

WEEK 1 LESSON GUIDE

CHANGING GEARS



BIG IDEA

We change when we know who God is.

BIBLE

The Transfiguration of Jesus: Matthew
17:1-9; Romans 12:1-3

LARGE GROUP TIME

Beep! Clunk! Clank! Boop! Hello! Welcome to *Changing Gears!* Just like robots can transform, in this series, we are going to explore things that change when Jesus is on the scene . . . and that includes you and me!

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "Not the Same" (North Point InsideOut)
 - "Won't Look Back" (SEU Worship)
 - "You Never Change" (Gateway Kids)
 - "2 Corinthians 5:17" (JumpStart3)

ACTIVITY | Robotic Musical Chairs

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up the room as you would for musical chairs. Include a sign that says "Oil Cafe" that will designate the spot where kids can sit once they're out of the game. Make sure you play fun robot beats like this. (Read [this](#) to ensure you are using music and videos legally in your church environment.)
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Divide the room into two teams. As a team, create two similar robots using LEGOs or other building blocks, but there must be 8-10 differences between them. Present it to the other group to see if they can spot all the differences.
- It's time for *Changing Gears!* Do you know what has gears? A robot! So it's time to get moving with a game that might feel a little familiar. It's musical chairs . . . but as robots!
- That means you've got to show off your best robotic moves while the music is going. And when the music stops, find a seat. Whichever robot is left without a seat will go rest in the Oil Cafe while we finish the game.

ACTIVITY | Loose Parts Robot Relay

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide kids into equal teams. Tape or mark a starting line on the ground opposite a table. Per each group, have a box or paper plate full of the same loose parts (such as bottle caps, old keys, wire, string, cereal boxes, pasta, various lids, pipe cleaners, buttons, and plastic utensils). When you say "Go," teams will race, one kid at a time, to place a loose part on a printed robot outline. The team to have every kid place a loose part and return to their starting line first wins. Allow kids to get creative and manipulate any of the parts necessary to make them fit.
 - ✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** You can lessen the anxiety by changing the focus of the activity from a race to everyone completing it together. You can talk with kids about how healthy it can be when we change our focus from winning to helping each other out. For kids who might not want to participate in a relay at all, feel free to give them their own robot outline and loose parts tray and have them build their own robots at their own pace.
- Today, we will race to build robots! With each member of your team adding a loose part to the robot, you'll see how it changes! Even though each team has the same loose parts to work with, I bet every robot will look different in the end. Let's get started!

QUESTION | Is change good or bad?

- **What is an example of any change you have experienced in your life? How did it make you feel?**
- Change can include many things, from haircuts and getting glasses or braces to moving to new places, having a different teacher, getting a new sibling, or losing a pet.
- When we experience changes, we have an opportunity to learn something new or discover a new way to be ourselves.
- Even though changes can bring on this opportunity, we can still feel unsure about them, and that's okay! Let's remind each other that we can learn something new when changes come our way.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 17:1–9 (The Transfiguration of Jesus)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read and act out the script while sharing the Bible story from Matthew 17:1–9 as [an inventor](#) in the lab showing off robot inventions. Recruit a leader to play the robot character, [dressed as a robot](#) and speaking in a robotic voice, or operating a [robot puppet](#) instead.
- *[Inventor is tinkering with fixing this and that on the "robot" (volunteer)]*
- **Inventor:** *[Looks up surprised after a little time passes]* Oh, hello. I didn't see you there. Welcome everyone to the Changing Gears laboratory where we specialize in all kinds of change! My name is Rickie, and I'm an inventor. You're in for a big treat because I've finally invented the most spectacular story-telling robot!
- **Robot:** *[In robotic voice]* Hello humans. I am Peter.
- **Inventor:** That's right! I've programmed this robot to think like the disciple Peter from today's Bible story, so it's going to be like we're hearing the story directly from Peter!
- **Robot:** Battery one hundred percent. Ready to initiate.
- **Inventor:** Very good. Okay, let's get to it. Peter, activate story mode!
- **Robot:** *[In regular speaking voice]* Hi there, I'm Peter. I was one of Jesus' close friends while he was on earth. Me and twelve other guys followed Jesus and learned something new every day about God and how we should live.

- **Inventor:** Right. So you must have been shocked when Jesus told you that he was going to die and then come back to life three days after his death!
- **Robot:** *[Back to robot voice]* Word not recognized. What is death?
- **Inventor:** Oh hmm. It's like powering down, except you don't power back up again. But please continue. What happened next?
- **Robot:** *[Normal voice]* Then, just six days later, he took three of us up on this mountain with him — James, John, and me. Then, suddenly, Jesus changed right before our eyes.
- **Inventor:** Changed? How?
- **Robot:** His face was shining like the sun, and his clothes were as white as the light. But that's not all. Moses and Elijah showed up next to Jesus, totally out of the blue!
- **Inventor:** You mean Moses who led the Israelites out of Egypt, and Elijah the prophet who was taken up into heaven?
- **Robot:** Indeed! I couldn't believe I was in the company of these legends. I told Jesus that it was good for us to be there. And I asked if he wanted me to build three tents, one for him, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.
- **Inventor:** What did he say?
- **Robot:** Before he could say anything, a bright cloud covered us, and a voice from Heaven — God! — said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"
- **Inventor:** Wow! That's amazing!
- **Robot:** Wow, indeed! We were so terrified, we fell facedown on the ground!
- **Inventor:** Well, then what happened?!
- **Robot:** Jesus came and touched us, saying, "Get up. Don't be afraid." And when we looked up, there was no one there but Jesus.
- **Inventor:** That must have been something to see Jesus change right before your eyes like that and to hear the voice of God from heaven!
- **Robot:** It was! And we were ready to tell everybody about it, but Jesus told us not to say anything until he had been raised from the dead. We didn't know it then but Jesus already knew what he was going to do for the whole world.
- **Inventor:** You mean dying on the cross and rising again so that we could be saved from sin?
- **Robot:** Precisely. Humans sin by disobeying God and disconnecting from God. Jesus came to earth so that people can be forgiven of their sins. Knowing that Jesus is the son of God changed everything for us and it can for you, too.
- **Inventor:** That's an awesome story about change. Well done, Peter-bot! Deactivate story mode!
- **Robot:** *[In robot voice]* Executing command. Goodbye. *[Marches off stage.]*

BIG IDEA | We change when we know who God is.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the Big Idea on an 8.5x11" piece of paper and affix it to the torso of the GrowBot you've made. Then, cover it with a flap until it's time for the big reveal. (You may choose to display the Big Idea from each week on a bulletin board afterward to make space on GrowBot for the new one.)
- It's time to meet GrowBot. GrowBot helps people grow and is going to share this week's Big Idea. And the Big Idea is *[lift the flap]:* **We change when we know who God is.**

VIDEO | Changing Gears, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

VIDEO | “We’re Autobots”

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video clip](#) from “Transformers.” Stop at 2:11.
- In the Transformers’ world, the Autobots are protectors of earth against its destroyers, the Decepticons. They can transform into cars or even become invisible so that they can get around and carry out their mission. They change because it’s necessary to do what they’re called to do.
- Similarly, there are changes we need to make once we decide to follow Jesus. We may not be able to do what the Transformers can, but we don’t need to!
- The change that happens when we discover Jesus is on the inside. When we welcome Jesus into our hearts and make the decision to follow him, we learn how to tell the difference between what’s right and wrong.
- When we get to know God, we know how God would want us to live.
- **We change when we know who God is.**

ACTIVITY | Nuts and Bolts Snack

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Provide [a snack bar](#) for kids to build their own nuts and bolts snack mix. This is essentially a trail mix blend, check out [this image](#) for inspiration. You may choose to theme it up by serving the snacks on [foil plates](#). Be aware of your kids’ allergies, and provide alternative snack options or avoid common allergen items like peanuts.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Have the kids blindly reach into a “treasure box” to pick a prepackaged snack item, toy, or another small gift. Describe the item they chose to them and then ask if they would like to keep it or change their minds. If they choose to keep it, they can remove the blindfold. If they want to pick something else, have them keep their blindfold on. Talk about how it’s easier to make decisions when we know more about it.
- **Have you ever changed your mind about something once you discovered some new information about it?** People do this a lot with food — once they learn a fact about a certain food, they might change their minds and choose to dislike it or like it even more.
- Let’s snack and chat about the “nuts and bolts” of how **we change when we know who God is.**
- **What do you think changes in us when we know who God is?**

SCRIPTURE | Romans 12:1–3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Romans 12:1–3 aloud with your group. Then show an image of a monarch butterfly (like [this one](#)) and a metamorphosis time-lapse video (like [this one](#)).
- Fun fact! **Did you know the monarch butterfly travels from Canada to Mexico every year?** It flies 2,750 miles (4,426 kilometers)! That’s a lot.
- **But could that butterfly always fly?** No, it goes through the process of metamorphosis, which is a Greek word meaning “transformation.”
 - *Another fun fact!* **Did you know that the New Testament was originally written in Greek?**
- This is the same word Paul used when writing Romans 12:2 — for us to “be transformed.” That means, not to just shift our ways a tiny bit but to be completely changed so that we are tuned into what God wants us to do.
- Paul knew exactly what it felt like to “metamorphose” like this. He used to be someone who went around arresting followers of Jesus, but after he met Jesus for himself, he became one of them! Paul knew that if he could be changed, anyone could be changed.
- This passage isn’t saying we have to become butterflies, but it is saying that this is a reminder of how **we change when we know who God is.**
- **Now, can you say “metamorphosis” with me in your best robot voice?**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

REFLECTION | How do we know we need to change?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this [video](#) of “Magic Man G” from “Jingle Jangle.” If you are pressed for time, feel free to cut it at 1:14.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** In addition to or instead of showing the video, ask preteens something like, “Has anyone ever told you that your shoes were untied? Or that you had food stuck in your teeth? What did you do after hearing this?” Help them draw the conclusion that sometimes, knowing something leads us to change and do something about it.
- That was quite the show, right? What you might not know is that Magic Man G was an inventor who was known for stealing ideas, including the one for the Whirly Twirly robot. And because Magic Man G didn’t have the original plans, it later malfunctioned!
- Now here is someone who could use a complete change!
- **How do you think he could change?**
 - Apologize?
 - Give proper credit?
 - Invent something himself?
- Oftentimes, we don’t know that we need to change anything until it’s brought to our attention somehow.
- **What makes someone realize they need to make changes?**
 - Did they make a mistake?
 - Did they hurt someone else’s feelings?

RESPONSE | Gears of Change

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up a makeshift [assembly line conveyor belt](#) using butcher paper and two long tables. Distribute a pre-cut printable to each kid, or hand out scissors for kids to cut these out themselves, and some markers. Kids will write or draw their responses on a different gear each week to add to the assembly line.
- **We change when we know who God is.** Change can feel good and exciting, and it can also feel stressful or scary. The changes that occur in us because of knowing God are always good changes, even if they feel new and even difficult to do.
- Today, let’s write or draw one thing we hope to change in our lives as a prayer to God on a gear. We’ll line the gears up on our assembly line and add new gears each week of our series.
- **What are some things in our lives that have changed (or can change moving forward) because we know Jesus?**

MEMORY VERSE | 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

- **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids repeat the memory verse after you chunk by chunk in their best robot voice! Download this [app](#) and give kids a chance to say the memory verse in their new “robot voice”. They can pick what kind of robot they want to be!
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Show preteens this really cool [tutorial](#) to get them to level up their robot voice game!
- **(Don’t forget to also check out the memory verse signs – a combination of SEE and ASL – available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/2Corinthians5-17.)**

PRAYER

- Dear God, we are so thankful that we change when we know who you are. You take our sadness and give us joy. You take our fear and give us courage. You take our weakness and give us strength. Keep changing us so that we can be more and more like Jesus! Amen

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- What do you think “transfigured” means? Who was transfigured on the mountain?
- Whose voice spoke out loud on the mountain?
- What did God say to do?
- Read Romans 12:1–3. How do you think our minds are “renewed” when we know who God is?
- Can you think of a habit or attitude that you can change in a way that would please God?
- How do you feel about change? What are some examples of change that are good? What are some that might feel scary or difficult?
- Who can you tell about the good changes God is making in your life?

ACTIVITY | Big Idea Sticker Bots

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using these [sticker bots](#), have kids create their own robot as you go through these talking points. Alternatively, construction paper, googly eyes, paper straws, foam stickers, and other supplies to have kids [build their own](#).
- Robots usually only do whatever they’re programmed to do, unless they are malfunctioning. **But did you know God did not make you and me to be robots that just follow commands?**
- God made us in a way that allows us to think and make choices. So when we use those choices to follow God, not only does it make God happy, but we become better as a result. **We change when we know who God is!**