



Listen to Him

Goal: To listen to Jesus and to shine with his light.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In Luke 9:28-36

There are many layers—and questions—about the story of the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain. The church has seen the story in various lights, focusing often on it as an indication of Jesus' divinity and his status as the second person of the Trinity.

The transfiguration story is a manifestation of Jesus as a surprising Messiah. First-century Jews expected a royal warrior-king Messiah, represented in the Old Testament by David and Solomon. Instead, Jesus appears with Moses and Elijah, representing the Old Testament Law and Prophets. Jesus is transformed, "the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Luke 9:29). A voice reminiscent of the voice at Jesus' baptism proclaims, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (9:35; see 3:22).

The divine sanction is of Jesus as a teacher to whom the disciples should listen and obey (see Deuteronomy 18:15). Jesus proclaims the will of God for him and his followers. By God's grace, we can hear Jesus' words to instruct and guide us. No other source or words can do the same.

The disciples reacted in fear but were reassured by Jesus. Surely they became gripped with gratitude. Through Jesus' words, they—and we—can know God: gratitude, indeed!

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

"Listen to me!" "Are you listening?" "Did you hear what I said?" These are familiar questions or directions children hear a lot as they grow up. Parents and teachers want children to grow up knowing how to make good and wise decisions. This is the same desire that God has for all God's children. In this story, we hear God reminding Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus. We all are helped by being reminded to remember the things we have learned from the stories of Jesus.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Can't you just imagine what Peter, James, and John must have been thinking about when they heard God remind them to listen to Jesus? This would be a great way to enter the story with the children. If you had been there and if you heard God remind you to listen to Jesus, what stories would you remember? What do you think is most important to remember about what Jesus did and what he taught? Some children will need help remembering; some will readily recall stories they have heard at church and at home in their Bible storybooks.

*You are the light of the world, O Christ.
Shine in me and through me. Amen.*



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 14, 17, 21

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

audio stories (optional)
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

white cloth

white candle

lemon juice, cotton
swab, lamp

Internet-connected
device

YouTube videos of
“Moses” and “Elijah”

Responding

Celebrating

clear plastic cups, ice
cream scoop, vanilla
ice cream, root beer

Praying

meditative music,
SCM 14a

Extra

copies of **Grace Notes**
(GN) 1

Note: bit.ly web addresses
are case sensitive.

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Before the children arrive, post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule.” Cut out and glue the arrow marker on a clothespin. Use the schedule to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

For “Preparing to Hear the Story,” use a cotton swab and lemon juice to write “This is my child. Listen to him.” on a sheet of white paper. Set aside to dry.

“Celebrating God’s Grace” requires more prep.

Welcoming and Preparing



Play “Come into God’s Presence” as children arrive. Welcome each child with “Grace and peace be with you, (*Name*).” Prompt the response, “And also with you.”

Introduce any newcomers. Be sure that any visitors are paired with buddies who will help them feel a part of your community.

Invite the children to help set the scene. On a table, place a white cloth, a Bible, and a white candle.

Turn on the lamp and let the light bulb heat up for “Preparing to Hear the Story.”

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Ask for a volunteer to practice reading the Scripture passage.

Show the YouTube videos “Moses” (bit.ly/2IvIVs9) and “Elijah” (bit.ly/2KqGj3G) to introduce or remind children who these important people were. Tell the children that they will hear about Moses and Elijah in today’s story.

Singing

Sing “Come into God’s Presence”—**SCM 17**. Encourage the children to come up with simple movements for the song.

Praying

Invite the children to share how their week went and what they are looking forward to in the week ahead. Turn on the candle to signify the light of Christ, shining bright.

Sit in silence for a few moments and then invite the children to repeat the prayer after you, saying the words and doing the motions:

Jesus said, “Let anyone who has ears, (*touch both ears*) /
let them hear.” (*cup hands behind ears*) /
God, help us to listen to your word. Amen. /



The word *transfiguration* describes the moment that Jesus appeared in shining glory before his disciples. It witnesses to Jesus' identity as the Son of God.



- T** Consider how much time your planned activities will take and adjust transition times according to remaining time available.

Preparing to Hear the Story

Explain to the children that each year, Transfiguration Sunday is the last Sunday before the church begins the season of Lent. Wonder what the word *transfiguration* means. Explain that it means that a change has taken place, something that changes the appearance but not what it really is. Suggest that the “Transformer” toys are kind of like a transfiguration. Their shape changes, and they may look different, but they are still made of all the same parts.

Show the paper that you prepared with the lemon juice to the children. Explain that it looks like an ordinary piece of paper, but it has an important message. Hold the paper close to a light bulb in a lamp. The heat from the light will transform the invisible message into a message that the children will hear today. Encourage the children to listen for a dramatic change in the Bible story.

Hearing the Story

Invite a child to find Luke 9 in the Bible. Have a volunteer read Luke 9:28–36. Conclude by saying, “Word of wisdom, Word of grace,” and prompt children to say, “Thanks be to God.” Place the open Bible on the worship table.

Ask the children what change they heard take place in the story.

Distribute paper and crayons or markers and ask the children to illustrate the story as you read it aloud a second time using **SCM 14** or the story audio. If reading, use your voice, your expressions, your feelings, and your body to make the story more lively. Vary the tone, speed, and pitch of your voice to indicate changes in mood.

- C** Give children time to respond and to share; for some children, listening and speaking may take longer.

Reflecting on God's Grace

Encourage volunteers to show and discuss their drawings. Discuss:

- ▼ Why do you think Moses and Elijah were with Jesus on the mountain?
- ▼ Why did God tell Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus?
- ▼ How do you think you would have reacted if you had witnessed Jesus' transfiguration?
- ▼ What can we learn by listening to Jesus' words in the Bible?

Singing

Sing “You Are My Own Dear Son”—**SCM 21**—a song that reflects God's words about Jesus. Turn off the candle.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.

Claiming God's Grace

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Form as many groups as you have a leader to be with each group. Give each child a piece of paper, something stiff to write on, and a pencil. Tell the children that they will use their eyes and ears to search out places in your church building where Jesus' words may be found. As they identify a place with Jesus' words, tell them to draw a small picture of it on their paper and write the words or several key words to remember what Jesus said.

Suggest that they begin looking for places with Jesus' words in the room and then have the groups move to different areas of your church. Some places they might find Jesus' words: Bibles, bulletin boards, hymnals, stained-glass windows, memorial plaques, banners. Set a time for the groups to return.

When the groups return, invite children to tell about their pictures and what Jesus said. Ask which place is their favorite. Invite examples of places at home where people can listen to and see Jesus' words, such as a Bible storybook, Bible story video, or Bible on a smartphone or computer. Encourage them to find one or more ways to listen to Jesus' words this week.



Celebrating God's Grace

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Ask the children to remember what transfiguration means. Tell the children that they are going to make a treat that will remind them of something changing its form or appearance while a cloud forms to remember the transfiguration story.

- ▼ Have a volunteer read Luke 9:28–30.
- ▼ Hand out cups, spoons, and straws and place three small scoops of ice cream in each cup. Ask the children what the three scoops can remind them of (*Jesus, Moses, and Elijah*).
- ▼ Have a volunteer read Luke 9:34.
- ▼ Pour the root beer over the ice cream to make a “cloud” in one cup. Invite the child whose cup it is to say the words spoken from the cloud, “This is my Son, my Chosen. Listen to him!”
- ▼ As you move to each cup to pour the root beer, invite the children to say, “And a cloud came over them . . .” and invite the child whose cup it is to say the words spoken from the cloud.

Enjoy the cloud-like root beer floats!

Praying God's Grace

Introduce the children to a listening prayer called a guided meditation.

Have the children spread out in the area so they are free of distractions. Set meditative music you have selected to repeat play. After the children have quieted, read the script for the meditation on **SCM 14a**.

After the meditation, talk together about how they can create a space to be with Jesus at home where they can listen for Jesus' words.

GN 1 Solution:

This is my Son, my Chosen. Listen to him.

Bonus:

sleepy

Extra Activity

Brainstorm what kinds of things shine. If the children don't mention it, remind them that when Peter, James, and John saw Jesus, he was shining brightly. Provide copies of **GN 1** and pencils. Allow time for the children to solve the puzzle and bonus question.

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Invite the children to gather and lead them in cleaning up the worship space.

Turn on the white candle. Ask the children what was something that helped them grow in their understanding of how to follow Jesus today.

Invite the children to follow your actions as you send them with the following prayer:













As we step out into the world, *(move one step forward)*
moving through fear, *(make a pushing movement to the left with one hand)*
moving through doubt, *(make a pushing movement to the right with the other hand)*
facing the challenges that come our way, *(take a step backward)*
we know Jesus is there to lift us up. *(raise both hands up)*
We know that God is always with us. *(take two steps forward)*
Let us listen to Jesus and shine with his light! *(cup hand around ear)*
Amen.

Turn off the candle.

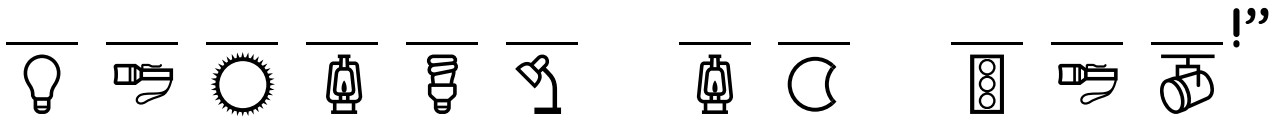
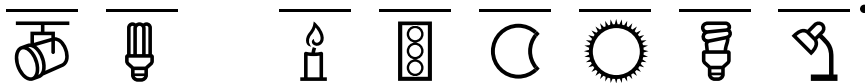
Remind the children about the free e-book and challenge them to read the story during the week.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

					
C	E	H	I	L	M
					
N	O	P	S	T	Y

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—Luke 9:35

Bonus: In our story, how did Peter, James, and John feel when they got to the top of the mountain?

