



**Opening Prayer:** Lord Jesus, you showed your friends who you really are, the Son of God. Help us to believe in you as you walk with us in our everyday lives. Thank you for being our friend. We love you. Amen.

**Theme:** *Jesus is full of surprises.*

**Gospel Listening:** Matthew 17:1-9 One family member reads the Gospel while everyone else listens quietly.

## Making Connections

**Reader:** One day Jesus and his friends Peter, James, and John decided to climb a mountain. When they got to the top of the mountain, Jesus surprised them. "His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light" (Matthew 17:2). This is called the *Transfiguration*. Then they saw Jesus talking with the prophets Moses and Elijah, who lived long before Jesus was born.

Then Peter, James, and John were in for another surprise! They heard the voice of God speaking from a cloud, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (17:5). Naturally, they were frightened, but Jesus touched them and told them not to be afraid. On their way down the mountain, Jesus asked his friends not to tell anyone what they had seen because people were not ready to understand what had just taken place.

## Family Sharing Time

*Use the questions below to guide your family discussion.*

**Preschool children:** Do you like surprises? Why? What surprises are really fun? Jesus is full of good surprises. Name some good surprises.

**Primary-grade children & Preteens:** God told Jesus' friends to listen to him. When you listen to Jesus and live as he teaches, does that surprise your friends and others? Why? Name people you know who listen to Jesus and live as his disciples. Give specific examples.

Do you know any other stories where Jesus surprised people? Share.

## Activity

**Materials needed:** small box, strips of paper, pencils, markers, scissors, glue, stickers, glitter

Family members decorate a box and place it at the center of the dinner table. Cut several strips of paper and place them near the box, along with pencils or markers. Beginning today, each person will use a paper strip to record the good actions he/she did. At the end of each day, family members can share their good deeds and then place the paper strips in the box. Watch the surprise box grow with good actions this week.

**Suggestion of the Week:** As a family, surprise a neighbor, family member, or friend by doing a good deed for them.

## Praying Together

Gather around a prayer table with a Bible, crucifix, candle, and surprise box.

**Leader:** God of surprises, thank you for showing us that Jesus is your Son.

**All:** Lord, help us to surprise and delight others by our kindness and goodness. Amen.

Give each other a sign of God's peace and love.