

# WEEK 1

## GOD RESTORES PEOPLE

### WE ARE TRANSFORMED

#### ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

## THE FOUR KEYS . . .

### KEY VERSE

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

### KEY IDEAS

1. The old man desires self.
2. The new man desires the things of God.
3. Transformation bears fruit.

### KEY PASSAGE

Ephesians 4:17-32

### KEY PRINCIPLES



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW . . .

when we surrender our lives to Christ, we are transformed into a whole new creation with a new heart that desires the things of God.



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD FEEL . . .

the desire to choose God over his or her sins.



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO . . .

recognize the transformation in themselves once they have accepted Christ.



#### EVERY CHILD SHOULD WANT . . .

want to bear fruit and live for Jesus.

# INTRODUCTION

As humans born into a fallen world with a fallen nature, we are children of God's wrath. This means that we are dead in our trespasses and sin, hostile to God, desiring to serve ourselves instead of Him, and this makes us destined to experience the wrath of God against our sin. BUT because of God's great love for us, He provided a way through Jesus for us to become children of grace instead. By believing in Jesus, trusting in Him for our salvation from sin, and choosing to live for Him, we become children of grace and receive God's forgiveness. When we believe in Jesus for our salvation, we are completely transformed into God's handiwork and given the purpose of doing His good works. By following Jesus obediently, we can bear the fruits of the Spirit. By our fruits, we can know that we have been transformed. (Matt. 7:16) This transformation does not mean we never sin again. We still live in a fallen world and can fall into temptation to go back to the old way of life. We must choose every day to put on the "new man" and renew our minds on the things of God by spending time in His word. We will never be perfect until we reach Heaven, but we can choose every day to live for Him instead of ourselves.

## OPENING ILLUSTRATION

Begin the class by bringing in a hard-boiled egg. Explain how the egg has a hard shell and that represents us before Christ. (Using a marker, write some sins on the shell.) Explain that outside of Christ, we desire only the things that satisfy our sin, and this makes our hearts hard to the things of God, not caring about what God cares about. But when we believe and surrender our lives to God, He transforms us. (Peel away the outer shell.) Explain that once we are transformed, our hearts are soft to the things of God and we begin to care about more than just ourselves. We begin to care about all the things that God cares about, and the more we are in fellowship with Him, the more we become like Jesus, with a soft heart toward others.

## KEY IDEAS

Read Ephesian 4:17-32. Then use the following points for guided discussion.

- The old man desires self.
  - What is the "old man"? The old self, before we came to Christ, when we desired selfish and sinful things.
  - How do we take off the old man? We take off the old man by crucifying the desires of our flesh, which simply means laying them down and turning away from them. We repent by turning in a new direction and walking toward Jesus. We walk away from the desires of our flesh, put on Christ, and live to fulfill His desires instead.
- The new man desires the things of God.
  - What is the "new man"? The new self, after we come to Christ, when we desire the things of God.
  - What does it mean to desire the things of God? This means that we desire to obey God's word and care about the things that He cares about instead of the things we selfishly want for ourselves. We desire to bring Him glory instead of ourselves.
  - Does it mean we don't sin anymore? No. Christians are still capable of sinning against God. In fact, we still do it all the time! But now that the Spirit of God lives inside us, we recognize our sin and can repent of it when we do it, asking God to help us, and we can renew our minds on the things of God every day to help us fight temptations.
- Transformation bears fruit.
  - When does transformation occur? Transformation occurs when we have repented and placed our faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, and we are saved.
  - How can we know we have been transformed? Matthew 7:16 says that followers of Jesus can be known by their fruits. We can take a look at our own lives and the lives of others who claim to follow Jesus and determine if the fruits of the Spirit are evident.
  - What kind of fruit do we bear? The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Gal. 5:13-26)

## Activity

Divide the class into two teams. On the table in front of the teams, have 15 blank footprints. Instruct the kids to write sins we should "put off" on 6 of the footprints and the fruits of the Spirit we should "put on" on the remaining 9. Have them take each of the sin footprints and tape them to the wall in a row going horizontally. Take the fruits footprints and have them tape them to the wall vertically to overlap the sin footprints and create a cross. Explain that the sin footprints represent the Old Walk and the fruit footprints represent the New Walk. Until we have received the gift of salvation in Jesus, we are on the Old Walk. In Christ, we can walk the New Walk by putting on the things of God daily, renewing our minds on His word.

## Prayer

Thank God for giving us new desires when we follow Him. Thank Him that His desires are always good and righteous. Ask God to help you put off the old man and renew your mind daily on His word so that you can stand against temptations when they come.

# FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

## ACTIVITY

Memorize the key verse Romans 12:2.

Spend time this week taking your child with you to the grocery store. As you walk through the produce section, talk about different fruits and vegetables and where they come from. How do they grow? How do we know where each fruit comes from/ how it grows? We can observe it and see it with our eyes. Use the discussion questions below to continue the discussion about the similarities with spiritual fruits.

## DISCUSSION

- What are the fruits of the Spirit? (Gal. 5:22-23)  
Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
- How do we know who a true follow of Christ is?  
We can observe the fruits of the Spirit in their lives, just like we can observe how the fruits we eat grow.
- How can you practice “putting on” the fruits of the Spirit in your own life more?

## PRAYER

Thank God that He loves us and desires fellowship with us. Thank Him that He doesn't leave us in our sin, but redeems and transforms us into new creations when we place our faith in Him for the forgiveness of our sins. Ask God to help you “put off” the old man and “put on” the new man, the things of God, by spending time with Him each day so that you can better understand what His heart desires of you.