



Life Changer – Lesson 2

4K and 5K

Divine Attribute: God is Life Changer

Heart Response: Believe in him

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

“Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!”

Points of Emphasis:

1. We are all sinners and need Jesus to change our lives.
2. Only God can change our hearts and lives.
3. When you believe in Jesus, you become a new person.
4. When God changes our lives, we want to tell other people.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

When reading through the book of Acts and examining the life of Paul, one thing is very clear: God is Life Changer. Following religious rules and doing and saying religious things is not sufficient. We cannot change our lives no matter how hard we try. But God is able to change our hearts and turn us towards himself. God sent his one and only Son to rescue us and bring us back into a relationship with him. The work has already been done for us, but we must choose to believe.

The Bible is clear that when we believe in Jesus, we are made new; the old life is gone and a new life is begun. When we choose to believe in him, we are admitting we cannot do it on our own. We are in desperate need of him and he responds. He gives us the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. When we seek him, he changes our hearts and the way we think. He replaces our unfulfilling, selfish desires with his own.

This brings change. Some of this change is immediate. When we encounter our holy God, his Spirit becomes alive in us. He opens our eyes to see with a new heart. Things that used to bring

pleasure are now recognized as sin and are no longer desirable. We become hungry for more of him and what he offers. This initial change of heart starts our new life of freedom, where the focus is no longer on us and our behavior, but on worshiping and bringing glory to God. As we allow God to work in our hearts, he continues to transform our lives to resemble more of him. As he continues to change us, we begin to see other people as God sees them. We want to share our story of life change with others so they can experience the same loving and personal God we know.

Over and over in the book of Acts, that is just what Paul did. Paul told his story of how God changed his life. There could be no other explanation for the turnaround that Paul experienced. The very person who was persecuting Christians for believing and proclaiming that Jesus was God's Son was now willing to go to jail and risk his own life to tell others the Good News! Paul's life was changed, and it wasn't because he tried harder or followed more rules. He believed and received God's great gift of grace and forgiveness and then passed it along to others out of the strength that only the Spirit can give.

As you read through the book of Acts and prepare to teach these lessons, seek God and ask him how he wants to use your own changed life. Ask God to show you the areas of your life that still need to be transformed to bring glory and honor to him. Pray for the strength that only God can give as you pass on what you have received from him to each child in your class.

CENTER TIME

10-20 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

To help the children transition into class, please use a center format at the beginning of each service. Set up three centers in your classroom to

allow children options of activities. Ideas include, but are not limited to:

1. Read books on the floor.
2. Color at the table.
3. Play with blocks on the floor.
4. Play with puzzles at the table.
5. Play with Play-Doh at the table.

OPENING ACTIVITY

10 minutes at the start of service

The following activity is provided to begin engaging the children for the upcoming lesson. As the teacher of your class, you have an important opportunity to come alongside the parents of these children to teach them about God.

Transformed

Supplies:

Building blocks (in rooms)

Place the blocks in the middle of the room and have the children help make them into a shape of a tall building. Then have the children transform the building into a robot. Come up with other things that they can transform the blocks into such as a snake, a triangle, or a chair. Split into two groups if you need to. Talk with the children about how God can transform our lives and change us like he changed Saul's life. You can even go over the memory verse and explain that, "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" Talk with them about how we belong to Christ. We must choose to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that he died and rose again to rescue us from the punishment of our sin. We must believe that we need a Savior, that we need Jesus. There is nothing we can do to change our hearts and lives, only God can.

BIG GROUP TIME

please check your classroom schedule

Please talk to your class about the purpose of this time—to have fun worshiping God together. Give your class practical ideas of what this means (obey the teachers up on the stage, sing and praise God

with a happy heart, keep your hands to yourself, etc.). Teachers, you are crucial in helping create a peaceful, orderly environment to worship God during this time. Thank you for your help!

SMALL GROUP TIME

25-30 minutes

Bible Story

Supplies:

Bible (Acts 14:8-23)

We've been learning that God is able to change lives. God had changed Saul's heart and life, and Saul was now telling people that Jesus was God's Son. Some people were very angry at what Saul was saying and were trying to catch Saul, but God helped him escape. His friends lowered him down in a basket on the other side of the city wall and Saul left Damascus.

After Saul became a follower of Jesus, more people began calling him Paul. Can you say, "Saul became Paul"? (Have the children repeat.) Paul became a new person on the inside. God changed his life! Remember our verse? "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Corinthians 5:17. (Repeat with them a couple of times.)

Paul is glad that God changed him. God didn't just change Paul's name; he also changed his heart. Paul now loves Jesus. Because Paul loves Jesus and Jesus changed his life, he wants to tell other people about him. Remember, not everyone is happy about that, though.

Paul's old friends, the Pharisees, are not happy and neither are some of the leaders in the cities Paul visits. There are still rules that say you cannot talk about Jesus in many of these places, but Paul knows he has to tell others about God. God has changed his life, and he wants to share that Good News with others.

(Open your Bible to Acts 14:8-23.) God chooses Paul and a man named Barnabas to be set apart and preach the Good News about Jesus. Paul

and Barnabas travel from place to place, excited to tell others about Jesus. When they go to a town called Lystra, they come across a man who cannot walk. He has not been able to use his feet since the day he was born.

As Paul speaks the truth about Jesus, the man listens closely. Paul looks right at the man. Paul sees that the man has faith and believes that he can be healed. So Paul calls out, "Stand up on your feet!" Then the man jumps up and begins to walk. His life is changed! Who changed his life? God changed this man's life. Only God has the power to heal and change someone's life.

The crowd sees what Paul has done by God's power. Paul and Barnabas then share the Good News with the crowd. They tell them to turn away from worthless things and turn to the living God. He is the one who made the heavens and earth. He is the provider of everything—the food you eat and the joy that can be in your hearts.

God uses the changed lives of Paul and Barnabas to tell others about Jesus. They continue to travel around, teaching people that Jesus can change their hearts and lives like he had changed theirs. Many people believe and their lives are changed. There are still many who do not want to hear about Jesus, but Paul continues to do what God wants him to do.

When we believe in Jesus and understand his love for us, we want to tell others all about him. We want to tell people how he changed our lives and how he can change theirs, too!

Prayer

Prayer time may not be appropriate immediately following story time. If this is the case, we ask that you be intentional about praying spontaneously or formally with the children at other times during class.

God, thank you so much for changing lives with your perfect love. Thank you for the Bible and all that we learn about you from your words. Help us believe that you can change our hearts and lives like you changed the man and healed him

so he could walk. Help us to tell others about you. Amen.

He Changes Us

Supplies:

Color changing beads (about 20 per child)

Pipe cleaner (1 per child)

Small cups (1 per child)

Tell the children you are going to make color changing bead bracelets. Give each child a pipe cleaner and a small cup half full of beads. Have them string their beads onto their pipe cleaner to make a bracelet. When the beads are exposed to sunlight, the beads change colors. This is kind of like what happens when God's spirit takes over our lives. He changes us. God makes us a whole new person on the inside. We are not the same person we used to be. Just like our memory verse tells us: "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" Tell them they can wear their bracelets to remember that God is Life Changer!

***Have fun and let them do the crafts themselves, as much as possible. This is a hands-on way for them to learn who God is and remember what they learn. It doesn't matter if they place the label or stickers in the wrong spot. What matters is teaching them who God is. ***

SNACK & ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

last 30 minutes

Please wash the children's hands before snack time and say a prayer thanking God for the food. As they are eating their snack, please take time to go over the review questions.

Review Questions

- 1. Who was traveling with Paul in the town called Lystra when they met the man that couldn't walk? (Barnabas.)**
- 2. What was the man who couldn't walk doing while Paul told the people about Jesus? (He listened closely, had faith, and believed that he could be healed.)**
- 3. What happened when Paul told the man to stand up on his feet? (He was healed and jumped up and began to walk.)**
- 4. Why did Paul want to tell everyone about God even if it was against the rules to talk about God? (Because God had changed his life. God changed him to love others and he wanted others to know that God can change their life too!)**

Trash to Treasure

Supplies

Box containing an assortment of empty bottles, boxes, cardboard tubes, etc. that can be used to make a "recycled robot" (one per bin)

Masking Tape

Place these random things in the center of the table and ask the kids what they think it is? (Garbage/trash.) Talk to them about how it doesn't look like much, and normally we throw most of this in the recycling or the trash. Tell them that we get to make a big robot out of all of this trash together. We will transform (change) the trash and give it new life. While you start creating your robot, explain to the kids that this is like what God does. He takes our messy, sinful life and transforms us and gives us a new life. Then go over the memory verse with them. "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Corinthians 5:17



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