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# “Shining Glory”

## Sunday School Lesson on the Transfiguration of Jesus

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Mountains, clouds, tents, bright lights.... there’s a lot to look at in the Transfiguration tale, but what should be the emphasis for communicating the story with children? Young students can certainly benefit from a greater understanding of how the disciples witnessed Christ’s glory on the mountain. The faith of Peter, James, and John was strengthened and they had a foretaste of wonderful things to come. In the same way, our faith can be enhanced by realizing that the life we live now is but a glimmer of a greater Heavenly hope some day!

**Lesson focus:** Students will explore and experience the story of the transfiguration. They will understand how Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament dreams, as well as the hope of things to come in the future.

**Bible Passages:** Mark 17:1-13 (see also Mark 9:1-8 or Luke 9:28-36); 2 Peter 1:16-21

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials / Supplies Needed:** Blankets or “tent” material; flashlight; pictures of historical figures; butterfly toys or pictures; cotton balls; cups; crayons; oil; paper; aluminum foil; glue/tape (all items are optional, depending on which activities are used).

**More Ideas for Teaching about the Transfiguration:**

- Compare another writers lesson on the [Transfiguration of Jesus](#)
- See how Kristen taught about the [Transfiguration in an earlier lesson](#)
- Compare our [preschool lesson on the Transfiguration](#)
- Watch the [children’s message](#) and [craft ideas](#) that go along with this lesson
- Find bonus activities for this lesson on [Sermons4Kids](#) and [Mission Bible Class](#)
- See more [Transfiguration Sunday School lessons](#)
- See the [Object Lesson Message](#) that accompanies this lesson



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# Games and Lesson Introduction Activities

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**Lesson Opening:** Start off the lesson with any of several opener activities...there are a few fun options, depending on which element of the story you hope to emphasize and focus on:

- Asleep, awake! In part of the transfiguration story, the disciples started to grow drowsy. In honor of this, start off with a “red light/green light” style game. Have students act like they are climbing a mountain, or running in place. Then turn out lights and instruct them to be “asleep” and freeze or act like they are sleeping. Turn the lights back on to “wake” them. Students who do not freeze or “sleep” in time can step aside and help watch for others.
- Transfiguration is “in tents!” Based on the suggestion to make tents for Elijah and Moses, help students construct blanket forts with chairs and cloths. You might even share the story from within these “shelters”, for extra fun!
- History...fulfilled! Show students pictures of old historical figures, grandparents, or presidents. You might also show some “relics” of old items, like original phones or even antiques. Explain that these former people/things are an important part of our history, but that the current government/parents and inventions that we use are what we should listen to and appreciate. In the same way, the disciples saw Elijah and Moses, who were important Old Testament figures. However, Jesus was the ultimate fulfillment of all of the prophecies and hopes that had come before.
- Lite brite... this is a somewhat “retro” toy, but can still be found. If you are not lucky enough to have access to lite brite, you might be able to find a fun glow in the dark item, chalk, a black light, or even create a “lite brite” of sorts by poking holes into a paper and holding it up to a light. The point is to show how shining a bright light reveals new things. The glory of God was revealed in the transfiguration, as the disciples witnessed Jesus shining before them.
- Metamorphosis...the transfiguration was sort of like a “metamorphosis” of sorts, where the divine nature of Jesus was revealed to the disciples. In a way, it was sort of like a caterpillar metamorphosing into a butterfly, so exhibit pictures or toys of butterflies/caterpillars, or have students act out the process by spinning a “chrysalis” and then “flying” around the room.

Explain to students that today they will talk about a special event in the life of Jesus. Help them sound out the word “transfiguration” and talk about how Jesus was shining before His special disciples. Invite kids to dive deeper into the story and learn what happened in the Gospel lesson. Note: this story can be simplified for younger kids, or looked at with greater detail for older students who can understand it well.



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# Bible Lesson: The Transfiguration of Jesus

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A very special camping trip... ask students if they have ever been on a trip to the mountains, or been camping. What kinds of special things happen when you go camping? Tell students that the story we are looking at today has to do with Jesus taking some of His friends on a sort of “camping” trip. They went up on a mountain, and something remarkable happened!

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*And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup> And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. Matthew 17:1-2*

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Wait...why did Jesus turn white? Ask students if they have ever seen bleach, or what it can do...it makes things super white! Well, it looked like Jesus was white here, only it wasn't from chemical bleach. It was God. Jesus was revealing a little bit of God's glory here. Usually, if someone saw God, they would die from His glory! But not only was Jesus there... some historical figures appeared, as well.

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*And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. <sup>4</sup> And Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” Matthew 17:3-4*

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Explain to kids that Peter was a little confused and a lot scared! He didn't even know what to say, so he thought maybe these Old Testament greats needed a tent to hang out in. Maybe he didn't fully understand what was happening. But then they heard a voice that cleared all of their confusion!



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*<sup>5</sup> He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." <sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. Matthew 17:5-6*

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Who was speaking out of the cloud? This was none other than GOD Himself. The disciples were, again, probably more than a little frightened by that. But it was probably amazing and exciting, too. God was affirming who Jesus was. They may have not been a hundred percent certain, but this made it quite clear. Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus WAS God. The disciples were probably excited. But Jesus didn't want them sharing that thrill just yet..

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*But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." <sup>8</sup> And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. <sup>9</sup> And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead." Matthew 17:7-9*

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Jesus affirmed that He was fulfilling those old prophets. But He also knew people might have a hard time understanding or accepting who He was. So the disciples weren't to spread it around just yet. But we should! In fact, we know more than just a peek of Jesus...we know who He was and what He did. We can celebrate this story because we know that Jesus was God. Peter was later able to share more about the experience they had on that mountain. His testimony reminds us that we are called to know God, and to share His love with one another!

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*For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup> For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," <sup>18</sup> we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with*

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*him on the holy mountain. <sup>19</sup> And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, <sup>20</sup> knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. -2 Peter 1:16-21*

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Describe that in older times, people knew of God only through priests or prophets. What a blessing and privilege that now we have the assurance of Jesus, and the knowledge of His salvation!

For additional Scriptures on the call of disciples, see the following:

- Mark 9:1-8
- Luke 9:28-36

**Close** with prayer and thank God for Jesus. Acknowledge God's glory and greatness, found and fulfilled in Christ. Ask for help in shining His light for all the world.



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# Craft one: “Cloudy Mountain of Transfiguration”

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## You will need:

- Plastic or Styrofoam cups
- Cotton balls
- Stickers or glitter
- Markers or decorating materials
- Glue and/or tape
- Popsicle sticks



## Procedure:

1. Flip the cup over and decorate with stickers or markers, if desired.
2. Glue cotton ball “clouds” around the cup, and add glitter for shine, if preferred. Add verse captions and notes.
3. Glue a popsicle stick near the top of the “mountain”, with a picture of Jesus (drawn or colored and cut out, we attached one if you get stuck).
4. If you would like to hang the craft, attach a string or pipe cleaner to the back side.



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# Craft Two: “Transfiguration Goggles”

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## You will need:

- Paper, paper plates, or cardstock
- Scissors
- Aluminum foil
- Pipe cleaners
- Glue and/or tape
- Decorative materials (markers, crayons, stickers)



## Procedure:

1. Cut the paper or cardstock into a circular shape, similar to a figure eight or a “headless snowman” sideways (these will be “glasses” or “goggles”).
2. Cut out two large holes from the inside of each rounded portion.
3. If desired, decorate the outside of goggles with marker, crayon, stickers, and verses.
4. Cut two pieces of foil for the “shiny element”, and tape these behind the holes.
5. If you prefer to use the goggles functionally and be able to see out of them, cut two more small holes within the foil, for eye holes.
6. Attach pipe cleaners to the outside for the ear piece attachments. Remember the remarkable vision of transfiguration glory!



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# Craft Three: “Shiny Coloring Stained Glass”

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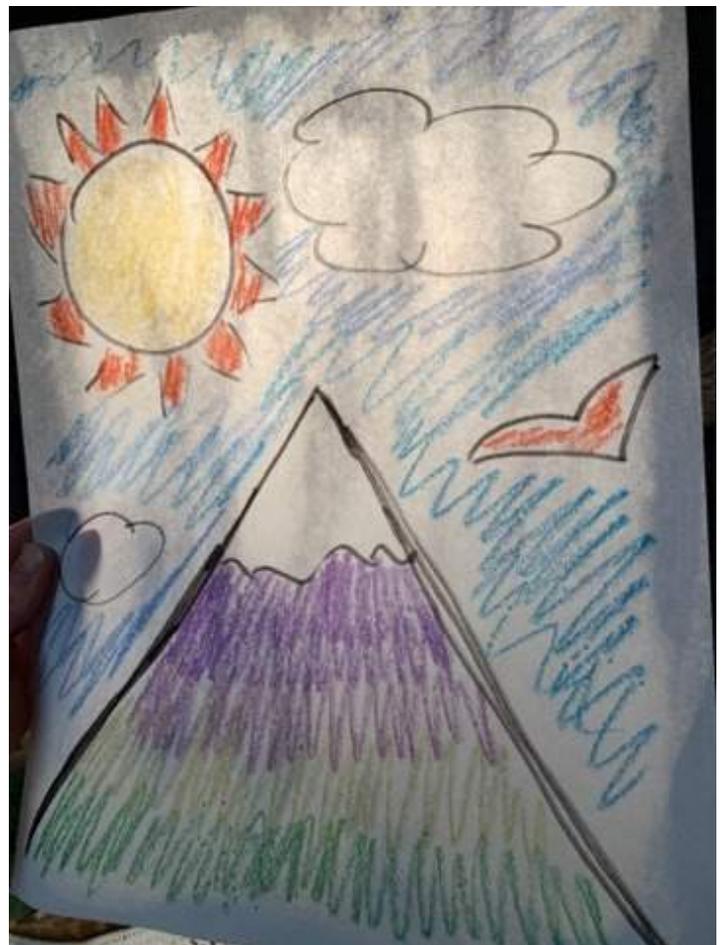
## You will need:

- Paper or coloring pages
- Crayons or pastels
- Sharpies
- Cotton balls, Q-tips, or brushes
- Oil (baby oil/vegetable oil)



## Procedure:

1. Draw a picture on the paper using Sharpies or dark markers (if using a pre-printed coloring page, this step will not be necessary).
2. Using crayons or pastels, color in the lines of the picture.
3. Carefully dab a cotton ball into the oil, coating the picture with a thin layer.
4. Allow to dry somewhat, and hold up the picture to light to view the “shiny” element created through the oil rubbing!



Learn About  
**Jesus, God's Son**

The Trinity

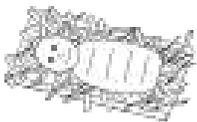
God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three persons who are all the same person – God. This is called the Trinity (Trinity means three).

When God decided to come and live on earth with people, he came in the form of Jesus, God's Son. Jesus is the most important person who ever lived on the earth. But Jesus is more than just a person. Jesus is **all God** so he knows and does everything that God does. Jesus is **all human** (people) so he can understand how we feel and act.

Names for Jesus

The Bible uses many different names for Jesus.

Find the names for Jesus in the puzzle.



P R I N C E B R R N O P  
W L T R U T H O X I J D  
K I L T H G I L S S R C  
J F C V I V H T O O E B  
M E M M A N U E L E C R  
Y U S S A E N I V D N E  
A G Q U Y O N R E L I A  
W O R D S H E P H E R D  
Z F U C H R I S T A P T



Jesus is God's **SON**.

The name **JESUS** and the Old Testament name Joshua both mean **SAVIOR**.

**EMMANUEL** means God with Us.

**CHRIST** means the Chosen One or Messiah.

Jesus is our **LORD**; he is the master and we are the servants.

Jesus is the **PRINCE** of Peace.

Jesus is the **WORD**; he brings us God's message.

Jesus is the **BREAD** of life.

Jesus is the **LIGHT** of the world.

Jesus is the Good **SHEPHERD**, and we are his sheep.

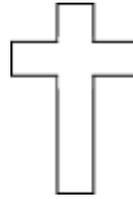
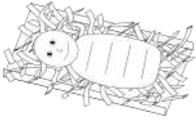
Jesus is the **VINE**, and we are the branches.

Jesus is the **WAY**, the **TRUTH**, and the **LIFE**.

# The Story of Jesus

Look up each verse and number the events in Jesus' life in the correct order.

- |          |              |       |                                                                 |
|----------|--------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | Luke 2:7     | _____ | Jesus went back up to heaven.                                   |
| <b>2</b> | Luke 2:52    | _____ | Jesus grew and pleased God.                                     |
| <b>3</b> | Mark 1:9     | _____ | Jesus was crucified on the cross.                               |
| <b>4</b> | Matthew 4:23 | _____ | Jesus was baptized.                                             |
| <b>5</b> | John 19:18   | _____ | God raised Jesus from the dead.                                 |
| <b>6</b> | Luke 24:6    | _____ | Jesus came into the world as a baby.                            |
| <b>7</b> | Acts 1:9     | _____ | Jesus traveled around, teaching, preaching, and healing people. |



## Why Did Jesus Come into the World?

Reason 1:

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
G	L	G	V	Z	X	S		
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Z	Y	L	F	G	T	L	W	

Reason 2:

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
G	L	W	R	V		U	L	I	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
F	H	L	M		G	S	V		
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____					
X	I	L	H	H					

In this code, A stands for Z, Z stands for A, etc.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>
↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕	↕
<b>Z</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>

# Jesus Christ

is the same yesterday and today and forever.  
Hebrews 13:8



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# “A Peek at God’s Glory

Children’s Sermon Object Lesson on the  
Transfiguration of Jesus in Matthew 17:1-9

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## Children’s Message: A Peek at God’s Glory

The Transfiguration of Jesus

**Main Objective:** The transfiguration is an important and celebrated event, but can be a little confusing for younger learners. Some guys went up a mountain, there were clouds, and Jesus got shiny?? What does this mean? This message aims to focus on the element of God’s glory, and how the disciples caught a glimpse of who Jesus truly was.

**Law/Gospel Theme:** Jesus was fully and truly God, but also became fully human. In this way, He died for our sins. The transfiguration takes a peek at the divine nature of Christ, but He was certainly still very much human, as well.

**Optional Materials / Object Lesson Props:** Cups (not transparent), small treats or candies, flashlight

**Bible Passage:** Matthew 17:1-9 (see also Mark 9:1-8 or Luke 9:28-36)

## More Ideas for Teaching about the Transfiguration of Jesus

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**Message Note:** As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. In this instance, the idea of love is reviewed in the context of Valentine’s Day, but this message may not coincide with the holiday directly, and any “love item” might work. Use what best suits you and those you teach.



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# Transfiguration of Jesus Children's Sermon

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*Greet the children, and have with you three or more cups or bowls, placed upside down. It may be helpful to place them on a tray or a clipboard for stability, if you don't have a table or other solid surface accessible. Under one of the cups, place some sort of treat, toy, or shiny object.*

Hello, children of God! How are you?

Well, I have a little treat I would like to share with you today. Would you like a little special something? It's right here on this tray, BUT...it's sort of hidden. One of these cups has the treat underneath it, but the other two are empty. They all look the same, but I want you to guess which cup has the treat. Do you think you can do that? You have to be absolutely sure which one it's under, if you're going to try and guess. Do you think you can be totally sure? *(Allow kids to point or speculate about which cup they think it might be).*

What do you think might make this easier to guess? Would it be helpful if I....let you peek under the cup? What if I lift it up just a little bit; would that help? *(Slightly lift the cup with the treat, revealing just a glimpse of what is underneath).*

Oh! Did you see what that was? Did you see a peek at the treat under there? You know, the Gospel story we are talking about today has to do with something similar. It wasn't a peek at candy, but it was a small glimpse of something even better—God's glory!

The event we are talking about is called "transfiguration." That's a pretty big word—can you say it? See, Jesus went up on this mountain, and He took with Him a few of His closest friends: Peter, James, and John. As they were up there, Jesus was suddenly shining like the sun, all full of light *(option: shine a flashlight for added effect)*!



It made the disciples pretty terrified. Then they saw Moses and Elijah, well-known historical figures. They didn't know what to do, and then they heard God's voice announce "this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased—listen to Him!"

The disciples realized they were in God's presence, and they fell flat on their faces in fear...but Jesus comforted and encouraged them to get back up. The disciples had caught a peek of who Christ was. When Jesus came to Earth, it was sort of like He was God in disguise. He was truly and completely a human person, but He was also totally God. Many people had been waiting for a Messiah and wondering what He would be like. The disciples had wondered if Jesus was the one they had long awaited. They thought He was. But this experience on the mountain took away any possible doubt. Seeing Jesus transformed, in a way, and hearing God's voice made them absolutely certain of who they were following. This was really and truly God.

How do you think that made them feel? They were probably pretty relieved at knowing who Jesus was for sure...and they were also probably excited! I'll bet they hurried to tell the other disciples, and couldn't wait to spend more time with Jesus. Why aren't we that excited? After all, we have more than just a peek. We know the rest of the story...Jesus not only lived as a human, but He died and rose again so that we could have life with God. He was really God, and became a person like us. Knowing that should make us shine with the hope of Jesus. We should be eager to share that with others, and celebrate the love God has for us!

It's a wonderful and blessed gift, and we don't have to go up on a mountain to witness it. We know that Jesus was the final fulfillment of all that had been hoped for, and He is still our joy today! Why don't we say thank you to God for that beautiful understanding?

*(Optional: after prayer, let each child have a treat from the cup.)*



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# Children's Prayer Moment:

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(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for showing us who you are

Help us to be amazed by your glory

And to shine like the sun with your love

Thank you for the Bible

Thank you for the love of Jesus

We love you, God!

In Jesus's name, Amen!

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## Matthew 17:1-9 (NIV) The Transfiguration

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**17** After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. **2** There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. **3** Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

**4** Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

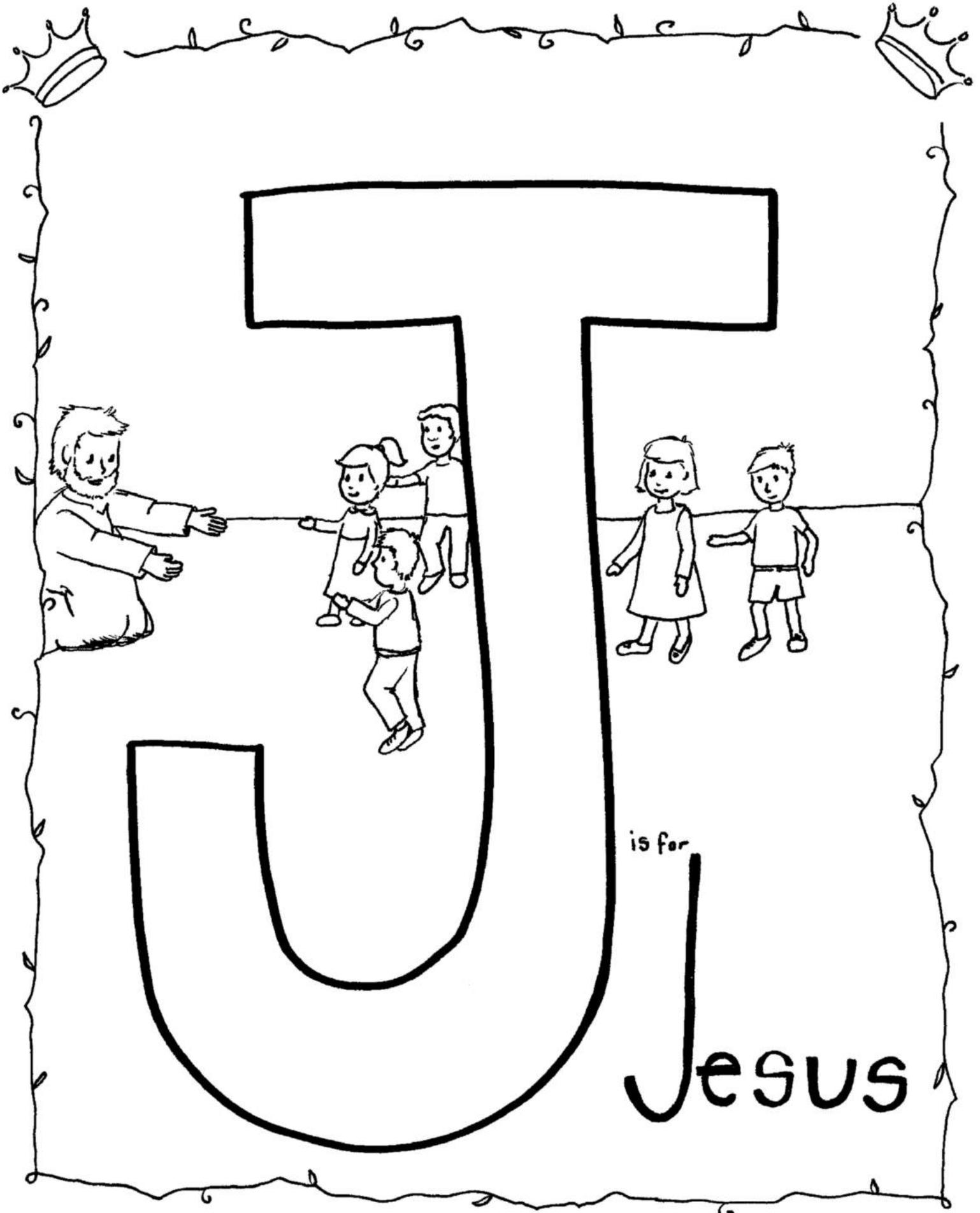
**5** While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

**6** When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. **7** But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid." **8** When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

**9** As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

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is for

Jesus



This lesson was prepared by [Kristen Schmidt](#), who serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO.

She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May

2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

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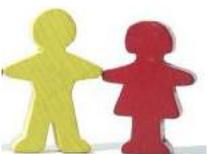
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