

TRANSFIGURATION: DRAMA/ART

Scripture: Matthew 17:1-8

Introduction: Growing Light

- Gather students on the floor away from the windows.
- Turn off the lights and turn on a flashlight, holding it close to the wall.
- Ask, “What do you see?” and, “What will happen if I move the flashlight away from the wall a little bit?” (Demonstrate how the circle of light grows.) Do this several times. Younger children might like to take a turn!
- Remind the children that we are celebrating the season of Epiphany, which is also called the season of light. Holding the flashlight close to the wall, ask, “Who can recall a special light that was seen when Jesus was born?” (star that guided shepherds and wise men.) The star led people to find Jesus and, through Jesus, God was revealed or shown to people.
- As Jesus grew older, he called his Apostles to help him spread the Good News about God (move flashlight away from the wall and let the circle grow.) God’s circle of love got bigger and bigger! Today, we will hear a new story about God’s light.

Present Story:

Materials

- Flashlight
- Five Biblical robes, one white chausible for Jesus,
- Bible, Beginner’s Bible, or Tomie dePaola’s Bible Story book

Assign roles: Jesus, Peter, James, John, Moses and Elijah.

Read Matthew 17: 1-8 and have students pose to create scenes. You may treat these as tableaus and take a Polaroid picture of each scene.

Discussion:

- Who did Jesus bring with him to the high mountain?
 - **Peter:** His name was changed from Simon Peter to Cephas by Jesus (which means **rock**). Peter was brought to Jesus by his younger brother Andrew. As time went on his name progresses to just Peter. What is interesting is that the Lord Jesus always (except at the name change) continues to call Peter, Simon.
 - **James**, son of Zebedee: Fisherman and older brother to John. He and his brother were bold and energetic, which is probably why they are nicknamed **Sons of Thunder**. Of the two

"James" that were Jesus' disciples he was known as James the Greater. His father may have been a man of wealth.

- **John**, son of Zebedee: Fisherman and younger brother to James. John had heard John the Baptist say "Behold the Lamb," and he became willing to be a disciple. Time passes -- we are uncertain as to the amount (maybe some of the patience required for disciples) -- before Jesus calls them to follow him.

- Peter, James and John became part of the inner circle of Jesus' followers. Was that because they were the most courageous, because they always understood everything, and always got everything right? How do you know? (Peter wanting to put up a shelter, all three falling facedown, terrified.) As we read more about them in the Bible we find that these disciples did not always get everything right. They had their doubts and questions. They needed time to grow and understand what they were required to do. Just like when we go to church and Church School we take the time to learn and grow.
- Who appeared on the mountain with Jesus? (Moses and Elijah). Explain to younger students that Moses and Elijah lived long before Jesus' time.
- What did Moses represent? (Moses appears as the representative of the law or the old covenant and the promise of salvation, which was soon to be fulfilled in the death of Jesus.)
- What did Elijah represent? (Elijah, the prophet, appears as the appointed restorer of all things. Read Malachi 4:5-6)
- Why did Peter want to build three shelters? (Peter may have desired to erect new tents of meeting where God could again communicate with his people, or he may have been thinking of the booths used at the Feast of Tabernacles. Maybe he just wanted to prolong the visit and capture this perfect moment: lawgiver, prophet and Messiah all together. But the idea was not appropriate because Jesus had to finish his task on earth.
- What do you think the cloud represented? Whose voice did they hear? (God)
- Did Jesus and his disciples stay on the mountaintop? Why not?

Art Activity

Materials

- Cross patterns with "Jesus" in the middle, copied on cardstock

- Glow in the dark fabric paint
- Glow in the dark star stickers
- Markers
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Yarn

Instructions

1. How was God's love and glory revealed in today's story? (voice in cloud, bright light) God's love and glory and shown to us every day. (Hold up a paper cross) Imagine that this cross is filled with the light of God's love. Use bright colors to show what it would look like. Have students cut out the crosses.
2. Does the light of God's love shine only in the daytime? It shines in the nighttime too! Use glow-in-the-dark paint to trace over the word "JESUS" in the center of the cross. Add some glow-in-the-dark stars. Punch a hole in the top and string through an 8" length of yarn. Knot to make a loop. Invite students to hand the cross on a doorknob at home to remind them that the light of God's love is with them all the time.

Closing

Sit in a circle with the flashlight. Ask the children to think of some ways that they can show the light of God's love to others. As they volunteer, let them shine the flashlight under their own chins (not in eyes!)

Pray together: Dear God, thank you for showing us your lorry and the light of your love every day. Help us to show your light to others. Amen