

# God Gives the Holy Spirit

(Acts 2:1-42)

## Pre-Session Warm Up

[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

*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me...to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8)*

## Lesson

Three days after Jesus had been crucified on the cross, the disciples discovered His empty tomb. Then they met their risen Savior who told them to go to Jerusalem and wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

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.**"*

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would fill the disciples with power.

Acts 1:8

*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."*

The apostles were obeying Jesus' instructions and were gathered in Jerusalem.

It was now time for the Jewish celebration of the "Day of Pentecost". God commanded the Israelites through His servant Moses to come together to celebrate seven different annual feasts each year. One of them is called the "Day of Pentecost" or the *Feast of Harvest* (Leviticus 23:15-21). It is like the American holiday of Thanksgiving, it is a festival of thanksgiving for the harvested crops. Pentecost is held 50 days after Passover.

It was now 50 days since Jesus' resurrection and 10 days since His ascension up to heaven. And, Jews of many nations had gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost.

All the believers were gathered together, waiting for the Lord to fulfill His promise to send the Holy Spirit Who would give them power to be witnesses for Him.

#### 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? What unusual sight happened in that room? Who filled the believers? (The Holy Spirit.) What did He help them 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 prophesy when he said that there was one coming who "*will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*" (Luke 3:16)

The scripture says, the Holy Spirit looked like "*divided tongues, as of fire.*"

- **Tongues** symbolizes speech — God wants us to tell people about the good news of Jesus taking our punishment for sin.
- **Fire** symbolizes God's purifying presence, which burns away the undesirable parts of our lives and sets our hearts on fire for Him.

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 the disciples speaking in their very own language!

#### 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!**"*

The people from all these various countries were amazed to hear God being praised in their own native tongue! They wanted to know what was happening.

#### Acts 2:12

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

They could hardly believe their ears! 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 a few days before 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, shared the Good News that Jesus died on the cross and that God raised 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 went on to tell the people that it had been God's plan for Jesus to be put to death and raised from the dead.

## 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 bon 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

**A**dmit you have sinned. "All have sinned" (Romans 3:23)

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

**C**all 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

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.)
3. What did it sound like in the room that the believers were gathered in? (Violent wind.)
4. What unusual sight happened in that room? (Tongues of Fire.)
5. Who filled each of the believers on the Day of Pentecost? (The Holy Spirit.)
6. What did the tongues symbolize? (Tongues symbolized speech.)
7. What did the fire symbolize? (Fire symbolized God's purifying presence.)
8. What did the disciples begin to do when the tongues of fire sat upon them? (They began to speak with other tongues or languages.)
9. Why were the people in Jerusalem confused? (They could hear the believers from Galilee speaking in the language they could understand.)
10. 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.)
11. What did the foreigners hear the believers saying in their own language? (About the wonderful things God has done.)
12. What did Peter do? (He stood up, raised his voice, and began to explain God's plan of salvation.)
13. What suddenly gave Peter the courage he lacked only a short time before? (He was filled with the Holy Spirit.)
14. 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?*")
15. 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.)
16. What does the Holy Spirit give 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.)

