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a resource in:
Sunday School

Change & Transition Lessons Elementary School



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Change & Transition

Life Changes, But God Stays the Same

Recommended Age/Class: **Elementary School** (K-5th grade)

Lesson Objectives:

1. The student will understand changes in life are normal, but God never changes.
2. The student will understand some life changes are wanted, while others are unexpected and hard to accept.
3. The student will understand any change can be uncomfortable, because it makes us experience something unknown.
4. The student will understand we can put our trust in God to help us in any type of change.

Scripture:

Deuteronomy 31:8, "And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed."

Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Malachi 3:6a, "For I [am] the Lord, I change not."

Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and forever."

Related Bible Stories:

- Abraham – moving to a new land.
- Moses – moving from living in the palace to the wilderness to leading God's people out of Egypt.
- Ruth – losing her husband, moving to a new land, getting married to Boaz.
- David – living as a shepherd boy to eventually becoming King.

Content:

- Everyone encounters change in life – change is normal and needed.
- God never changes – He is always the same.
- Changes can be more typical, everyday occurrences (e.g., beginning kindergarten or moving from elementary to middle school).
- Some changes are larger, but planned for changes (e.g., moving to a new house or a new town).
- Other changes are not asked for and can be hard to go through (e.g., best friend moves away or a death of a family member).
- In times of change, we have to move from what we know to a new way of living or going about our life routines.
- We can trust God to help us through any change.
- God gives us strength and courage to go through changes in life.

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Discussion Questions:

1. What does the word “change” mean?
2. How do you feel when something changes or life is different?
3. What are examples of ways life can change?
4. What are changes you want to experience in life?
5. What are changes we need to experience in life? (e.g., growing up, starting school)
6. Do we always like the changes we experience? Why not?
7. Do we like it when we don’t know what might happen next? How might this make us uncomfortable?
8. What are changes you would find hard to experience in life?
9. Who never changes?
10. Who should we put our trust in during times of change? Why?
11. Give an example of a time when God helped you do something you found hard to do.

Activity:

1. Activity 1: Sorting Changes

Materials needed: life changes cards printed and cut apart, marker board and dry erase marker, tape; optional: two hula hoops and two index cards

- a. Draw two circles on the board and label one as “wanted change” and the other as “difficult change.” (Optional: Instead, put label two index cards and put them beside the hula hoops.) Discuss how some changes in life we want to experience and are a normal part of life, whereas other changes we would not want and are hard to go through.
- b. Have each student draw out a life change card and read it aloud. Discuss whether that change would be a wanted change or a difficult change to experience in life.
- c. Have the student tape the life change card into the appropriate circle on the marker board. (Optional: Have student put the life change card into the appropriate hula hoop.)
- d. After all the cards are sorted, discuss who never changes and who we should put our trust in during any type of change in life.

2. Activity 2: God never changes!

Materials needed: yellow and orange construction paper, scissors, markers or crayons

- a. Have students draw a circle for the sun out of yellow or orange paper and cut it out.
- b. Have students write *Hebrews 13:8*, “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*” on the circle.
- c. Have students draw long triangle rays for the sun out of the contrasting color of paper.
- d. Have students glue the rays onto the circle.
- e. Talk about how the sun always shines during the day – just like God always is there and never changes.

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3. **Activity 3:** Bible Verse Active Memorization

- a. Have students stand in a line in the room, with some space behind and in front of them.
- b. Say *Hebrews 13:8* together with students moving to each part of the verse:
 - i. Yesterday: hop backwards
 - ii. Today: hop back to starting point
 - iii. Forever: take one large hop forward or several hops forward
- c. Do this several times until the children have the verse memorized.

4. **Activity 4:** A Time for the Word

- a. Read *Ecclesiastes 3:1-11* out loud to the children. Have them listen for all the times of life in the verses.
- b. After reading it once, tell them you will ask them to see how many they can remember the next time you read it. Read it again to them or have children each read a verse of it.
- c. After reading, see how many of the times of life from the verses the children can remember and list them on the board. Title the list “A time to...”
- d. As you write each one, discuss what each one means and the ones that God prefers us to do as we treat others with His love.
- e. Read the verses one more time and add other times of life not remembered on the list.

5. **Object Lesson 1:** Growing Up

Materials needed: pictures of baby animal and adult animal pairs, baby pictures of the teacher

- a. Have children look at all the animal picture pairs. Talk about what is different between each pair of pictures. Show a picture of yourself as a baby and have children see how you have changed and grown up.
- b. Talk about how everyone in life changes and that change can be a good thing. However, when other things in life change, we can worry about them because we do not know what it will be like. God never changes – He always loves us and will always take care of us, no matter what!

6. **Object Lesson 2:** Change One Thing

Materials needed: usual classroom and its furniture

- a. Before the students come into the classroom, change something noticeable about the arrangement of the classroom furniture.
- b. When students arrive, see if they notice the change. Discuss the change with them and how it made them feel.
- c. Talk about how sometimes we like changes, while other times we might not because we don't know what is happening or we miss something the way it used to be.
- d. Talk about how change in life is normal, but God never changes.
- e. Variation for steps a-b: Have one student leave the room and make one change. Have them come back in and guess what the change was. Continue this for other students in the class.

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Responding to Life Changes

Recommended Age/Class: **Elementary School** (K-5th grade)

Lesson Objectives:

1. The student will understand God can use changes in our lives for good.
2. The student will understand prayer helps us turn toward God for help during changes in our lives.
3. The student will understand parents and other trusting adults can help during changes.
4. The student will understand God gives us hope to make it through difficult times.

Scripture:

Isaiah 43:19, "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert."

Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Hebrews 6:19a, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast."

Lamentations 3:22-24, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."

Related Bible Stories:

- Jacob – fleeing from his brother, working with his uncle for two wives, becoming the father of God's people.
- Joseph – being sold to Egypt, sent to jail, and serving as a ruler to preserve people from famine.

Content:

- Changes we experience in life, even if unwanted, can be learning experiences.
- We learn more about how God loves us and wants to take care of us through transitions.
- We can learn how to better help others who might go through similar changes, because we know what it feels like and what helped us.
- Praying to God during times of change helps us think about God instead of ourselves.
- Praying to God helps us to trust Him to help us.
- During times of change, children can ask their parents and other trusting adults for help.
- When we are going through changes, God gives us hope for the future.

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Discussion Questions:

1. How do you react when life brings changes? (worry, avoid it, pray, ask others for help, etc.)
2. What does God want us to do when life brings changes?
3. What can we learn from times of change?
4. How might we be better able to help other people who are going through similar changes in their lives?
5. How does prayer help us when we go through times of change?
6. Who can you turn to for help when you are worried about something?
7. What is hope?
8. How does hope help us get through times when life feels different or uncomfortable?

Activity:

1. Activity 1: Prayer Poster

Materials needed: Large sheet of white/construction paper for each student, markers/crayons

- a. Have students write a prayer to God thanking Him that He never changes and asking for help in times of change. If the student has some specific change they are going through right now, he/she could write a specific prayer stating something like “I trust you God to help me _____ (fill in blank with life change).”
- b. Talk about symbols of God’s help in time of need and promises to always be there (e.g., rainbow, Bible, sunrise and sunset). Have children add symbols of their choice to their poster.

2. Activity 2: Word Hunt

Materials needed: Large construction paper letters hidden to spell a focus word/s from today’s lesson, such as HOPE or TRUST

- a. Before the lesson hide the construction-paper letters around the room.
- b. Have students find the letters and help spell the focus word/s for today’s lesson.
- c. Talk about the word and ways we can live out that word in our lives during times of transitions or changes.

3. Object Lesson 1: Hope in Hard Times

Materials needed: Pictures of a Caterpillar, Butterfly, and Cocoon or a Butterfly Life Cycle Puppet

- a. Ask students what their favorite animal is. Show the caterpillar and ask them if a caterpillar is their favorite animal. Talk about how the caterpillar lives a life of eating and trying not to be eaten by predators.
- b. Show the cocoon and talk about how the caterpillar is put into this tight, uncomfortable situation. Compare this to how sometimes times in our life are difficult and uncomfortable. Talk about how the caterpillar is waiting and hoping for the new change that will occur.
- c. Show the butterfly. Talk about how through that time in the cocoon the caterpillar grew into something beautiful. Compare this to how God can help us to grow and change through hard times. We can learn more about God’s love and care for us, and we can learn to care for others who are going through similar hard times in their lives.

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4. **Object Lesson 2:** Praising God in Good and Bad Times

Materials needed: dog treats

- a. Tell the students you brought along some treats to share. Show the dog treats and ask who would like one.
- b. Discuss who really want the treats – dogs. Talk about how dogs will do anything for a treat – roll over, fetch a stick, play dead, etc. When dogs do tricks, we train them to do it by giving them a treat. In this way, the dogs are doing the trick really for themselves so they can get the treat.
- c. Compare this behavior to sometimes how we pray to God or praise God. Sometimes we do it just because we want God to bless us with good things in our lives. However, God wants us to pray and praise Him in both the good and the bad times. Review the story of Job and how Job praised God in all his trials (*Job 1:21*). No matter how hard transitions in life may be, God wants us to praise Him and focus on His goodness.

Life Changes Cards

Moving to a new house	Moving to a new town and school	Ending summer vacation and starting a new school year
Going from elementary school to middle school	Parents starting a new job	Starting to take piano lessons
Best friend moves away	Death of a family member	Getting a different family car
New brother or sister in the family	Growing up	Learning to ride a bike