



A Workshop Rotation Model Lesson Plan from rfour.org

## The Transfiguration | Mark 9:1-8; 14-29

Season 1.Session 7: Science, Movement & Games, Storytelling, Arts & Crafts

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### OVERVIEW SECTION

#### How to Read This Lesson Plan

The **Overview Section** is the foundation of this lesson plan. The questions and activities for the class that you will be teaching on Sunday morning have been based (sometimes loosely) upon what you read in this section. The **Overview Section** is composed of five components (each component is underlined in the lesson plan):

**How to Read This Lesson Plan** (defines all components of the lesson plan)

**Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation** (a reminder of why we do this)

**Scripture(s) for the Session** (a reminder that the scripture is to be read in every class)

**Key Verses & Theology** (background for teachers to ponder)

**Themes to Focus on from the Scripture** (the ideas that the session's lessons are based on)

The actual lesson is found in the second section, **The Sunday Morning Experience Section**. Think of this section as the step-by-step instruction guide to your Sunday morning teaching experience. There are four components to this section (again, each component is underlined in the actual lesson plan):

**Preparation** (including supplies needed)

**Classroom Statement** (a brief explanation of what will be taught/happening in the classroom)

**Step-by-step process of the lesson** (including the scripture to be read)

**Suggested variations for age groups** (Self-explanatory but not always applicable)

We encourage you to read the rest of this **Overview Section** before reading the **Sunday Morning Experience Section**.

#### Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation

The purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation is, with God's help and in community, to hear and interact with the stories of our faith tradition, to pray, worship and play together, and to equip and support the building of relationships with God and with each other.

**Scripture(s) for the Session:** Mark 9:1-8; 14-29 (from The Message)

*Please READ this aloud in every class you teach.* The actual words to the scripture can be found in **The Sunday Morning Experience Section: Step-by-Step process of the lesson**. When

reading to the class, please read it from the lesson plan (not an actual Bible) as the wording of the scripture has been modified to help clarify some language issues.

**Key Verses & Theology:** These are provided to help the teachers think about and build a framework for understanding the story to help in answering some of the questions that the students might raise in class.

*"I'm not just talking about the distant future. Some of you who are standing here are going to see the kingdom of God arrive in full force." 2 Six days later, three of them did see it.* The kingdom of God exists where God is allowed to be king. The Kingdom of God is not just heaven. It is not just a place that we go to when we die. It is much more than that, and starts in the here and now. Jesus is trying to get his disciples to understand this by letting them know they'll be seeing it soon, while they are still alive.

*Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain to pray. Once they were up there and praying, Jesus' appearance changed from the inside out, right before their eyes.* Prayer is how we let God be king in our life. In prayer, we are both offering to God and receiving from God. We are offering praise and admitting need. And we are receiving comfort and direction. In this give and take with God in prayer, we are changed. Jesus' change in appearance symbolizes this change we experience in prayer. Also, when we are listening and speaking with God, we see things we wouldn't normally see on our own. The arrival of Moses and Elijah symbolize this "insight" that comes in prayer. All in all, the arrival of the Kingdom of God is an arrival filled with transformation.

*But then Peter interrupted* Such transformation that comes in prayer can be unsettling and sudden and uncomfortable. We will feel a desire to push away. We might do this in many ways. A common way is to interrupt our praying by thinking of our own plans and desires. This is what Peter does. Here, God is transforming Jesus and offering insight in the form of Elijah and Moses. But how does Peter respond? By interrupting with his own plans. In that moment, Peter stops God from being king. Peter offers his own commands instead...and it stops everything.

*"This is my Son, marked by my love. Listen to him."* But not all is lost when Peter interrupts (or when we interrupt). Jesus and others who are listening to God are still available to help us and talk with us. Also, we are all marked by God's love. God does not remove that mark from us. We might ignore God's claim of love upon us, but God does not remove it from us. So once we realize that our interrupting is getting in the way, we can turn back to God's love, we can re-engage in prayer and go back to letting God be king in our life.

**Themes to Focus on from the Scripture:** Themes are provided to help teachers understand the teaching of the *session* (not necessarily the class). Sometimes an activity in one class may not match up with any of the themes.

**Kingdom of God** – The Kingdom of God is wherever we choose to let God be king. Be that in our minds, in our chores, in our relationships, in our work, in our finances, in our lives – wherever we invite and choose to let God be king, that is where the Kingdom of God is. To let God be king requires a few things from us. 1. That we seek to be aware of what God wants to have happen in

God's kingdom. 2. That once we are aware of what God wants to have happen, then we do it. 3. That we keep checking in, seeking to be aware of what God wants to have happen.

**Prayer** – There are two types of prayer: Conversational and meditative. In conversational prayer, the conversation with God that takes place mostly within our head/brain. Prayer is how we become aware of what God wants to have happen in God's kingdom. Prayer involves our words and our listening. This conversation, if we continue it, if we keep doing it, will shape and form us. Then, because our thoughts and actions are shaped by prayer, our doing becomes an extension of our prayer life. How we think, how we see, how we respond to others will be shaped and formed in our conversing with God. We bring the Kingdom of God to the here and now by having a conversation with God.

**Light** – Light illuminates. In order that we may see, light is required. In this story of transfiguration, God is the source of this light. Jesus in prayer lights up. A cloud that God speaks from is filled with light. Light, however, in and of itself, cannot be seen. Only by the things that stand in the light, can light be seen. Nighttime is a perfect example of this. The moon reflects the light of the sun that is behind us. But we can't see the light as it flies past the earth. We don't see it until it hits the moon. If we *could* see the light from the sun, the night sky would be brilliant white instead of deep black. The implications of this is that if we choose to stand in the light of God, we will shine and reflect God's light to others, just as Jesus does for the disciples.



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### THE SUNDAY MORNING EXPERIENCE SECTION

#### **Preparation**

- Print out this lesson plan and bring it with you on the Sunday Mornings you are teaching
- Arrive at pre-arranged time to join other teachers, shepherds and staff for an opening prayer.
- Supplies Needed: Clear bowl with water, mirror, flashlight, aluminum foil strips, D-sized batteries, flashlight light bulbs, strips of paper for blind spot activity

#### **Classroom Statement**

This Science class consists of reading of the Transfiguration story, and then doing a blind spot experiment, a battery lighting up a light bulb experiment and using water to refract light as ways to illustrate how God helps us to see.

#### **Step-by-Step Process of Lesson**

Shepherd comes in with students

**SHEPHERD ASKS** "Question of the Day."

**INTRODUCE yourself**

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_ and I want you call me (tell the students how they may address you).

**PRAY** (Short and simple is perfect)

God, thank you for this day and for each other. We need your help. Help us to learn about you this day. Amen.

**TELL**

- We're going to read a story today where Jesus takes a few of his disciples to a mountain top to pray.
- While they are praying, Jesus is transformed.
- This story is usually called the "Transfiguration Story" and the word transfiguration means to change in appearance.

**READ MARK 9:1-8; 14-29** (from The Message)

1 Then Jesus drove his point home by saying, "I'm not just talking about the distant future. Some of you who are standing here are going to see the kingdom of God arrive in full force." 2 Six days later, three of them did see it.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain to pray. Once they were up there and praying, Jesus' appearance changed from the inside out, right before their eyes. 3 His clothes shimmered, glistening white, whiter than any bleach could make them. 4 Elijah, along with Moses, came into view, and were in deep conversation with Jesus. 5 But then Peter interrupted, "Rabbi, this is a great moment! Let's make it last forever. We can build three memorials - one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah." 6 Peter blurted this out without thinking, stunned as they all were by what they were seeing. 7 Immediately, a cloud filled with light enveloped them, and from deep in the cloud came a voice: "This is my Son, marked by my love. Listen to him." 8 The next minute the disciples were looking around, rubbing their eyes, seeing nothing but Jesus, only Jesus.

### ASK

- What were Jesus and the disciples doing when Jesus was transfigured? (praying)
- What is it about Jesus' appearance that is changed? (his clothes shimmer and become very bright)
- After Peter interrupts, what happens next? (a cloud filled with light moves over them)
- Who is it that you think is talking from the light-filled cloud?
- Who is it that you think changes Jesus' clothing?

### TELL

- The light in this story comes from God.
- When Jesus is praying, he's stepping into the light of God.
- It makes him shine.
- Every time we pray, we're stepping into the light of God too.
- And when God's light shines through us and on us, we're changed.
- We're going to do a number of experiments today in which we play around with light, change light or have light change an object.

### EXPLAIN

- What is one of the primary things that light allows us to do? (see)
- But even when Jesus is shining with God's light, Peter still interrupts, right?
- Peter has a blind spot.
- We all do.
- Let's find our blind spot right now.
- The blind spot is the area on the retina (a part of the eye) without receptors that respond to light.
- To find this area, close your right eye. Now look at the image given to you:



- Hold the image in front of you with your arm straight out.
- With your left eye (the one that is open), look at the plus sign.
- At a certain distance, the dot will disappear from sight.
- This is your blind spot in your left eye
- Reverse the process. Close your left eye and look at the *dot* with your right eye.
- Move the image slowly closer to you until the + disappears.

## **DO blind spot activity**

### **TELL**

- Without light we wouldn't be able to see the plus or the dot – even with both eyes open.
- But even with light, we still can't see things sometimes.
- So we need help from one another (our other eye), to see things that on our own we cannot see.

### **ASK/TELL**

- If we think about the Transfiguration story and pretend that Jesus is a light bulb, what would he need in order to light up? (hint: Think about a flash light – what does it need to light up?)
- That's right! Jesus would need electricity to light up. He'd need a power source.
- In the story, God is that power source.
- Now, thinking about the story some more, how do you think Jesus connected to this power source in order to light up? (he prayed)
- So we're going to light up our own light bulb with a power source (batteries) using aluminum foil.

## **LIGHT BULB EXPERIMENT**

- Get into groups of two.
- Each person in the group gets one battery.
- Each person in the group gets one strip of aluminum foil.
- Each GROUP gets one light bulb.
- Can you make the light bulb light up by using one battery and both strips of aluminum foil?
- (for safety concerns, 1, 2 or 3 D sized batteries do not have enough voltage to harm a child).
- Hints: use both sides of the battery; try touching the aluminum foil to different parts of the light bulb.
- Once you figured that out, can you make the light bulb light up using one battery and only one aluminum foil strip?
- Hints: have the bulb directly touch the battery
- Once you've figured that out, can you make the light bulb light up brighter by using more than one battery?

### **TELL**

- So in the story, Jesus is the light bulb...he's all lit up, right?
- And God is the battery.
- And what connects Jesus to God? Right! Prayer does.
- And that's how we connect to God too. That's how we shine with God's light – by praying.
- Prayer connects us to God.

### **If there's time...**

### **TELL**

- When we shine with God's light, we will each shine in a unique and exciting way.
- To demonstrate this, we're going to shine some light through some water.
- We're going to bounce that light off a mirror in the water
- And when we do that, let's see what happens to the light on the wall here.

### **HOW TO DO THIS:**

- Take the clear glass bowl filled half-way with water.
- Lean the small mirror inside the bowl, underwater and aimed toward a darkened wall.
- Take a flashlight and shine it on the mirror.
- Have someone move the mirror about until it is reflecting the light through the water and onto the darkened wall.
- A small rainbow should appear on the wall

**Note (added after the fact):** This was not an easily done demonstration and did not work anywhere near as well as I would've liked. Instead of this activity, making some simple kaleidoscopes might be a suitable alternative/replacement.

### **TELL**

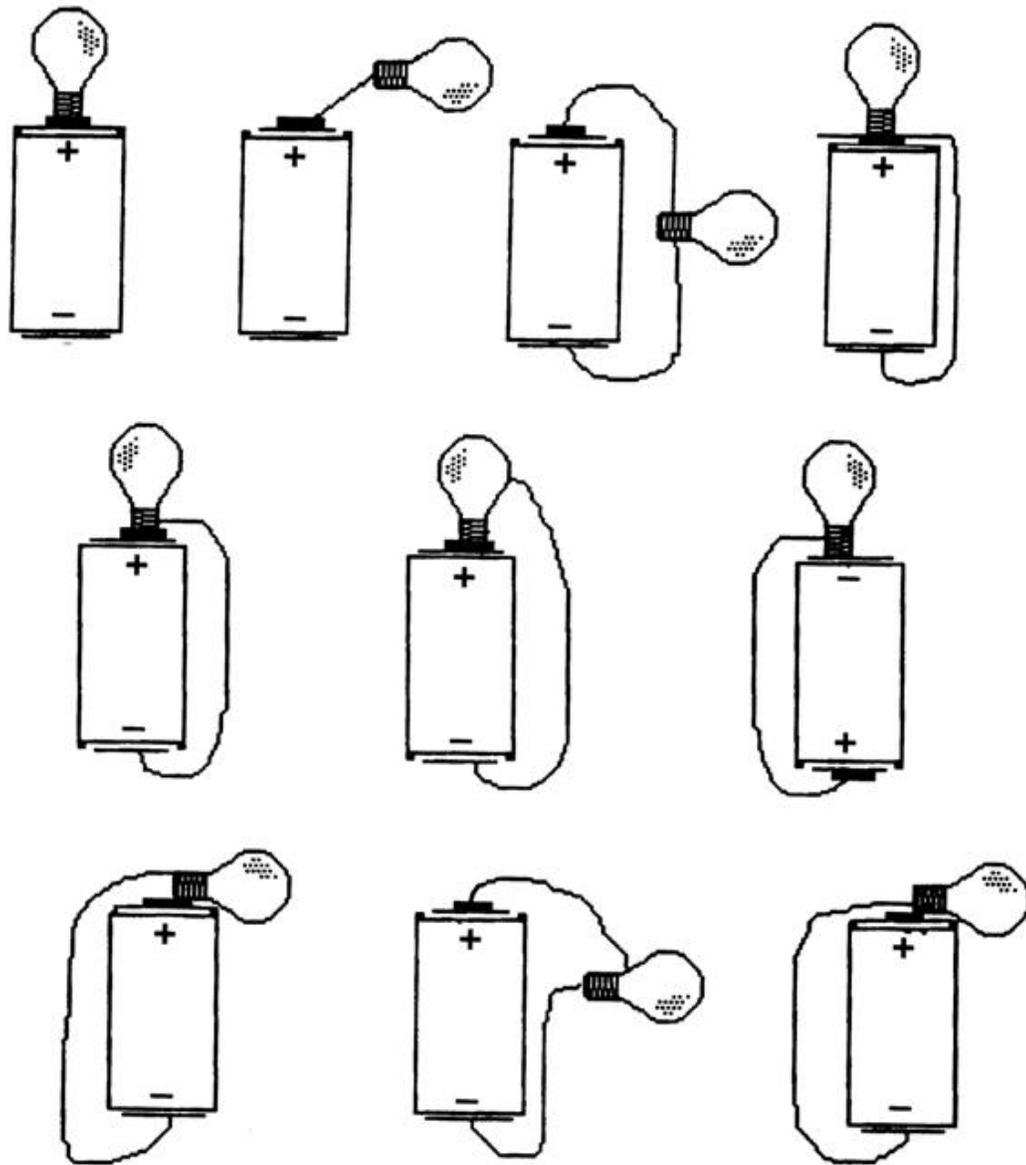
- When we shine with God's light, there are many colorful ways in which we will shine.
- This is the good news for today.

### **CLEAN UP**

### **DISMISS**

### **Suggested Variations for age groups**

For younger children, they may not be able to figure out how to make the light bulb shine on their own. They may need some visual help. Here are some ways to attach the light bulb to the battery (see next page). Not all ways will work:



**Note:**

I came across this post in a science forum (after I wrote the lesson and taught it). I'm not mechanical enough to trust myself with it. The writing isn't clear to me, so there'd have to be some experimentation beforehand (how do you rig the a/c line cord, for instance?) and that's the part I don't trust myself with. But it seemed like a really good demonstration to go with the Transfiguration story:

*An all-time favorite with kids is the glowing pickle. I use it to demonstrate conductivity of different materials. After going through the litany of boring conduct or no conduct exercises.....wood, plastic, coins etc...I rig the pickle. I use two metal forks and an A/C line cord. Connect one fork to one side of the cord the other to the other side. Wrap and tape wire and handle. Get a large dill pickle and insert the forks into opposite ends. Set the entire assembly on a non-conductive piece of wood. KEEP THE KIDS AT LEAST ARMS DISTANCE AWAY!!! Apply the 110V A/C and watch as the pickle starts to glow and crackle. It's more fun under dim lights.*