

2 Corinthians 5:12-21

“Transformed (Part 1)”

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:12-21

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17 *“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

Lesson Focus: This passage of Scripture truly gets to the heart and core of the gospel. God radically transforms us into new creatures when we trust and believe in Him. We will talk a lot about this word “transformation” leveraging several objects that the kids should be familiar with.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Paul Writing Letter, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Caterpillar to Butterfly

Starter Activity: Movie Clip Intro to 2 Corinthians

After worship, we will keep all of the kids in the Summit Room for a little movie clip to introduce our lesson and book of the Bible. We are going to show a quick video from the first [Star Wars movie](#) showing how Luke Skywalker visited a pretty nasty place. After watching the video, we will ask a few questions: *

Q: How do you think Luke Skywalker felt when he walked into that place?

A: Nervous, anxious, and uncomfortable!

Q: Why do you think he felt that way?

A: The characters in that place did not look very nice.

We are going to jump into a new book of the Bible this weekend called **2 Corinthians**. A “Corinthian” was somebody from the city of Corinth just like a “Texan” is what you would call somebody from Texas.

But back then, to be a “Corinthian” also meant that you were known to be a little like the nasty characters in that movie scene! Not creepy aliens, but just known for being BAD! Yet this is EXACTLY the place where the good news of Jesus Christ is needed! And you know what happened after the apostle Paul went there and told them about the death and resurrection of Jesus? * The people believed and were **TRANSFORMED!** (**Teachers:** Consider writing this word on the white board as we will refer back to it thru lesson!)

Q: Who knows what it means to be TRANSFORMED? *

A: You are dramatically changed as a person, and in this case, dramatically changed for the BETTER! *

But guess what? The Corinthian people started behaving like “Corinthians” again instead of Christians! *

So in both 1 and 2 Corinthians, Paul is challenging them to no longer live like “Corinthians”, but as TRANSFORMED followers of Jesus. (**1 Corinthians 6:9-11**)

Bible Study:

2 Corinthians 5:12: Another thing that happened was bad guys infiltrated the church bragging about themselves rather than bragging about the good news of Jesus Christ. This has been happening for 2000 years and it still happens today.

Anytime someone teaches you about God, ask this Q: *Are they showing off themselves and what they have done, or are they showing off God and what He has done?* *

2 Corinthians 5:13: These guys were not only bragging about themselves, but they were smearing Paul as a Christian leader. They were gossiping about him behind his back!

Q: Have you ever been called names behind your back? How’d it make you feel? * This is the one of the WORST things you can do to a person! Why is it so bad?

1) You are spreading lies about people. 2) And they can’t even defend themselves.

2 Corinthians 5:14: But Paul rested on the infinite love of Jesus Christ in the face of all this nastiness and it is what urged him on. Let’s go deeper into what this love is.

Q: One died for all. Who is the “One” who died for all? A: Jesus, the Son of God!

Q: How does Jesus’s death show love to Paul and us also?

A: **John 3:16!** (**Teachers:** Consider having the class recite this verse together)

God is HOLY and we are NOT because of our sin. Our sin requires punishment. But Jesus took that punishment that we deserve upon Himself when He died on the cross satisfying God’s justice. * God the Father gave what was most precious to Him, His only Son, that we would be saved and restored to Him! This is AMAZING LOVE!

But as **John 3:16** says, it is only those who BELIEVE and TRUST in Him that are saved.

2 Corinthians 5:15: Here is the key to being a true Christian! Remember the bad guys: Were they bragging about Jesus Christ or themselves? **Themselves!** This proves they were phonies!

For Paul says here that Christians no longer live for themselves, but for Jesus Christ! Christians are people that are **TRANSFORMED!** They are no longer their own boss. The risen * Jesus Christ is now their boss! (**Teachers:** To emphasize this draw a big “I” on the white board and point out how all people live for “self” by nature. Then “transform” the “I” into a cross by moving the top and bottom lines of the “I” to the side of the long vertical line! The cross represents Jesus who now makes the rules for us!) *

2 Corinthians 5:16: How we see others is also **TRANSFORMED**. * Remember the Star Wars scene? Corinth was a place full of BAD people. Paul once saw them only as BAD people. But then he saw them as people who needed to hear the good news of Jesus Christ! This is why missionaries go to foreign lands and people: to tell them about Jesus!

2 Corinthians 5:17: This is one of the most beautiful passages of Scripture! When we trust in Jesus, God doesn't just remove the bad parts and keep the good parts. Rather, He completely **TRANSFORMS** us into something entirely new.

Q: How many of you know where butterflies come from? A: Caterpillars! (**Teachers:** Consider bringing a few pictures of caterpillars and butterflies and using this to enhance the discussion)

This is a lot like what happens to us when we trust in Jesus Christ. We are transformed into something new and wonderful and beautiful! Just like the butterfly never goes back to being a little caterpillar, we are dead to our old life never to go back!

Q: How many of you have been baptized? Baptism shows this reality. We were once dead in our sins and going down into the water symbolizes our death to sin and our OLD life. We come out of the water a new creation!

2 Corinthians 5:18-19: God does this transformation, not us. We just believe and trust in Him and He takes care of the rest.

Q: Who knows what it means to be reconciled? A: It means to be brought back into peace with someone. * Remember God is HOLY and we are NOT! The Bible says we are enemies of God UNLESS we are **TRANSFORMED** through faith in Jesus Christ! *

2 Corinthians 5:20: Paul calls himself an ambassador.

Q: Who knows what an ambassador is? A: An agent who represents a King to others.

Paul went to Corinth as Jesus's ambassador telling them they can be reconciled to God, the King of the universe! As believers, we are also Jesus's ambassadors to our unbelieving friends and family. Missionaries are His ambassadors to foreign lands!

2 Corinthians 5:21: This verse describes what is known as the "great exchange" or trade.

Q: How many of you still have Halloween candy leftovers? Did you do any trades with your siblings or friends? (**Teachers:** Consider bringing in some candy to bring out this illustration below) *

What this verse describes is the WORST trade ever for Jesus and the BEST trade ever for us. Imagine Jesus has all of the BEST candy, an infinite supply of it. And all we have is the bad stuff. In fact, ours is so bad that it is poisonous and will make you sick!

What this verse teaches is that when we believe in Jesus, He takes ALL of our rotten candy and He gives us all of the good stuff. The rotten candy represents our sin which He went to the cross to pay for. The good candy represents His righteousness, His holiness, His perfection, which He gives to us. WOW!

Key Point: This is OUTRAGEOUS. Would you ever accept such a trade? NO! Why would Jesus do this? Because He wants us to be reconciled and this was the only way due to our sin! He loves us and wants us to be in relationship with Him.

When you understand this amazing crazy love of God, it **TRANSFORMS** you!

As we read back in v. 15, we no longer live for ourselves. We live for Him who died and rose again for us!

Optional Small Group Activity:

This whole passage on TRANSFORMATION and becoming a new creation is wonderful and powerful, but a lot of kids might not “feel” like a new creation if they have trusted in Jesus as little children. Emphasize that feelings can deceive us and trick us which is why we need to go to the Bible to know truth and not to our feelings.

Draw on the white board two columns and title each column BEFORE and AFTER. Then write these verses down in rows under the columns:

- 1) Galatians 4:7
- 2) Ephesians 2:4-5
- 3) Ephesians 5:8
- 4) Romans 5:10
- 5) Romans 8:9

Have the kids look up these verses and together write on the board how these verses describe us BEFORE and AFTER we believe in Jesus Christ, regardless of how we FEEL about it.

A LOT happens when you trust in Jesus Christ! Even though you may not feel it, we must trust what God’s Word says is true!

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “Transformed”

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:12-21

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17 *“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

Teachers/Parents: As the memory verse above states and this passage emphasizes, God radically transforms people when they come to faith in Jesus Christ. We talked a lot about transformation during our lesson and how God transforms His people into the opposite of what they are apart from Him. Have some fun taking turns coming up with lists of opposites (i.e. dark and light, white and black) and then share any stories of how you have observed yourself transformed into doing the opposite of what you did before you knew Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read **2 Corinthians 5:12-13**. In class we talked about how false teachers crept into the church at Corinth and were not only boasting about themselves, but also spreading lies and gossip about Paul behind his back. Read **Proverbs 26:22**. Why do you think participating in gossip is so easy to do?
- 2) In **2 Corinthians 5:15**, it describes how believers in Jesus Christ have their priorities changed and transformed. How are they changed?
- 3) What do you think it looks like to live no longer for yourself, but to live for Jesus Christ as it says in v. 15?
- 4) In **2 Corinthians 5:17**, believers are described as completely transformed, new creations. Baptism is an outward representation of this inward reality. Have you been baptized? If not, why not?
- 5) In **2 Corinthians 5:18**, it describes how believers are reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ. In class we talked about how reconciliation is when two parties at odds with each other are restored in relationship. Why are people at odds with God? (Hint: Read **Romans 3:23**)
- 6) **2 Corinthians 5:20** teaches that believers are ambassadors of the great King Jesus Christ to the world. We are His representatives to a lost and dying world. Who in your life can you plead with to be reconciled to God? Pray for them now together!