

Camp Follow-Up Series

Lesson 1—Mount of Transfiguration

OVERVIEW

Bible Passages: Matthew 17:1-9

Key Verse: Proverbs 4:27—“Do not turn to the right nor to the left; Turn your foot from evil.”

BEFORE CLASS

Preparation: *Your preparation will determine the direction your class will go.*

- Consider “mountain top” experiences you’ve had in your life.
- Consider what it means “to come down from the mountain” with Christ.
- Study and prepare your lesson so that you are familiar with the teaching outline.
- Use the Contact 1-2-3 system to the right to follow up on students who have recently missed Sunday School.
- Be sure to contact guests who visit your class to let them know that they are always welcome.
- Encourage students who made decisions at camp to keep following Christ and to not be ashamed in living for Him..
- Pray for each student by name.

CONTACT 1-2-3 SYSTEM

The first time a student is absent, give them a call. Following the second absence, send them a postcard. The third week they are absent, pay them a visit.

Think about it: What does it say to a student when they miss multiple weeks in a row and are never contacted? It says, “It really doesn’t matter if you’re here or not.”

Small things communicate great messages. Let the three “small” things above communicate that you care and miss your students when they are absent.

OPENING ACTIVITY

Getting Started

Ask those students who went to camp to briefly share what it meant to them. *(Take a little time for this. This lesson is actually shorter than most so that you'll have more time for this type of important "What is God doing in your life?" discussion.)*

Discussion

- *What is the most incredible thing you've ever seen?*
- *What do you think are the most incredible stories about Jesus in the Bible?*

BIBLE LESSON

Have your students turn to Matthew 17:1-9.

While turning there, *SAY:*

Today we're going to look at something that happened to Jesus and three of His disciples and how it paints a picture of a "mountaintop" experience and what follows afterwards.

- *How would you describe your walk with Christ right now?*
 - a. *"I'm closer to God today than I've ever been before."*
 - b. *"I'm growing steadily day by day."*
 - c. *"I'm on a mountaintop 'spiritual high' following camp."*
 - d. *"My walk with Christ is lacking."*
 - e. *Other?*
 - *Describe the time in your life when you were closest to Christ.*
 - *Describe a "mountaintop" experience or spiritual high that you've had in the past. Did it last? Why or why not?*
 - *Picture in your mind a valley that shoots up to a mountain that goes back down into a valley on the other side. Where in this picture would you put your walk with God? Are you on top of the mountain? In the valley before you get to a mountain? Going up the mountain? Coming down a mountain? At the very top or just part way up? (NOTE: You might want to draw a picture of this and let students take turns marking where they feel like they currently are.)*
 - *Why do you feel this way?*

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Matthew 17:1-3
 - *How do you think you would have felt if this happened in front of you?*
 - *What do you remember about Moses?* (His mom sent him down the Nile River in a basket because the Egyptians were killing all the Hebrew boys that were born. He was found and adopted by Pharaoh's daughter and was raised in Pharaoh's household, but fled after murdering an Egyptian. God appeared to him in a
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burning bush and sent him back to Egypt to free the people of Israel. Through Moses God sent ten plagues against the Egyptians when Pharaoh refused to release the Hebrew slaves but he finally released them after the death of all the firstborns. Moses led the Israelites through the Red Sea which God parted and received from the Lord the Ten Commandments. He led them for forty years in the wilderness due to their disobedience and finally died overlooking, but not entering, the Promised Land, because of his own disobedience.)

- *What do you remember about Elijah?* (Elijah was a prophet who by faith, prayed and it did not rain for the space of three and a half years, after which he confronted the King Ahab and had a “showdown” on Mount Carmel against the prophets of baal, as seen in 1 Kings 18. Elijah never died because God took him up in a chariot of fire.)
- *Why do you think these two individuals appeared to Jesus while He was in His glory?* (The Bible doesn’t say although some believe it’s because they symbolically represent all the saved people who will be present when Jesus returns again (in His glory). Moses represents all those who will die before Christ comes. Elijah represents those who will not die but will be caught up to heaven alive (1 Thes. 4:17). Others suggest that these two will be the two “witnesses” that the book of Revelation speaks of who preach for a set period of time, are killed and three days later rise up and preach again. However, these are just theories--the Bible is silent on the matter.)

SAY: For whatever reason Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus, this must have been an incredible experience for Peter, James and John. Imagine what it must have been like to have heroes from the past appear and to see Jesus transformed into all His glory. Imagine what it would be like if this had happened to you.

- *Seeing Jesus transfigured in front of you and seeing Moses and Elijah speaking with Him, what would you have said to Jesus?*

SAY: Let’s find out what Peter’s suggestion was.

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Matthew 17:4

SAY: Peter had an idea—Let’s build three shelters, one for Jesus, one for Moses and one for Elijah.

- *Do you think this was a good idea?*
- *Why do you think He suggested this?* (He sensed the significance of the event and he probably didn’t want it to end—He wanted to prolong what he was experiencing. “Let’s make this more permanent—Let’s give them a place to sleep.”)

Timeout Illustration

SAY: Some students want to do the same thing with camp experiences—they want to live on the “mountaintop” but the mountaintop is not where real life happens. A mountaintop experience is like a time out, when your coach calls you aside and gives you instructions and pumps you up and gets you ready for the next play. But time outs don’t last forever—they’re temporary—to get you ready to go back into the game. No coach has ever called a timeout just to enjoy that moment in time. Timeouts are always about what is getting ready to happen next.

- *If you said that you were on a mountaintop a moment ago, what do you think Jesus wants to do in your life next?*
- *Do you think mountaintop experiences last forever? (What is real about a mountaintop experience is as real on the mountain as it is in the valley. Although the “emotions” may lessen, the commitments can last forever. Whether or not they do, however, depends on what you do after coming down from the mountain—Do you stay firm to your commitments? Do you spend daily time with God? Do you “feed” the choices and decisions you’ve made. Etc.)*

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Matthew 17:5-8

- *What are the two things Jesus said to His disciples when it was time to go? (“Get up” and “Don’t be afraid.”)*
- *How are both of these great advice when coming back from camp?*
 - (1) “Get up”—Don’t stay still; keep moving; move from where you are; don’t keep sitting; stand firm, etc.
 - (2) “Don’t be afraid.”—Take courage; be bold; do what God wants you to do no matter what the cost; Trust Him; Don’t fear the change; Don’t fear what people might think or say or do.
- *What would you want to do if you had an experience like the one the disciples had—you saw Jesus, shining in His glory, and Moses and Elijah, heard the voice of God? (If something this incredible happened to you, probably the first thing you’d want to do is to tell someone else.)*
- *Have you shared your experiences at camp with anyone? Have you told anyone what God did in your life?*

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Matthew 17:9

- *Why do you think Jesus told them not to tell anyone what had happened until after He had risen from the dead? (Some people had already tried to make Jesus a king by force, and if news of this event had become commonly known, perhaps others would have attempted to make Him king.)*

SAY: Today, don't keep silent. Brag and boast about what God has done. Now is the time to tell people what Jesus means to you in the hope that they too will want Jesus to be their king.

KEY VERSE

SAY: I want you to consider the decisions you made at camp or if you didn't go to camp, the decisions you've made to follow Christ at some point in your life. Also think about the decisions that others made...

- *What advice would you give to them to help them stand firm?*
- *Which Bible verses would you share with them to help them stay on the right path?*

Choose a volunteer to read—Read Proverbs 4:25-27

SAY: Whether you are on your way up the mountain, down the mountain, or on either side, keep your focus on Christ, keep your feet from evil, and always follow Him.

WRAP IT UP

Pray today specifically that your students will continue to follow Christ, that they will boast about all the good things God has done and that their commitments at camp will remain true and real.

Prayer Time

List prayer requests below and on the back of this page and pray for your students throughout the week. *Ask if any of your students want to pray today.*