

INSIDE AND OUT

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

Have you made new year's resolutions only to find a few weeks later you were no longer following through? According to forbes.com, just eight percent of people keep their resolutions!

But Paul says in Romans 12:2 that we can be changed! God wants to change thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and judgments that cause us to act in ways contrary to his will. And when those inward changes bear fruit in our outward lives, we become reflections of him!

God just asks us to give him everything we do every day, as an offering to him. Here's how:

- Be aware of his presence all day. This is "fixing our attention" on him.
- Be grateful for his goodness. Thank him for the good in your life.
- Ask him to change the things in your life that aren't good. Give him permission to work in you.

You'll begin to see your life changed inside and out! Read and meditate on Romans 12:1-2.

LESSON ONE

CHANGED

WELCOME

LOW ENERGY ACTIVITY

- 2–3 star-shaped Post-It Notes per kid (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 piece of paper per kid (to draw on)
- Markers

SMALL GROUP LESSON

- 1 piece of 8" x 10" cardboard per kid, blank on both sides
PREP: Create a sample. See an example [HERE](#).
- Dark markers

CRAFT ACTIVITY

- 1 flat marble (1") per kid (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 self-adhesive magnet per kid (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 circle (1") punch (*optional*, purchase [HERE](#))
- Mod Podge (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 Verse Cut-Out per kid (download [HERE](#))
PREP: Cut cards out along lines. We recommend using a 1" circle hole punch.
- Cotton swabs

HIGH ENERGY GAME

- 2–4 hula hoops (purchase [HERE](#))
- Energetic music

SKIT

- 2 SpongeBob photos (download [HERE](#))
- 1 camera

LARGE GROUP LESSON

- Name tags (download [HERE](#))
PREP: preselect kids to play these roles. Attach lanyards to the name tags.
- 1 big flashlight

MINISTRY TIME

WORSHIP

CHALLENGE PAPER

- 1 Challenge Paper per kid

WELCOME LESSON ONE

CHANGED

5
min



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

ICE BREAKER

Kids find a partner and form a pair. Pairs stand facing one another and observe each other for five seconds. When time is up, the pair turns back to back.

One partner changes one small thing about his/her appearance (untucks shirt, turns up collar, pushes hair behind ear, takes off earring, etc.) Change needs to happen in ten seconds.

Pair turns and faces each other and the other partner guesses what change was made. They have three tries to correctly guess.

Pairs switch roles and go again. Repeat 2–3 times.

INTRO

Turn to a neighbor and share...



If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?



Today we'll find out what we mean when we say that Jesus can change us from the inside out, and why he does that. We'll hear a Bible story about someone changed by Jesus and see a story about how Jesus changed some modern-day kids.

RULES

We've only got **THREE RULES**. Not too bad!



- 1 Listen to your group leader.
- 2 Be a good friend.
- 3 Have fun!

If you follow these rules, you'll have a great time and learn something new.

OFFERING

It's so great to **GIVE BACK TO GOD**. When we give God back a small piece of what he's given us, we show how much we trust him.



Pray aloud that God would bless the offering and the church's mission in the community and world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Add your announcements below:



= Show slide for this point. (Download [HERE](#).)

LOW ENERGY ACTIVITY LESSON ONE

CHANGED



ALL STARS

SUPPLIES:

- 2-3 star-shaped Post-It Notes per kid (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 piece of paper per kid (to draw on)
- Markers

- 1** Each kid is given a piece of paper and draws a self-portrait.
- 2** In case it's not obvious who it is... The artist's name is placed at the top.
- 3** When all of the portraits are finished, stick them all up on a wall.
- 4** Hand out some star-shaped Post-It Notes (two or three per kid).
- 5** Each kid writes a positive adjective (cute, fun, responsible, smart, etc.), describing him or herself and sticks it on his or her self-portrait.

SMALL GROUP LESSON ONE

CHANGED

15
min



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

Introduce yourself and welcome each kid by name.

Check up on previous prayer requests or events.

ACTIVITY

SUPPLIES:

- 1 piece of 8" x 10" cardboard per kid, blank on both sides (Create a sample. Example [HERE](#).)
- Dark markers

Today our lesson highlights stories of some people who were changed from the inside out by Jesus.

God offers each of us a story like that! That's why he sent Jesus—to forgive us, make us clean, and to heal us from the wrong things done to us. Then he gives us a heart like his!

Provide examples: instead of bullying others, we can be kind and loving; instead of being disobedient to our parents, we can obey them and be respectful;

Think hard about yourself. If you've made Jesus the leader of your life, is there something about you that Jesus has changed?

Hand out a piece of cardboard and marker to each kid. On one side of their cardboard, have the kids write or draw the way they used to be. On the other side, have them write or draw how they show God's heart more now, because of Jesus. Show them your example "cardboard testimony".

Maybe you used to lie, but now, because you follow Jesus, you tell the truth. Or you used to have bad dreams, but now Jesus helps you sleep. There are lots of ways Jesus changes us!

If the kids are having trouble coming up with something, have them write something they'd like to stop doing. On the other side, they can write what they'd like to start doing instead, that's more in line with God's ways.

After all the kids have finished, have them take turns sharing them with the group, if they'd like. You might even want to take pictures.

Discussion:



I needed Jesus to change me! I'm so glad I heard about Jesus and trusted him as my savior and leader. Now he's changed me from the inside out. *Share how Jesus has and is changing you.*



Can you get too old for Jesus to change you and help you show God's heart to the world? Do you think Jesus will ever be done changing you? Why?



Why does the Bible say to "fix our attention on God" to be changed from the inside out? What does that mean?

PRAY

Pray that God will help the kids fix their attention on him and look for ways he's changing them.

CRAFT ACTIVITY LESSON ONE

CHANGED

15
min



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

VERSE MAGNETS

SUPPLIES:

- 1 flat marble (1") per kid (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 self-adhesive magnet per kid (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 circle (1") hole punch (optional, purchase [HERE](#))
- Mod Podge (purchase [HERE](#))
- 1 *Verse Cut-Out* per kid (download [HERE](#))
- Cotton swabs

- 1 Each kid gets a marble, a Verse Cut-Out, a cotton swab, and access to the Mod Podge.
- 2 Use the cotton swab to cover the flat side of the marble with Mod Podge.
- 3 Glue the marble to the Verse Cut-Out, making sure the words are showing through the marble. If desired, paint over the back side of the cut-out with another layer of Mod Podge.
- 4 Allow the verse marble a few minutes to dry.
- 5 After the marble has dried, affix the self-adhesive magnet to the back of the marble.
- 6 The kids may take home the finished craft to put on their refrigerator as a reminder of our series verse. This will help them memorize the verse!



DISCUSS DURING THE ACTIVITY:

- Do you think you can memorize this verse? Let's say it together, "Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out."
- Do you know who wrote these words? Saul—who later became known as Paul, the man from our Bible story today—wrote them in a letter to people from Rome. What did he know about being changed from the inside out?
- What is one way you think God wants to change you on the inside?
- If God changed you like that, how would it show on the outside?

HIGH ENERGY GAME LESSON ONE

CHANGED



HOOP IT UP

SUPPLIES:

- 2-4 hula hoops (purchase [HERE](#))
- Energetic music

- 1** Form two groups of at least 10. If there are fewer than 20 kids, form one group and compete against the clock.
- 2** Each group holds hands for the entire round.
- 3** Place a hula hoop between two group members, hanging from their joined hands. At the word “Go!” they begin passing it around the group in a clockwise direction *without letting go* of the hands of the person next to them.
- 4** The group’s goal is to get the hula hoop around the entire circle and back to where it started.
- 5** When it completes the circle, the group sits down to indicate they’re finished.
- 6** Award points at the end of the round. The fastest group wins 100 points.
- 7** Round 2 is played with 2 hula hoops in each circle, going in opposite directions. Both hula hoops must get back to where they started. When they’ve completed the circle, the group sits down.
- 8** Award 100 points to the fastest group.
- 9** Each group selects their best 2 hula hoopers to represent their group.
- 10** Contestants take a hula hoop and spread out. When the music begins, they start hula-hooping.
- 11** The contestant sits down with his or her group if the hula hoop falls to the ground or his or her hand touches the hula hoop.
- 12** The last hula hooper is the winner and will receive 300 points for his or her group.
- 13** The group with the highest total number of points wins. Kids cheer for their groups.
- 14** When the winner is (or winners are) revealed, everyone applauds for all of the contestants. Hail the Mighty Champions!

SKIT LESSON ONE

CHANGED



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

REFLECTING GOD'S IMAGE

PROPS:

- 2 SpongeBob photos (download [HERE](#))
- 1 camera

(ENTER Reece, wearing camera, carrying 2 large photos. Reece is fiddling with camera.)

Reece: Oh, hi, everybody! I was so busy adjusting my camera, I didn't see you there! I'm Reece. I really like learning how to do cool things. One of the cool things I've learned recently is photography. You know what that is, right? It's using a camera to make an image of a person or thing.

Does anyone know what an "image" is?

(Accept varied answers and comment positively on them so kids will continue to participate.)

According to the dictionary, the meaning of "image" is: "a physical likeness or representation of a person, animal, or thing, photographed, painted, sculptured, or otherwise made visible."

(Show camera.)

If I take a picture of you with my camera, the photo I take of you would be an "image" of you.

Would that photo or image of you actually be the real you? Of course it's not.

(Show high quality photo of SpongeBob.)

This image of SpongeBob in this photo can't speak, think, or do anything, but it does show us a lot about him and what he's like.

That makes me think of how we're created in the "image of God." We're not God, but we were created to be like him and reflect what he's like. Kind of like this photo shows what SpongeBob is like.

(Show distorted photo of SpongeBob.)

We used a computer to distort the image. This doesn't look much like him now, does it?

God created us in HIS image to be perfect, but just like a computer can "warp" or change an image until you can't recognize the person, sin has warped the image of God in all of us. Now, human beings don't show what God is like very much, because of sin. You know it's true if you think of all the mean and unkind things people do to one another.

But God sent his perfect image, Jesus, to the earth. Do you know why God sent Jesus? He sent him so we could see in Jesus EXACTLY what God is like AND so he could make it possible for God's image in us to be restored—to be put back right, like it's supposed to be—as we trust Jesus as our Savior and Leader.

That's why when we trust in him, he gives us the Holy Spirit to change us from the inside out. He's putting us back to what he intended us to be from the beginning—God's image bearers—so we can show the world what God is like.

So, let's fix our attention on him, so he can change us from the inside out!

LARGE GROUP LESSON ONE

CHANGED

20
min



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

SUPPLIES:

- Name tags (download [HERE](#)): Saul; Stephen; Jesus; Ananias—preselect kids to play these roles and attach lanyards to the name tags.
- 1 big flashlight



PRESHOW VIDEO (watch [HERE](#))

OK Go - Upside Down & Inside Out

Hey everyone, how are you doing? I'm _____, and I get to be your teacher today. Today we're starting a new series about how God can change us from the inside out. You know why he wants to do that? So we'll show HIS character—his heart—to the world. Yeah! He wants us—you and me—to show the world what HE's like by the way WE live! That's kind of a BIG idea isn't it?

Our Bible verse for this series is **ROMANS 12:2** which says “**Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out.**” Let's say it like this: *(Repeat with kids)* **Romans 12:2... Fix... your attention... on God... you'll be changed... from the inside... out.**



See, when each of us make Jesus the leader of our life, and put our trust in him, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit comes to live right inside of us to help us get to know God more and have power to live God's way. God's goal is that you and I would have such a close relationship with him, that his ways would just naturally “rub off” on us, and we'd become more and more like him!

The Bible tells us about a guy who experienced exactly what I'm talking about. The funny thing was, he didn't start out as someone who showed what God's character was like at all! He started out as a Jesus-hater! His name was Saul, and we can find his story in the New Testament book of Acts. I have some volunteers who are going to help me with this story.

Have four kids, recruited in advance, wear the name tags and stand shoulder to shoulder on stage, as you stand behind them telling the story. Have them repeat their lines after you, and perform actions as you narrate.

Long ago, two Jewish parents had a baby named **SAUL**. They taught him how important it was to obey God's laws. When their son was old enough they sent him to a school in Jerusalem to become an expert in God's laws. **SAUL** joined a group called the Pharisees. Pharisees were extremely serious about obeying God's commands, and even added *extra* commands to obey. **SAUL** thought, “God is surely pleased with me!”

Because of his years studying God's word, **SAUL** knew of God's promise to send a messiah—a savior or king who would save people from their sins and restore their kingdom. One day he heard about a group of people who said the promised Savior had already come. These people taught in the temple courts and everywhere they went that God had sent his own son, Jesus, to be the Savior. Instead of making him happy, this news bothered **SAUL**. He didn't believe Jesus could be this Savior. He was very upset when many people in Jerusalem believed and became followers of Jesus.



= Show slide for this point. (Download [HERE](#).)

SAUL was especially angry when he heard one of these followers named Stephen teaching about Jesus. **STEPHEN** had the nerve to say to the religious leaders, “You murdered the promised Savior! You did this when you asked for Jesus to be crucified.” **SAUL** thought, “That’s ridiculous!” He was pleased when the religious leaders threw heavy stones at **STEPHEN** until he died.

SAUL said, “These believers in Jesus need to be stopped!” So, he went to the places where they gathered, arrested them, and threw them in jail. But this wasn’t enough. Even though he was doing everything he could to destroy them, their message was spreading even outside of Jerusalem.

No matter how hard he fought, lives were being changed whenever people believed that Jesus was the Savior of the World.

“I must do more!” **SAUL** thought. “I’m fighting for God!” But the truth was, he was fighting against God and his plan.

SAUL decided to do even more to stop Jesus’ message from going anywhere else. He got permission to go to the far away city of Damascus to arrest and imprison anyone there who taught about Jesus.

So, **SAUL** and some other men began their journey to Damascus. **SAUL** was traveling down the road when something amazing, life-changing happened! **SAUL** met Jesus and discovered he’s alive!

Shine flashlight down on SAUL.

At about noon a light brighter than the sun startled **SAUL** and he fell to the ground. The light was shining so brightly that everyone traveling with **SAUL** covered their eyes and fell to the ground. A voice began speaking to him. It was Jesus!

Only **SAUL** could hear **JESUS** saying, “SAUL, SAUL, why are you hurting me?” **SAUL** was terrified and said, “Who are you Lord?” **JESUS** replied, “I am JESUS of Nazareth. I am the one you are persecuting.” When **SAUL** was hurting the followers of **JESUS**, he was really hurting **JESUS** himself. Jesus spoke to **SAUL** so he would know that he is the Son of God, the promised Savior who is alive.

SAUL must have felt terribly sad. He’d believed Jesus was dead because Jesus had died on a Roman cross and been buried in a tomb. He hadn’t believed the stories that Jesus had risen from the dead. He

thought he was doing the right thing by trying to get rid of people who believe in Jesus. But when **SAUL** heard Jesus speak to him, he suddenly knew that he’d been horribly wrong.

Meeting Jesus on the way to Damascus changed **SAUL**’s life forever! He was changed from an enemy of God to being God’s child.

JESUS told **SAUL**, “Go into Damascus where you will get instructions about what to do next.” The bright light disappeared and **SAUL** and his men were alone. As **SAUL** got up from the ground, he opened his eyes and discovered he was blind! His men took him by the hand and led him into Damascus.

In Damascus, there was a believer named **ANANIAS**. God told him to go visit **SAUL**, and pray for him to see again. **ANANIAS** was shocked and answered, “Lord, I’ve heard of SAUL. He has arrested and hurt many of your followers. He’s even come here to arrest us, too.” God reassured him that **SAUL** was a believer now, too. **ANANIAS** trusted and obeyed God, despite the concern he might have felt. **ANANIAS** went to **SAUL** and prayed for him, “God, help brother SAUL see again,” and **SAUL**’s eyes were healed! Then he got up, and was baptized.

From the day Jesus met Saul on the road to Damascus, God began to change him inside out. When we become followers of Jesus, his Holy Spirit comes to live inside us, too, and he begins to change us, so that we can show his heart to others by the way that we change. The Bible even says that the Holy Spirit makes us more and more like him so we “reflect his glorious image.” (2 Corinthians 3:18) In other words, if we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, we start acting more like Jesus. That’s a really good thing, because Jesus is the most wonderful person there is! He’s the best role model we could ever follow!

Applaud and dismiss all actors.

Meeting Jesus completely changed Saul. We’ll hear more of his story in the next few weeks. But now you may be thinking, “That’s a Bible guy, way back in Bible times. Can Jesus do anything for me now?” Oh guys, I’m so happy to tell you that he can! He’s still in the business of changing people from the inside out! In fact, I have a video of a group of real kids—all about the same age as you—who had some negative things in their lives that made them feel ashamed, or sad. The kids came to Jesus with them, and Jesus changed things. He changed the kids themselves.



= Show slide for this point. (Download [HERE](#).)

Watch this video:



CARDBOARD TESTIMONIES (watch [HERE](#))

What changed things for these kids? It was Jesus!
Jesus can change us from the inside out, just like our
Bible verse today tells us. Say it with me.
**ROMANS 12:2... Fix... your attention...
on God... you'll be changed... from the
inside... out.**



= *Show slide for this point.* (Download [HERE](#).)

MINISTRY TIME LESSON ONE

CHANGED



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

Ask kids to sit or stand quietly. Pray, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Maybe you have an area of your life that needs changing. It could be anything!

Listen for the prompting of the Holy Spirit and mention things that come to mind.

Jesus wants to help you, that's why he's given us the Holy Spirit. If you want real change in your life, you need the help of the Holy Spirit.

Let's focus our attention on him and invite him here now.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, we need you. We invite you to come to each of us to show us what you want to change in us. Thank you for your powerful help.

Ask kids to take some time to listen to the Holy Spirit. Give them a minute or so—depending on the age and attentiveness of your group.

If you thought of something that God might want to change in you or in your life, let us know by putting your hand on your head.

Allow time for kids to respond.

Remind the kids that everyone can pray for people in our church. Ask volunteers and other kids to gather around the kids who have responded. They can ask kids what they want prayer for, and pray for them as the Holy Spirit leads them. Kids can even pray for volunteers!

For more directions on how to pray with kids, see the [Five-Step Prayer Model for Kids](#).

WORSHIP LESSON ONE

CHANGED

10
min



THE VERSE Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. *Romans 12:2 (MSG)*

THE POINT Jesus can change me from the inside out.

SONG #1



LIVE IT OUT (watch [HERE](#), purchase [HERE](#))

Amber Sky Records

Colette Taylor, Reggie Joiner

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SONG #2



NO ONE GREATER (watch [HERE](#), purchase [HERE](#))

Amber Sky Records

Chrystina L. Fincher

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CCLI: 6128847

SONG #3



DANCE (watch [HERE](#), purchase [HERE](#))

Planetshakers

Joth Hunt

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CHALLENGE PAPER LESSON ONE

CHANGED

INSIDE AND OUT

Play this true or false game based on this week's Bible story from Acts 9:

1 Saul was traveling to Damascus to visit his sick grandmother.

true false

2 Saul saw a light brighter than the sun and heard an angel speaking.

true false

3 Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting him.

true false

4 Saul was blind for three days.

true false

5 God told Mary to go to Damascus and restore Saul's sight.

true false

6 Ananias obeyed and went to Saul and Saul's sight was restored.

true false

7 Saul preached the Good News boldly and everyone loved him.

true false

8 Jesus can change a person from the inside out when they trust him and focus on God.

true false

Recite this week's point:
Jesus can change me from the inside out.

Recite this week's Bible verse:
Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out.
Romans 12:2 (MSG)

Kid's name:

Kid's grade:

Parent signature:

Answers: 1. False—to imprison believers in Jesus; 2. False—he heard Jesus speaking; 3. True; 4. True; 5. False—God told Ananias to go; 6. True; 7. False—some wanted to kill him; 8. True