

# CHILDREN'S LESSON

## Jesus Is Brave



### TEACHING PROPOSITION

Jesus teaches us how to be brave through the stories and experiences of his life so that we can live by his example.

### TEXT

Mark 9:2-8

### LEADER PREPARATION - IN PERSON

- Make copies of Appendix A (if you are not using physical Bibles)
- Make copies of Appendix B if you are doing the activity individually, or, if you are doing this activity as a group, draw it on the dry erase board or on easel paper.
- Preview the version of When You Are Brave by Pat Zietlow Miller or secure a copy of the book. (link below)
- Test AV equipment.

### LEADER PREPARATION - VIRTUAL

- When you send out the link to join the education session, ask participants to have markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils available.
- Create a slide to share with the scripture on it (Appendix A).
- Create a separate pdf copy of Appendix B and invite families to print out a copy of Appendix B if they are able.
- If printing is not feasible, then conduct the activity as a group, with you doing the illustrating in a way that children can see and participate.
- Create a virtual copy of Appendix B (if group activity)
- Invite children to have markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils available.
- Test the screen share function.

### RESOURCES & MATERIALS - IN PERSON

- A/V equipment
- A copy of the book or the YouTube version of When You Are Brave by Pat Zietlow Miller (<https://youtu.be/Wgg6b5N8cA4>)
- Bible(s) or copies of Appendix A
- Copies of Appendix B or a drawing on a dry-erase board or easel paper
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils

### RESOURCES & MATERIALS - VIRTUAL

- Computer and video-conferencing program
- An open tab with the YouTube version of When You Are Brave
- An open slide with the scripture on it (Appendix A)
- A copy of Appendix B in the Chat function
- Invite children to have markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils available

## CLASS OUTLINE

- 5 minutes Welcome and Gathering Ritual
- 10 minutes Being Brave
- 15 minutes Exploring the Story of Jesus' Transfiguration
- 10 minutes Creating a visual of what Jesus taught us
- 10 minutes Songs
- 5 minutes Sending Ritual

## GATHERING RITUAL

*Invite the whole group to form a circle (without holding hands) with plenty of room between participants to stretch their arms out wide. Welcome group members by name as everyone gets to their place. Today's prayer will be a whole-body prayer and will require quiet participation. Let the children know they are to follow your actions with their eyes wide open and on you.*

**Let us pray...**

*(fold hands in prayer but keep eyes wide open)*

**Holy Lord, we praise you for another opportunity to rise and do your work.**

*(make lifting motion with hands - feet still! - until their hands are high in the sky)*

**Thank you for bringing us together to learn more about you today.**

*(participants bring arms down, gesturing to one another)*

**Help us to follow you.**

*(participants stretch down low and point to their feet)*

**And help us to love you.**

*(participants bring hands back to "praying hands" in the center)*

**In your name we pray, Amen.**

## JESUS TEACHES US HOW TO BE BRAVE...

*Ask these opening questions to help children connect with the story...*

- **What does it mean to be brave?**
- **Who do you know who is brave?**
- **How do people look when they are brave?**
- **Tell me about a time when you were brave...**

*As much as time allows, help each child come up with a time when they were brave, even if it means something small like coming to class for the first time, attending the first day of school, going down the big slide for the first time, etc.*

*Then transition into the story by explaining that there is a book you want to share about being brave.*

*Read or show:*

**When You Are Brave by Pat Zietlow Miller (<https://youtu.be/Wgg6b5N8cA4>)**

*Explore the story by asking these or your own questions:*

- **How does the child feel at the beginning of the story?**
- **How does the child "become brave"?**
- **What does brave look like in this story?**
- **How did the child know they were brave?**

## THROUGH THE STORIES AND EXPERIENCES OF HIS LIFE...

*Explain that there is a story in scripture that teaches us about bravery. It's a story about Jesus and three of his friends. You may want to weave these teaching points into your introduction to the text:*

- Today's story is from the Gospel of Mark. Even though it's the second book in the New Testament, it was actually the first Gospel written, which means it is the oldest and the one written closest to when Jesus was alive.
- In the story we are reading today, there are five people, in addition to Jesus, and we want to take a moment to remember who they are...

*Ask the children these questions as a way of setting the stage for hearing the story. If the children cannot remember any stories about them, use the teaching points below their names to help them.*

- **Who are Peter, James, and John? What stories do you know about their lives?**
  - o *All three were friends of Jesus and part of the original disciples.*
  - o *James and John were brothers to whom Jesus gave the nickname "sons of thunder."*
  - o *Peter was very close to Jesus and did a lot of things with him—prayed in the garden, tried to walk on water, had breakfast with Jesus on the beach after the resurrection. He was also the disciple who sometimes messed up—he denied he knew Jesus on the night he was arrested.*
  - o *However, God still had a job for Peter to do and used him as the disciple upon which Jesus would build the Church.*
- **Who are Moses and Elijah? What stories do you remember about who they are?**
  - o *Under God's direction, Moses demanded Pharaoh to let God's people go.*
  - o *He led the ancient Hebrews out of slavery, across the Red Sea (which God parted) and through the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land.*
  - o *Moses brought the Ten Commandments from God down from Mt. Sinai and gave them to the people.*
  - o *Elijah was a great prophet sent from God to speak God's word to the people.*
  - o *Elijah tells them—even the King—how to live in ways that please God, even when they don't want to hear it.*
  - o *At the end of this life, a great whirlwind comes and Elijah is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire.*

*You may want to tell the children that this story is sometimes called "the Transfiguration Story." "Transfiguration" means the people involved came away from their experience changed by it.*

*Project the scripture or ask children to find a Bible (or use their handout) to follow along as you, or an older child, reads the story aloud.*

**Read Mark 9:2-9**

*Invite the children to engage with the story with these questions or some of your own.*

- **Wow, that's quite a story! What do you think it was like to be there physically, like James, Peter, and John?**
- **Whose VOICE does the scripture say they heard?**
- **Where else have we heard God's voice in the Bible, and when have we heard God say the same words? (the Baptism of Jesus)**
- **What do you think James, John, and Peter were thinking and feeling when that happened?**

*Weave these teaching points into your discussion.*

- **In this story of the Transfiguration, we begin to see the truth that Jesus will die on the cross for God's glory to be fulfilled.**
- **We are reminded that Jesus knew what was ahead of him and needed to be brave.**
- **His friends wanted to stay on the mountain top, where everything was wonderful, but Jesus said no—there were things they still needed to do.**
- **He brought his friends along so he could teach them about what was going to happen and how to be brave as they went with Jesus on the rest of his journey.**

*Encourage continuing conversation with these questions or those of your own.*

- **What kinds of things did Jesus do in his life?**
- **What did he have the disciples do as a part of Jesus's ministry?**
- **How did he teach the disciples what they needed to do?**
- **How was Jesus brave?**
- **Why was Jesus brave, and how did he become brave?**
- **How did he teach the disciples to be brave?**

## **SO THAT WE CAN LIVE BY HIS EXAMPLE.**

*This portion of the lesson will focus on what they know Jesus has taught them. Continue the conversation, keeping in mind the ages of the children with whom you are working.*

*"Big" concepts like loving or helping are correct, but encourage the children to dig a little deeper. For example, young learners may answer that Jesus taught us to be kind to strangers. Digging deeper into that concept may uncover answers that might include, "Jesus taught us to love our neighbor even when our neighbor has a different skin color or religion."*

**If teaching in person and conducting this as an individual activity...**

*Give each child a copy of the line drawing of Jesus and set the markers, crayons, and colored pencils out for the students to use.*

**If teaching in person and conducting this as a group activity...**

*Draw the figure on Appendix B on a dry erase board or easel paper.*

**If teaching virtually...**

*Invite children to find their printout of Appendix B and their markers, pencils, or crayons or to use the screen sharing function of the video-conferencing platform to do this activity as a group.*

*Draw “rays” out from Jesus as you compile a list of things learned from the example of Jesus. Begin by asking these questions:*

- Name one thing Jesus taught.
- How did that teach us to live?

*Continue the process until all of the lines/rays are surrounding the drawing of Jesus. Then continue the conversation:*

- In what ways are these easy, and in what ways are these difficult to do today?
- How does Jesus teach us to be brave?

*Incorporate these teaching points into the conversation as your wrap up the discussion.*

- Jesus was headed toward scary days ahead of him as he faced the cross.
- He knew it, but he was BRAVE.
- As Jesus led his friends down the mountain, he knew they would need to be brave, too.
- Jesus leaned on God (praying in the garden in Matthew 26; crying out to God from the cross in Matthew 27) and that was not weakness, but also an example of bravery!
- Jesus invites us to lean on him and to lean on God when we need to be brave.
- Being brave looks different for everyone. The important thing is that we follow Jesus’s example.

*Transition into the closing activity by saying that sometimes singing helps us be brave. In the Civil Rights movement, when Martin Luther King Jr. and his friends were working to make sure all people—including people who are Black and Brown—would have the same rights, they would sing to keep up their courage.*

*There’s a song our African siblings sang to keep up their courage as they worked for their freedom. It’s called “Siyahamba,” and it means “We are Marching in the Light of God.” The first link is a version that will teach the children the words. The second is a lively rendition by the Symphony of Human Rights. Learn the words and sing the song together.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBgWVV5R\\_Qs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBgWVV5R_Qs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsG3XvWouXc>

## CLOSING RITUAL

*Move again into the circle for closing prayer. Begin standing feet apart and hands folded, eyes wide.*

**Thank you, God, for this morning's lesson on the mountaintop.**

*Stretch arms high over your head and reach toward the sky.*

**Lead us out to be brave and to listen to Jesus!**

*Stretch arms forward.*

**Help us to follow Jesus's example and walk in his ways.**

*Reach down and stretch toward feet.*

**In the name of Jesus Christ, who came to earth to show us how to live,**

*Bring arms back to the center in praying hands.*

**Amen.**

## Writing Team



Delilah Jane Phillips is a first-year prior Master of Divinity student at Union Presbyterian Seminary on the Charlotte Campus. She graduated from the Richmond Campus with a Master of Arts in Christian Education in 2013 and is the newly appointed Director of Children and Family Ministries at First Presbyterian, Charlotte.

**MARK 9:2-8****The Transfiguration**

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly, when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore, but only Jesus.

