**GROWING TOGETHER:** FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Session 4 of 4

# Jesus is glorious!

### MEETING AIM

To attempt to make sense of Jesus’ transfiguration, recognising he is amazing but also mysterious.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 17:1-13

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

The story of Jesus’ transfiguration is mysterious yet stunning. The three disciples would never forget it; after all, Jesus is mysterious. He puzzles us. That’s how it should be. He is God. This session draws this series to a close. Spend time recalling your discussions over the last three weeks.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Welcome the children and share some simple refreshments and ask the children to share about the week they have had. Talk about the brightest lights anyone has ever seen. Why do we not look at the sun? If possible, show different shades of white, placing them in the order of ‘whiteness’.

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** verbal, logical and visual puzzles (search online for riddles, number puzzles, matchstick puzzles and picture puzzles – CBBC is a good source)

Show the group the puzzles you have brought. Invite the children to have a go at solving some of them individually, in pairs or as a group. As you work, chat about which puzzle they like and what it feels like when they solve a puzzle.

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** A4 paper (both coloured and white); sticky tape; scissors; white tissue paper; Blu Tack; a torch

Before the session, stick together three sheets of coloured A4 paper along the long edge. Fold this strip of paper along the joins and cut out paperchain figures; open them out. These are the disciples. Cut out another paper figure the same size and shape from white paper. This is Jesus. Stick this onto the end of the coloured chain with Blu Tack.

Cut out three more figures the same size and shape from white tissue paper. Finally, cut out a large cloud shape from the tissue paper.

Read Matthew 17:1-13 (you could have readers to be the narrator, Peter, Jesus and God’s voice). Pause the reading at the end of the following verses, and demonstrate the action with the paper figures:

Verse 1: Jesus invites his friends to go up a mountain with him. Move the four paper figures along as if walking.

Verse 2: Jesus became different (transfigured), his face was all-shining, his clothes like white light. Detach Jesus from the disciples and place the tissue paper over him, shine a torch through him.

Verse 3: Tissue-paper Moses and Elijah join Jesus.

Verse 5: Cover the tissue figures with the white cloud.

Verse 7: Lay the paper disciples face down. Take the tissue paper off your Jesus figure. Touch the paper disciples with the paper Jesus.

Verse 13: Attach Jesus to the disciples again. ‘Walk’ them down the mountain.

Repeat the story again, with the children moving the paper figures around.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Many things in this story make us wonder. Ask children for their comments before you ask wondering questions like these:

* If you’d been one of the disciples, what one thing would you remember?
* Jesus told them not to tell anyone about what they had seen (v9) until after he had risen from the dead. Ask: Why might that be?
* What have they discovered about Jesus that’s amazing but also puzzling?

Remind children that Jewish people expected the prophet Elijah to return before the Messiah came. The disciples were excited (and scared) when they saw a figure they knew was Elijah. (We don’t know how they recognised Moses and Elijah!) Jesus explained John the Baptist was an ‘Elijah’ figure who had prepared the way for Jesus, showing them that he was the expected Messiah.

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

**You will need:** two sheets of white A4 paper stuck together at the narrow edge, folded concertina-like to create six chain people; felt-tip pens; scissors

Give each child a concertina-folded set of paper. Encourage them to draw a person shape on the top of the concertina, then cut through the whole thing to make six joined-up people. Open up the concertina and name and decorate the six people: Jesus, Peter, James, John, Moses and Elijah. Talk about how the children can tell the story when they get home.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** candle (real or battery operated); matches (if using a real candle)

There is something mysterious about this story. There’s something very mysterious about Jesus. Encourage children to share what it is about Jesus they find hard to make sense of.

Light or switch on your candle and ask the children to be quiet and chat with Jesus about the mysterious things they have just talked about. Then pray this prayer, encouraging the group to shout out things in their lives that they find tough at the right time:

“Thank you, Jesus, that you are so amazing, far beyond what we can ever understand. But you understand the tough things in our lives especially…Help us to enjoy wondering about how awesome and amazing you are, even if we don’t easily understand. Amen.”

**RO WILLOUGHBY**

ministers with people of all ages at St Chad’s Woodseats.