



Hey Students! Welcome to _____. For those of you who don't know me, my name is _____. If we don't know one another, I'd love to meet you. I'm really glad you're here!

How many of you loved that very hungry caterpillar rap? Let's give another round of applause to _____ for laying down a sick beat! And as you can tell by the graphic up on the screen, we are starting a brand new three-part message series called "Metamorphosis." Turn to the person next you and tell them, "We gonna change."

How many of you had bug catchers when you were a kid? When I was in kindergarten or first grade, I remember my class making these boss bug catchers. We got to construct them, color them, and then our homework was to actually go home and catch something. And I remember getting roly polies. Does anyone know the actual scientific name of those things? I got roly polies, I got ants that quickly got away, I got some ladybugs... I think I even had a classmate who caught a stinkin' praying mantis! He was definitely the coolest 1st grader on the block that day. But later in our bug unit, our class got to take on a project together: Operation Make a Butterfly. As you know, a caterpillar goes into its little cocoon, waits a little bit, and then pow, it's a butterfly! This is amazing stuff. The technical name for this process is metamorphosis.

The real Merriam-Webster dictionary definition for metamorphosis is, "change of physical form, structure, or substance especially by supernatural means."

Wow, that's a pretty powerful definition for something that isn't overtly Christian. It's so amazing how God uses science to tell a story about Himself and about our part in that story.

That is what we are going to be talking about over the next three weeks. We are talking about how we change, how as Christians, we go through a metamorphosis of sorts when we become a Christian. Before, we were a person that was totally fixated on ourselves. Our default setting was selfish. From the time we woke up until the time we went to bed, it was, "what do I want to eat for breakfast," "who do I want to talk to" "how can I get more

playing time,” “how can I get those people to like me more,” “what do I want to do after practice,” “what picture should I post,” “why didn’t my mom wash that shirt for me that I wanted to wear,” “why didn’t she text me back,” “what should I watch before bed?”

And then we met Jesus, and now we are becoming people who think “how can I help my mom out today,” “what would encourage my teacher and show them that I’m different because of Jesus,” “who at school feels left out,” “what teammate needs encouragement,” “what could I do with my life that would leverage my gifts to reach more people with the gospel of Jesus?”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT) says, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”*

So, we become this new person whose life is way more meaningful and full of adventure. We look different. Just like a caterpillar looks totally different from a butterfly, we begin to look more like Jesus because He has supernaturally transformed us! It’s a metamorphosis. It’s a supernatural phenomenon. And that is what baptism represents. It’s a symbol showing everyone what God has done inside of our hearts. It’s the moment that the butterfly emerges from the cocoon. Everyone gets to see the difference.

[Teacher’s Note: tell an abbreviated version of your testimony here about how you changed dramatically when you became a Christian.]

Many of you in this room have made this decision. You have chosen to become a Christian. But what now? Quickly after you were baptized or gave your life to Jesus, you realized, “wow! I am still pretty messed up!” You feel the tension of living in a broken world. Addiction is still there. Anger is still there. Unforgiveness is still there. Discontentment is still there. A desire to gossip is still there. Self-promotion is still there.

So, that’s what I really want to talk about today and for the next three weeks: how we change. How do we root out those sinful desires that control us and overtake us like Jekyll and Hyde or the Hulk?

Turn to your neighbor and tell them again, “We gonna change.” I believe that **the first step to changing is to realize that we need to change**. Because our natural tendency is sinful, we often don’t realize how

destructive our thoughts and actions actually are until something drastic happens. But the good news is that we can learn from our mistakes. We are not doomed because of our failures. There is hope no matter what you are struggling with to conquer and to have the victory in Jesus' name.

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV) *“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*

How many of you have ever driven in a car? If you have, you may have heard the term “blind spot.” When a driver wants to change lanes, they need to turn their head and look behind them, because their mirror may not be showing the entire picture. There are blind spots where another car could be that could cause a deadly collision. And we all have those blind spots in our lives. We can’t always see those things right away in us that could and will potentially cause destruction. Even if you think you are doing pretty well right now, I guarantee you that you are not perfect. There are areas that God wants to gently come beside you and show you a better way.

[**Teacher’s Note:** give an example here of a blind spot you had/have in your life that God is working out in you.]

We must realize our need for change. The caterpillar needs to change. It was created to change. And you were created to look like Jesus, to mimic your Creator, to be like your Father in heaven. The Bible says in...

Genesis 1:27 (GNT), *“So God created human beings, making them to be like himself. He created them male and female”...*

...and **Ephesians 2:10 (NLT),** *“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”*

Look around you. Think about all the division, chaos, anger, brokenness, and disaster in this world. The way that humans are doing life isn’t working. When we turn from God’s way, things break.

Romans 1:21-23 (NLT) describes it well:

“Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols...”

Romans 3:10 (NLT)

“No one is righteous—not even one....”

But we are not too far gone. We can change, but we cannot change in our own strength. We have hope, because Jesus has made a way to put it all back together again.

Romans 3:22-24 (NLT)

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.”

Jesus died on the cross, so we could still experience the sweetness, the utter bliss, the forever happiness of living life with God, the way it was always supposed to be. **To change, we have to realize that we need to change.** And we have to surrender the myth that we can do it on our own, because we can’t. We need Jesus.

As I think about the moments in my life where I felt this realization that I needed to change, I think about them in them in a few categories.

1) The first is pain.

Pain has drawn me to see my deep need for Jesus. When we experience pain, or something terrible happens in our lives, we realize just how powerless we are. We grasp for anything to give us hope. We can react to our pain either by rejecting God and trying to ease the ache with temporary fixes or by surrendering to God and letting Him take control and pick up the pieces.

James 1:2-4 (NIV) says,