

GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE

- **Key Verse:** “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”
James 1:17
- **Teaching Passage:** Luke 19:1-10
- **Supporting Texts:** Numbers 23:19, 1 Samuel 15:29, James 1:17

EACH – UNCHANGEABLE:

Introduces the truth that **God does not change** by thinking about how much everything else changes. Ask kids to name ways that they have changed this year (gotten taller, different hair, learn more about God, learned to tie their shoes, etc.). Then, name various things and ask kids to tell you how those things change.... trees, sand dunes, caterpillars, etc.

Play a **quick game** to help kids recognize change and how easy it is for people to change. Have all the kids sit in a circle (or one circle per leader in the room). Choose one person to leave the room, or stand in the corner facing the wall. While the one player is away, the group should change as many things as they can- people swap seats, take off nametags, untie shoes, etc. Then, call the player back and ask them to point out the changes in the group. Explain that we can change very easily and in fact people and all other parts of creation are always changing, but that God never changes.

Go through a list of truths about God that we’ve learned so far this year and ask the following questions...

- * Is there ever a time that God was not almighty?
- * Is there ever a time that God was not good?
- * Is there ever a time that God was not righteous?
- * Is there ever a time that God was not truth?
- * Is there ever a time that God was not love?
- * Is there ever a time that God was not just?

Help kids to see that everything we’ve learned this year about God is ALWAYS true about God.

Introduce the story by saying that this is a familiar story that reminds us of 2 things about our truth for the week....

(1) people change, not God and (2) the gospel never changes.

Read Luke 19:1-10 and/ or tell the story in your own words highlighting the following points:

- Zacchaeus was known for being a cheater. He was rich and he loved being rich more than anything else.
- When Jesus came to town, Zacchaeus wanted to see Him, so he climbed a tree to see over the crowd.
- Jesus approached Zacchaeus and told him to come out of the tree because He was coming to his house.
- The people in town couldn't believe that Jesus was spending time with a sinner.
- Upon meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus changed. He told Jesus he would pay back everyone he had stolen money from and would give half of his stuff to the poor.
- Jesus responded by saying that He had come to seek and save the lost.

Ask the following questions:

(1) Who changed in this story- Jesus or Zacchaeus?

(2) How was Zacchaeus able to change? Did he change on his own, or did Jesus change him?

Explain that the change we see in Zacchaeus' life is change that's only possible when God works in our hearts. Zacchaeus went from a man who loved money more than anything to a man who loved God more than anything when he met Jesus.

DEFINE AND REMEMBER:

To help the kids remember this truth about God, take a few minutes to define the attribute.

UNCHANGABLE = CANNOT BE MOVED, DOES NOT CHANGE

Since motions & actions help kids remember, choose an action for *UNCHANGABLE*. A good motion might be to shake your finger like saying *NO*.

MEMORY VERSE:

SAY: “This morning we’re talking about the truth that God is **Unchangeable**. A great way to think about the fact that God never changes is to look at the ways that we have changed.”

Give each child a piece of paper and something to draw with. Encourage kids to quickly draw 3 pictures of themselves.

(1) what you were like as a baby, (2) what you are like now and (3) what you think you’ll be like when you are a grown up.

As they work on their pictures, remind them that people change but God never changes.

*Read the memory verse (**James 1:17**) a few times together and do the motion for saves.*

CROSS CONNECTION:

Think back to what Zacchaeus was like at the beginning of the story. Remind the kids that everyone in town knew that Zacchaeus was a “sinner.” Then, remind them that the same is true of us. The Bible tells us (Romans 3:10-12 & 23) that just like Zacchaeus we are all sinners and we all love ourselves and our own ways more than we love God. The Bible also tells us (Ephesians 2:8-9) that we can’t change that truth about ourselves on our own....we can’t make ourselves into something that is not a sinner. BUT, the Bible also tells us (Romans 5:8 & 6:23) that we haven’t been left to change ourselves, but that just like Jesus came and met Zacchaeus where he was... a lost sinner... that Jesus comes and meets us right where we are and changes us to be like Him. We can change a lot of things about ourselves, but this is one thing we can’t change. From the very beginning of time, people have needed God to come and rescue them from their sin and bring them back into relationship with Him.

The fact that we can’t change our sinful hearts on our own reminds us of the unchanging nature of God. The whole Bible is the story of God coming into His creation and changing people’s hearts (Ezekiel 36:26). Just like God is always holy and always good and always just and always loving and always righteous.... God is always in the business of rescuing His people.

SONGS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmiL38ezUWk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VDpHibftHs&t=20s>

GAME: Remember My Name

Have the children sit in a circle. Pick a child to start. He says his name and something interesting about himself. The child to his right repeats what the first child said and then adds his name. The child to his right repeats what the first two children said and then adds his name and something interesting about himself. Keep going until all the children have had a turn.

For example, the first child may say, "My name is Marty and I like to play softball." The child to his right will then say, "Marty likes to play softball. My name is Steve and I have a dog named Spot." The next child would say, "Marty likes to play softball. Steve has a dog named Spot. Have the children sit in a circle. Pick a child to start. He says his name and something interesting about himself. The child to his right repeats what the first child said and then adds his name.

The child to his right repeats what the first two children said and then adds his name and something interesting about himself. Keep going until all the children have had a turn. For example, Marty may say, "My name is Marty and I like to play softball." The child to his right will then say, "Marty likes to play softball. My name is Steve and I have a dog named Spot." The next child would say, "Marty likes to play softball. Steve has a dog named Spot. And my name is Rudy and I have a brand new bike." My name is Rudy and I have a brand new bike."

GAME: Zaccheus Spies

This is played just like "I SPY", but having one child pretending to be Zaccheus and saying "Zaccheus spies with his/her little eye_____". Play until each child has had a turn.

ACTIVITY: Measuring Contest

Supplies: Measuring tape

Measure each child and see who is the shortest and who is the tallest

REVIEW:

Give each child a blank piece of paper. Provide markers or colored pencils. Encourage them to write the word UNCHANGEABLE somewhere on the paper and then write or draw something to help them remember this attribute of God. They could write the definition for UNCHANGEABLE or the memory verse or they could illustrate the story. After a few minutes, bring the group back together and give kids time to share what they have drawn or written.

PRAYER:

Pray that the kids in the group would come to know God more and more each week through this study and that they would remember that all of us are sinners who need to be saved and that they would turn to this good God for salvation. Pray that children in the group would think about the ways that they have changed and rejoice in the fact that we have a God that never changes.