

God Gives the Holy Spirit

(Acts 2:1-42)

Introduction

[Teacher, before class wrap a gift box with a removable lid containing these objects: 2 flashlights (one without batteries), Bible, Family Picture, a Heart, and something to represent Prayer. To introduce the lesson, show the students the gift.]

We all love to receive gifts! Has there ever been a time in your life that you knew you were getting a gift you wanted but had to wait for it? [Allow students to share.]

Inside this box are gifts that God promises to give to everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus. [Ask volunteers to come and take one thing from the gift box, then discuss how each object relates to gifts from God, saving the flashlights for last.]

Heart: Represents God's love and comfort for His children.

Bible: God's Word is a gift to His children because it tells us of His promises and instructions for life.

Family: It is a gift to be part of God's forever family and to be able to pray together and help each other.

Flashlight: [Have the two students who chose the flashlights turn them on. Discover that the one that did not come on does not have a battery.] The flashlight with batteries reminds us of another very important gift that God has given to believers. When we are saved, God gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit. He comes and lives in our hearts and gives each of us power to live a life that pleases God. A person who is not saved, has no power to live a life that pleases God.

[Put the items back in the gift box and put the lid on it.]

Opening Prayer

Father, we are so glad that you have sent us the Holy Spirit. He is our Comforter, our Helper in times of need. He gives us the power we need to live a life in victory over sin and He gives us the courage we need to tell others about Your love for us. Thank You that You have provided us with resurrection power — the same power that raised Jesus from the dead — through the Holy Spirit Who dwells in us. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*But you will receive **power** when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon you. And you will be my **witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*
(Acts 1:8)

Lesson

Last week we learned that right before He ascended back up to heaven, Jesus had told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father.

Acts 1:4-5

*Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "**Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised**, as I told you before. (5) John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

While Jesus was still on earth, He had told His disciples about the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26

*But when the Father sends the **Advocate** [Helper] as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will **teach** you everything and will **remind** you of everything I have told you.*

John 16:7-8

But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate [Helper] won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to

you. (8) *And when he comes, he will **convict the world of its sin**, and of God's **righteousness**, and of the coming **judgment**.*

John 16:13

*When the **Spirit of truth** comes, he will **guide you into all truth**. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. **He will tell you about the future**.*

Jesus had clearly taught His followers about the Holy Spirit while He was still with them.

When we pick up the story today, the apostles were obeying Jesus' instructions. They were gathered together in Jerusalem anxiously waiting for the Lord to fulfill His promise to send the Holy Spirit who would give them power to be witnesses for Him. [Review today's verse.]

It was now 50 days since Jesus' resurrection and 10 days since His ascension up to heaven.

There was a big celebration going on in Jerusalem called the "Day of Pentecost" or the *Feast of Harvest* (Leviticus 23:15-21). Like the American holiday of Thanksgiving, it is a festival of thanksgiving for the harvested crops and God's provision.

All Jewish men were required to come to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, so there were Jews from many different nations there in Jerusalem. The town was packed with people all speaking different languages: And when the day of Pentecost arrived, something amazing happened.

Acts 2:1-4

*On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. (2) Suddenly, there was **a sound** from heaven **like the roaring of a mighty windstorm**, and it filled the house where they were sitting. (3) Then, what looked like **flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them**. (4) And **everyone** present **was filled with the Holy Spirit** and began **speaking in other languages**, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.*

Ask:

- What did it sound like in the room that the believers were gathered in? (A sound like a violent wind.)
- What unusual sight happened in that room? (Tongues of Fire.)
- Who filled the believers? (The Holy Spirit.)
- What did the Holy Spirit cause them to do? (Speak in other languages.)

God made His presence known to this group of believers in a spectacular way — violent wind, fire, and His Holy Spirit. This was a fulfillment of John the Baptist's prophecy at the time He baptized Jesus when he said that there was one coming who "*will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*" (Luke 3:16)

Then, the disciples began to speak in other languages.

Acts 2:5-8

At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. (6) When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. (7) They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, (8) and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages!

The noise caused the Jews visiting Jerusalem to come running to find out what was going on. All the foreigners in Jerusalem at that time were amazed to hear God being praised in their own native languages!

Acts 2:11

(both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!"

They could hardly believe their ears! They wanted to know what was happening.

Acts 2:12

They stood there amazed and perplexed. "What can this mean?" they asked each other.

Some people made fun of the disciples, saying they were drunk.

Acts 2:13

But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, "They're just drunk, that's all!"

But Peter, now empowered by the Holy Spirit, explained...

Acts 2:14-15

Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. (15) These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o'clock in the morning is much too early for that.

Here is Peter who only 50 days earlier had been a coward and deserted the Lord Jesus in His deepest hour of need. Peter who had denied that he even knew the Lord, was now speaking boldly to the crowd, unashamed!

Acts 2:22-24

"People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. (23) But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. (24) But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.

Peter, given boldness by the Holy Spirit, told the crowd, "When you saw Jesus doing all those powerful miracles, you knew He was the promised Messiah, yet you killed Him by having Him nailed to a cross."

But Peter told them this was the plan of God all along. Jesus Himself had told them very clearly before He was crucified that He must suffer and be killed, but three days later God would raise Him from the dead.

Acts 2:32-33

"God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. (33) Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today.

Peter boldly says, "You can't deny that God raised Jesus from the dead because you were all eye-witnesses! God did this so that you would have no doubt that the One you crucified, was the Messiah.

Acts 2:36

"So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!"

The Holy Spirit was using Peter's message to work in their hearts.

Acts 2:37

Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"

When Peter accused the people of being responsible for the death of Jesus, God's Son, their hearts were broken. They were convicted of their sin and wanted to know what they needed to do next.

Acts 2:38

*Peter replied, "Each of you must **repent** of your sins and **turn to God**, and be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Wow! Peter was boldly used for the Lord, wasn't he? He was empowered by the Holy Spirit! He told them they needed to **repent**, or turn from their sins, turn to Jesus for forgiveness and **be baptized**. Peter told them that once they did that, they would **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**.

When you call on the Lord Jesus to save you, God the Holy Spirit comes to live inside you to help you. The Holy Spirit gives you the power you need to live boldly for the Lord, to make godly choices, to say, "No!" to sin, and to speak with confidence about the things of the Lord. In fact, it will be hard for you not to tell everybody you meet about Jesus!

The Holy Spirit enabled Peter to stand up and tell thousands of people about what the Lord Jesus had done for mankind. He became a powerful witness for the Lord. When Peter finished talking, the people were convicted by God's Spirit, they wanted to know how to receive the power of the Holy Spirit, too. Many people received Jesus that day!

Acts 2:41

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

Everyone in the world is born a sinner and needs to be saved. Everyone needs to hear the wonderful good news that Jesus came and took the punishment for sin. But not everyone will be convinced. Those who believed were added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all!

Let's read verse 42 to see what they did:

Acts 2:42

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

The new believers gathered together regularly to hear the apostles teach about Jesus. These new believers lived a life filled with the Holy Spirit.

Object Lesson:

Only those who believed that Jesus died on the cross for their sins were born again on that day and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Have the children sit in a circle. Give each child an empty paper cup. Ask, "What's inside your cups?" Hold up a paper cup, and say, "If we don't have Jesus in our lives, we may be like these cups: empty inside with nothing to give other people." Pour water into the cup you're holding. Say, "When we believe in Jesus and ask Him to be the Lord of our lives, God promises to pour His Spirit into us and fill us with His love, just as the water fills this cup."

Ask the children:

- Why did God give us the Holy Spirit?
- What happens when we're filled with God's Spirit?

Have the children stand in a circle, holding their paper cups. Say, "Let's see how being filled or baptized with the Holy Spirit helps us live a victorious Christian life." Pour your water into another person's cup and whisper, "The Holy Spirit gives you **strength**." Then have that person pour the water into the next person's cup and repeat, "The Holy Spirit gives you **strength**." So on around the circle. Go around the circle again saying, "The Holy Spirit gives you **comfort**." Ask the children to think of things that the Holy Spirit gives them when they are filled with the Spirit of God. For example,

- The Holy Spirit gives you wisdom.
- The Holy Spirit gives you power to say, "No!" to sin.
- The Holy Spirit gives you power to live a Godly life.
- The Holy Spirit gives you power to tell others about Jesus.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank You, Lord, for sending us the Holy Spirit who gives us the power we need to live godly lives before You. Forgive us those times we forget to call upon Him when we need Him so desperately. We are so weak without Him and we need Him so badly. Thank You that Your power is only a prayer away. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

CRAFT CORNER

Create a Tract: Using the pattern on page 6, let each child make a booklet by folding the page in half and then in half again. Or, give each child a paper on which they can print out neatly, the following:

Jesus can save you from your sin

Admit you have sinned. "All have sinned" (Romans 3:23)

Believe Jesus died for your sins. "Christ died for our sins" (1 Corinthians 15:3)

Call on Jesus to save you (Romans 10:13)

Demonstrate how a tract can be used; give children an opportunity to practice in class with a partner.

GAME CENTER

Battle of Knowledge —

Materials: Masking tape, bean bag,

Procedure:

1. Cut out 8 red circles and eight black circles.
2. Write 16 Review questions.
3. Create a sixteen-sectioned grid on the floor with the masking tape, four sections wide and four sections deep.

●	●	○	○
●	○	○	○
●	●	○	○
●	●	●	○

4. Divide the class into two teams – the Reds and the Blacks
5. To win the game, your team must get four circles in a row. Taking turns each team throws the bean bag into an unoccupied square. If the team answers a Review Question correctly, they get to put one of their circles in that square. If the team answers incorrectly, the other team gets a chance to answer the same question. If the other team answers correctly, they get to put one of their circles in the square. Once a circle is in a square it cannot be removed.
6. Teams can work together to answer the question, but each team member must take a turn throwing the bean bag.

Or, Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

Review questions:

1. What Jewish celebration was going on that brought all the foreigners to Jerusalem? (Pentecost)
2. What is Pentecost? (It's like Thanksgiving; it's a festival of thanksgiving for the harvested crops and God's provision.)
3. Where were the disciples waiting for the promise of the Father? (In the upper room.)
4. What sound did the disciples hear when they were waiting for the Promise of the Father? (A violent wind.)
5. What unusual sight did they see? (Tongues of fire.)
6. What did the disciples begin to do when the tongues of fire sat upon them? (They began to speak with other tongues or languages.)
7. Why were the people in Jerusalem confused? (They could hear the believers from Galilee speaking in the language they could understand.)
8. What did all the foreigners in Jerusalem think was happening? (They were all amazed and marveled; then some of them began to make fun of the disciples, saying they were drunk.)
9. What did the foreigners hear the believers saying in their own language? (About the wonderful things God has done.)
10. What did Peter do? (He stood up, raised his voice, and began to explain God's plan of salvation.)
11. What suddenly gave Peter the courage he lacked only a short time before? (He was filled with the Holy Spirit.)
12. What was the reaction of the crowd of people when they heard Peter preach? (After Peter's powerful, Spirit-filled message, the people were deeply moved and asked, "*What shall we do?*")
13. What did Peter tell the people to do when they asked, "*What shall we do?*" (He told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins.)
14. What does it mean to repent? (Turn away from sinning.)
15. Lots of people came running when they heard the violent wind; they wanted to know what was going on. Did everyone who came get filled with the power of the Holy Spirit? (No! Only those who believed that Jesus died on the cross for their sins were born again on that day and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit)
16. What does the Holy Spirit give you? (Wisdom, comfort, strength, the power you need to live boldly for the Lord, to make godly choices, to say, "No!" to sin and to speak with confidence about the things of the Lord.)

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