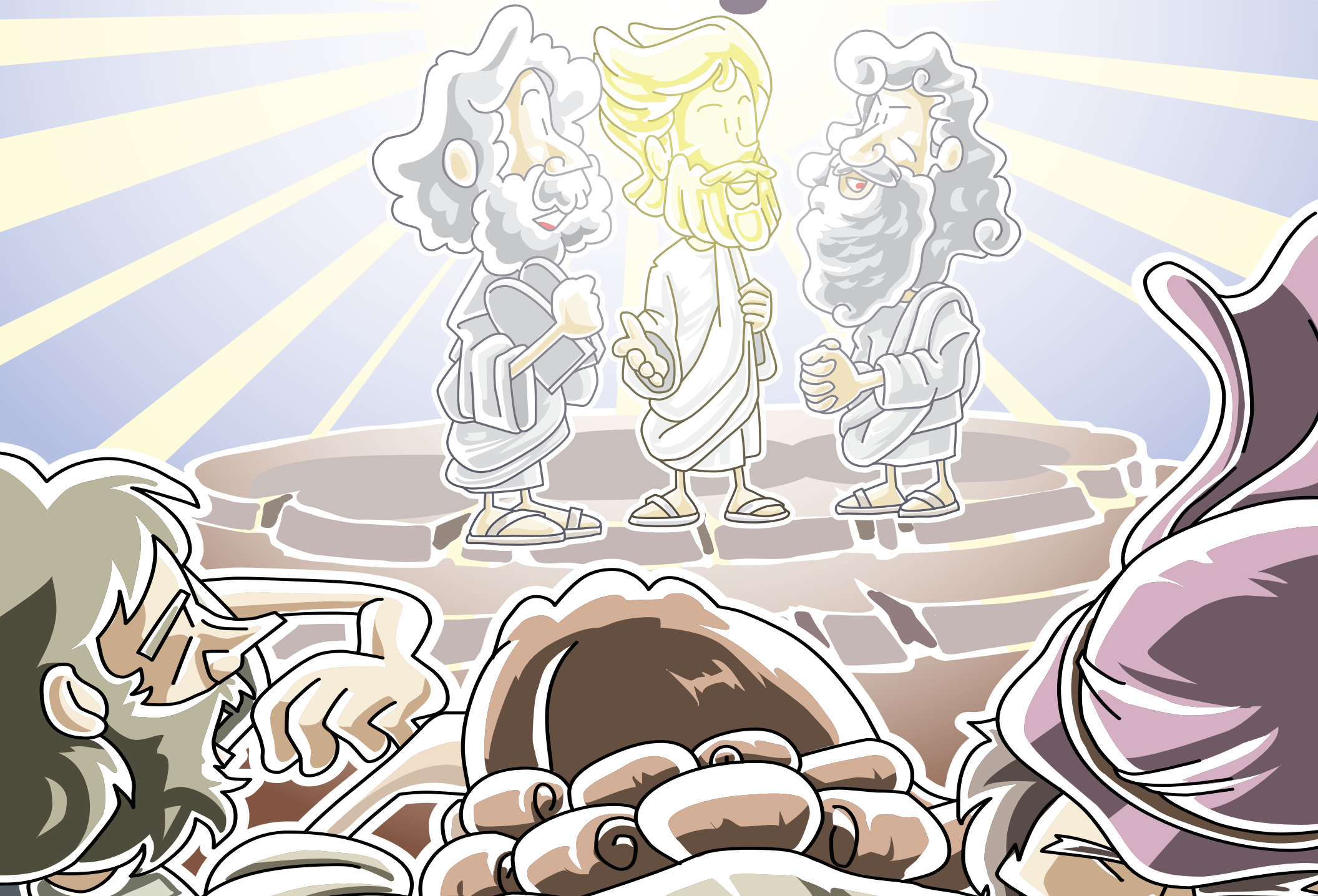
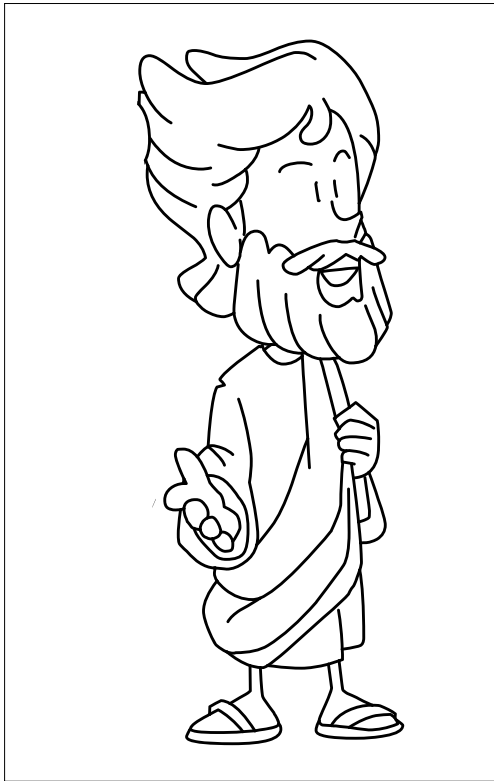


# The transfiguration



## Colour me!



### Matthew 17:1-9

Six days later Jesus took Peter and the brothers James and John with him. They went up on a very high mountain where they could be alone. There in front of the disciples, Jesus was completely changed. His face was shining like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

All at once Moses and Elijah were there talking with Jesus. So Peter said to him, "Lord, it is good for us to be here! Let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While Peter was still speaking, the shadow of a bright cloud passed over them. From the cloud a voice said, "This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him. Listen to what he says!" When the disciples heard the voice, they were so afraid that they fell flat on the ground. But Jesus came over and touched them. He said, "Get up and don't be afraid!"

When they opened their eyes, they saw only Jesus. On their way down from the mountain, Jesus warned his disciples not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Son of Man had been raised from death.

## Commentary

The disciples had been with Jesus for a while. They had been amazed by all the things he'd said and done, but lately Jesus had begun talking about suffering and death. It didn't make any sense to them. Everything was going so well, so why was he suddenly so gloomy about the future?

About a week later, Jesus takes three of his disciples up a mountain. He wants them to understand something more about who he is, particularly in the light of what is going to happen soon in Jerusalem. There on the mountain top, Jesus begins to look very different. It is as if the bright light of heaven is shining right through him. Beside him appear great leaders from long ago – Moses and Elijah. Peter wants this wonderful moment to last forever, and suggests building shelters for all three of them. But it is impossible to tie God's glory down like this. Then they hear God's voice, which is as much for the three disciples as for Jesus. Whatever happens next, they know for sure that Jesus is God's Son and that they should listen to what he is saying. In their moments of fear and doubt, they need to keep their eyes fixed on Jesus.

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## Questions

- ▶ Why do you think Jesus chose these particular disciples for this special experience?
- ▶ Why did Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus? What did it mean?
- ▶ This is the second time God's voice is heard in the Gospel story. Can you remember what God said about Jesus at his baptism?
- ▶ How do you think this experience would have helped the three disciples in days to come?



### Visual aid

Place a bright light (for example, a table lamp without a shade or a desk lamp) between two mirrors opposite each other. See how the light is bounced endlessly back and forth between the mirrors, adding to its brightness and mystery.



### Activity idea

On a sheet of paper, draw an outline of Jesus on the mountain. Colour it in with felt-tipped pens in bright colours. Now turn the paper over and brush the back lightly with an even coating of olive oil. Let it dry. When you hold the paper up to a window, the light will shine through in a very powerful way.



### Prayer idea

God speaks and Jesus stands at the centre between Moses and Elijah, who represent the teachings of the Old Testament. Draw an outline of a cross on paper with enough space to write words on the cross. Now, together, think of as many descriptions of Jesus as you can, writing them on the cross in different colours – for example, light, friend, shepherd, king, defender, rock, Son of God, truth, and so on. Use some of the words to help you create one-line prayers to praise Jesus.

### Key verse

From the cloud a voice said, “This is my own dear Son, and I am pleased with him. Listen to what he says!” (Matthew 17:5).

### Old Testament story link

Exodus 24:12-18: Moses and Joshua go up into the bright light of God’s glory on Mount Sinai.

Colour me!

