

Southwest Indian Ministries Camps

Elementary Devotional

April 2023

Focus your life on Jesus.

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
- Philippians 1:6

INTRO

One of the nice things about being out in the woods camping is the freedom you have. There are no locked doors out in the woods. There’s no TV, no radio, and usually no cell phone signals. Bed times are usually more relaxed in the woods, and best of all - you can go to the restroom just about anywhere out there.

But even in the woods, there are some rules and directions that are important to follow. Rules about campfires and fire safety are very important. So, too, are the rules about food storage, especially when you’re in an area populated by bears.

It’s also very important that you set your tent up correctly. There’s nothing worse than having a tent collapse on top of you, especially in the middle of the night or worse, in the middle of bad weather. Imagine having to crawl out into the mud in your pajamas with the rain pouring down and the wind blasting your tent as you struggle to rebuild it!



Some things deserve our attention. That goes for rules, and for people. We each pick and choose the people who get our attention. Some of those people include celebrities. We pay attention to news about our favorite singers, actors, and athletes. We pay attention to business leaders, world leaders, and politicians. We pay attention to the people who deliver our news, and we choose to pay more attention to the ones we trust.

We pay special attention to certain people in our lives, like our friends and classmates. We pay attention to teachers, coaches, and pastors. We especially pay attention to our guardians. But there’s one man more important than them all, and that’s Jesus.

Early in his ministry, Jesus’ followers knew he was a special man. They knew it by the miracles he performed and the lessons he taught. Then one day, three of his disciples saw something even more incredible, a sight that left no doubt Jesus deserved their full attention.

MARK 9:2-13

The Transfiguration

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. ³ His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ⁴ And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

⁵ Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁶ (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

⁷ Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"

⁸ Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what "rising from the dead" meant.

¹¹ And they asked him, "Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

¹² Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? ¹³ But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is written about him."

MAIN POINT

One of the things that tells us someone is important is the company they keep. When we see someone hanging out with a famous or powerful person, we assume that person must also be important. If they weren't important, why would they be hanging out with someone we know is very important?

Peter, James, and John saw Jesus standing with the two most important men in Israel's history. Moses was the leader who brought God's people out of slavery in Egypt and led them to the land of Israel. And Elijah was Israel's greatest prophet, a man who gave many signs and messages from the Lord to try and return his rebellious people to God.

There was Moses and there was Elijah, speaking with Jesus. By this Peter and the others knew Jesus was important. Then, as if this wasn't enough of a vision, God spoke and told them to pay attention to the words of Jesus. From that day on, they would give Jesus their full attention, knowing that no one they would ever meet deserved their attention more.

Jesus is the Son of God. He came to Earth to set us free from our sins. Jesus is the only man who could have saved us from sin, and for that reason alone, he deserves our attention.



But Jesus did more than die for our sins. Jesus showed us a different way to live. Through his teachings, his miracles, and his interactions with people, Jesus taught us how to love the way God loves us. He went to the sick and disabled, showing them love. He went to sinners and outcasts and treated them with love. Jesus never turned anyone away. No matter who they were or what they had done, Jesus welcomed people with open arms.

We were created
in God's image to
do two things on
Earth: learn to
love God and
learn to love
other people.

The more we give Jesus our attention, the more we will act like Jesus. We will learn to love others and to reach out to people no one else wants to know. We will become Jesus' hands and feet in this world, and we will change it for the better.

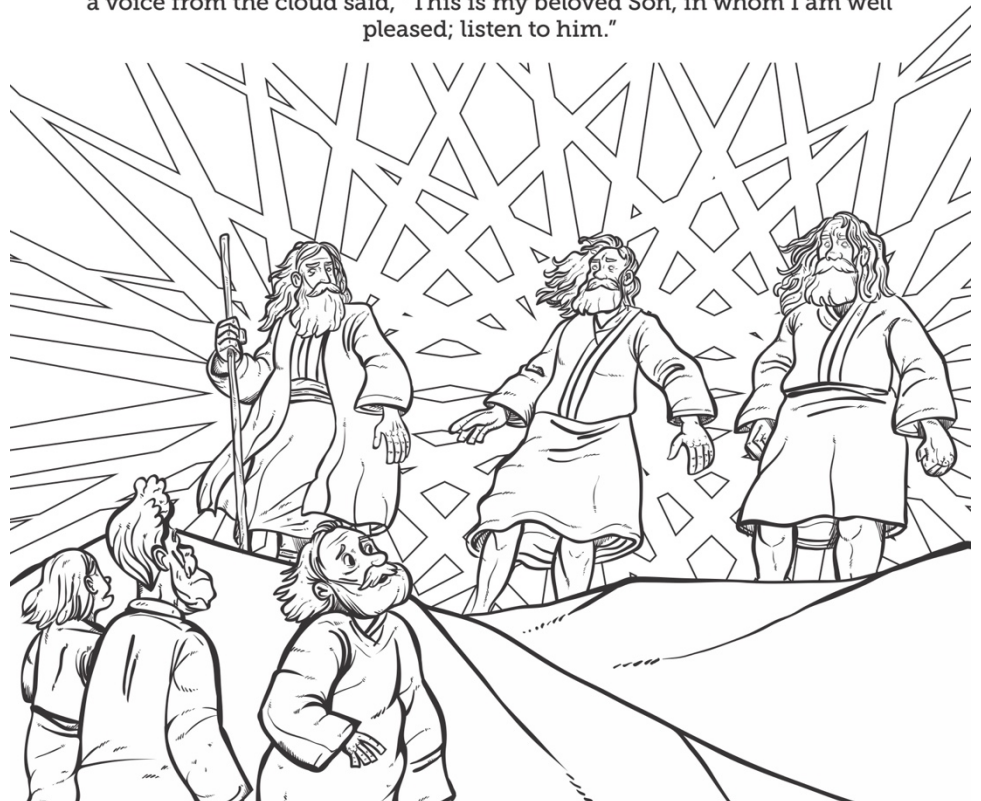
People pay attention to their favorite celebrities. They like to imitate them, copying their hair, their fashion, and their lives. Imagine if we all lived like Jesus! Imagine what the world would be like if we loved others the way Jesus did. Imagine the difference we could make.

Jesus deserves our attention. Jesus will save us from our sins, and he will show us how to live so that the whole world will know how much he loves them!

JESUS TRANSFIGURED

Matthew 17:5

He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him."





**Answer the questions and mail to: SIMCamps | 14202 N 73rd Ave | Peoria, AZ 85381.
Please print legibly.**

Camper's Name:

Mailing Address:

Text #:

E-mail:

1. Who went up the mountain with Jesus?
2. Whom did Peter, James, and John see talking with Jesus?
3. How did the disciples know Jesus is important?
4. Why do we need to give Jesus our attention?
5. How can we change the world by living like Jesus?