

LESSON 3

JESUS PROMISES THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Because the Holy Spirit Leads Me, I Am Led

SCRIPTURE: [John 14](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: While preparing to be with God the Father in heaven, Jesus promises His followers that God would send them the Holy Spirit—God's very presence—to lead them always.

WORD OF WONDER: Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

—Exodus 15:11b (NIV)

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Holy Spirit is one with God the Father and God the Son. He is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence, empowering believers to honor God and follow Jesus. The Spirit brings wisdom and knowledge of God's Word, guiding and encouraging God's children.

WHAT?

Before Jesus died on the cross, He comforted His disciples by promising that the Holy Spirit would come to them after He went to be with the Father. The Spirit would be their helper, teaching them all things and reminding them of Jesus' words.

WHERE?

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit's coming during His Passover supper with the disciples in an upper room of a house in Jerusalem. Shortly after, Jesus and His disciples crossed the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was arrested before His crucifixion.

WHEN?

This story took place shortly before Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion. Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Holy Spirit would later come on the disciples during Pentecost, after Jesus' resurrection and ascension.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

In the book of Ezekiel, God promised to give His people new hearts by placing His own Spirit within them ([Ezekiel 36:26–27](#)). This promise was realized when the Holy Spirit came to Jesus' followers, empowering all believers to reject sin and walk in newness of life.

Curiosity

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Welcome Question

Leader Tip: *For Preteens.* Spur curiosity by asking older kids to give examples of leaders in different areas of life. Some examples include leaders at school, in government, in the armed forces, in the music industry, in sports, at church, in the Bible, etc.

At your start time ...

Gather kids together and let them know how happy you are to see them!

Call on several kids to share their answers to the Welcome Question:

Can you name a leader you know? As kids answer, invite them to imagine all the different places where someone might be willing to follow a good leader. They can name people they know personally or well-known leaders they have heard about in the news or in school. Also encourage them to tell each other why they think those people are leaders.

A leader is someone who guides or gives direction to those following him or her. Today we'll hear about the most important leader of all. And when we follow Him, we are led by His powerful, wise, and loving presence. But first, it's time to be curious.

Curiosity Questions

I'm curious ...

- If you had to pick between being a leader or a follower, which would you choose? Why?
- What makes a good leader?

Elementary STEM Activity: Follow the Leader

Leader Tip: Transparent bottles with straight, smooth sides (such as those used for some types of electrolyte water) work best for this activity!

For this activity, you'll be placing several paper clips into a full water bottle and demonstrating how a magnet on the outside of the bottle can move the paper clips.

Ahead of time, practice the activity to ensure your magnet is strong enough to move the paper clips. Many science magnets (such as wand magnets available from online retailers) can pull the paper clips up and even out of the bottle. Average kitchen magnets can move the paper clips but may not be strong enough to pull the paper clips out of the bottle. Either will work for this activity!

After practicing, remove the paper clips from the bottle, refill the bottle with water, and put the cap back on.

Hold up the filled water bottle and several paper clips. Drop the paper clips into the water and watch them sink to the bottom.

Do you think I can lead the paper clips back to the top of the bottle without touching them or shaking the bottle? Allow kids to respond.

If they think you can, invite them to share how they think you'll do it. Next, reveal the magnet. Set the bottle on the table and hold the magnet against the outside of the bottle. Use the magnet to move the paper clips to the top of the bottle. If your magnet is strong enough to pull the paper clips up and out of the bottle, remove the cap and do so. Or if your magnet isn't that strong, keep the cap on and simply move down, and around the inside of the bottle.



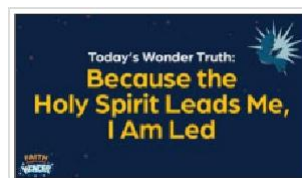
Invite a couple of kids to the front to take turns holding the magnet as the other kids shout out direction words like "up," "down," "right," and "left." The kid holding the bottle can use the magnet to lead the paper clips in the directions shouted.

If time allows, explain some of the science behind the activity: A *magnet* is a rock or metal that can pull certain types of metal toward itself because of a force called *magnetism*. Magnets can work across distances, so a strong magnet doesn't have to be touching the magnetic object in order to pull it toward itself.

Wow! Magnets are powerful, and our magnet sure led these paper clips all over! We are a little like the paper clips in this activity.

When we believe in Jesus and trust Him as our Savior, He promises we will have the Holy Spirit to help, teach, and lead us every day. We get to follow God's Holy Spirit like the paper clips followed the magnet!

The Holy Spirit is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence in our lives, and today's Wonder Truth is **BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS ME, I AM LED.**



Leader Tip: If kids are unfamiliar with the Holy Spirit, explain that God is three persons but still one true God: Father, Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit. This is called the *Trinity*. The Holy Spirit, who is God, lives in all Jesus-followers and is our powerful, wise, and loving helper. Assure kids that they will all learn more about the Holy Spirit throughout this lesson!

Preteen STEM Activity: Make It Move

Ahead of time, print the [Make It Move Maze Sheet](#) on cardstock. You will need one sheet for each kid, or if you plan on having kids work together in small groups, you will need one for every 3–4 kids.

Order or gather strong magnets; you will need one for each kid or one for every 3–4 kids, depending on whether you designate this activity as an individual or group activity. While magnetic science wands work great, some household or craft magnets are also strong enough for the activity. Just be sure to try the magnets ahead of time to ensure they are strong enough to move a paper clip (or iron fillings) through a sheet of cardstock.

Set a Make It Move Maze Sheet on a table and a paper clip (or a small pile of iron fillings) near the start of the maze. (The magnets should be out of sight.) Gather kids around the table so they can see the maze. **Do you think I can get this paper clip through this maze without touching it?** Allow kids to respond.

If they think you can, invite them to share how they think you'll do it. Next, reveal a magnet. Then carefully lift the sheet with the paper clip or iron fillings on it. Holding the magnet in one hand and the maze in the other, place the magnet under the sheet and use it to direct the paper clip (or iron fillings) through the maze.

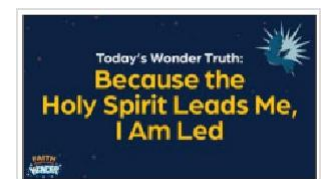
Now invite kids to try doing the activity themselves! Hand out copies of the Make It Move Maze Sheet, magnets, and paper clips (or a small pile of iron fillings) to each kid. Or if you want kids to work together, have them gather in groups of 3–4 kids and give a set of supplies to each group. Give kids several minutes to have fun with their magnets and mazes!

Kids can race one another to see who can guide their paper clips through their maze the fastest, or they can simply experiment to see what happens with their paper clips (or iron fillings) when they move their magnets in different directions. Walk among the kids, letting them show off what they are doing and discovering!

If time allows, explain some of the science behind the activity: A *magnet* is a rock or metal that can pull certain types of metal toward itself because of a force called *magnetism*. Magnets can work across distances, so a strong magnet doesn't have to be touching the magnetic object in order to pull it toward itself.

Leader Tip: Consider sending a paper clip, magnet, and copy of the Make It Move Maze Sheet home with each kid so they can do this activity with their families. (Kids could also use a magnet from home.)

You all did an amazing job using magnets to lead your paper clips through the maze! We are like the paper clips in this activity. When we believe in Jesus and trust Him as our Savior, He promises we will have the Holy Spirit to help, teach, and lead us every day.



The Holy Spirit is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence in our lives, and today's Wonder Truth is **BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS ME, I AM LED.**

Faith

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

—Exodus 15:11b (NIV)

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any latex allergies within your ministry before doing this activity.

Today we learned about the Holy Spirit—God's powerful, loving, and wise presence—who is with all Jesus-followers. What an amazing gift! Let's practice our Word of Wonder as a way of telling God how incredible He is!

Open your Bible to [Exodus 15:11b](#) and read [Exodus 15:11b](#) together.

Next, hold up a deflated balloon where everyone can see it. With the balloon inflated, invite the group to play a game. The goal is to keep the balloon in the air as long as possible, avoiding touching the ground.

To start off, invite everyone to say the first word of the verse as you bump the balloon in the air. With the next bump, everyone will say the second word of the verse, and so on. If the balloon pops or hits the ground, the group will stop and recite the entire verse together. Play several rounds if time allows.

Leader Tip: For added challenge, include variations of the game, such as these: 1. Everyone stays seated the whole time. 2. Bumpers must use other parts of their body to bump the balloon—no hands. 3. Each person is only allowed one bump.

Make It Inclusive: For kids who have excess energy or neurodiverse tendencies, provide balloons for individual play. Also consider offering suggestions for additional movement. For example, say, "I wonder if you can hop on one foot the entire time!" For kids with mobility challenges, invite them to hold one end of a dish towel while an adult holds the other to assist them in keeping the balloon up when it comes their way.

Elementary Questions

- Who did Jesus promise God would send to the disciples? (*the Holy Spirit*)
- What other names did Jesus use to describe the Holy Spirit? (“*Spirit of truth*,” “*Friend*,” and “*Holy Spirit*.” See [John 14:17, 26](#).)
- As Jesus-followers, the Holy Spirit is our friend! What does it mean to be someone’s friend? What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to be your friend?
- The promise of the Holy Spirit was for Jesus’ first disciples and for everyone who follows Jesus today. How does that make you feel?
- Who is someone that doesn’t know and follow Jesus? Who is missing the friendship and help of the Holy Spirit in their lives?

Jesus promised that God’s powerful, wise, and loving presence that led Him would also be available to everyone else who follows Him. Let’s spend some time in prayer thanking God for the Holy Spirit and praying for those who don’t know and follow Jesus yet.

Preteen Questions

- Before Jesus died on the cross, who did Jesus promise God would send to His disciples? (*the Holy Spirit*)
- What other names did Jesus give the Holy Spirit as He described this promised gift to His followers? (“*Spirit of truth*,” “*Friend*,” and “*Holy Spirit*.” See [John 14:17, 26](#).)
- What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do for His followers? (*Be their friend; teach them all things; remind them of Jesus’ words*. See [John 14:25–26](#).)
- For Jesus-followers, the Holy Spirit is our friend, helper, teacher, and leader. Which of these do you need the Holy Spirit to be for you right now?
- Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit guiding you to say something or do something? What happened?
- We can’t see the Holy Spirit, but when we pay attention, we can sense Him leading and guiding us. What are some ways you can pay attention to God’s Spirit and respond to His lead? (*Example: You sense the Holy Spirit speaking to your heart through a new worship song about God’s majesty, and you respond with wonder! You also decide to share the song with someone else.*)

God gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who knows Jesus and chooses to follow Him. Let’s spend some time thanking God in prayer for His powerful, wise, and loving presence who makes His home with us!

Make It Inclusive: Understanding and answering open-ended questions can be difficult for some kids. Modify questions to help all kids participate by changing questions into yes/no format, offering answer choices, and/or providing extended wait time for kids to process.

Small Group Prayer Time

Begin your prayer time by thanking God for making a forever relationship with Him possible through Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Invite kids to ask God to help them pay attention to the Spirit at work in them and to respond to His lead. And close by encouraging kids to think of someone they know who doesn’t know and follow Jesus and to pray silently for them, asking God to reveal His love to them.

Identity

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Elementary Responding in Worship: Holy Spirit, Lead Me

Make It Inclusive: If kids in your group have lots of energy, get them up and moving in this worship response activity by inviting them to walk (or run) in place as they imagine being on the road.

Invite kids to close their eyes and imagine the following scene: **Imagine you are walking down a road by yourself, and there are no signs helping you know which way to go. What do you notice as you walk down the road?** Pause after each question for kids to think and imagine quietly.

Is it daytime or nighttime? Is it nice and warm outside, or is it bitter and cold? As the wind blows, are you moving with the wind or against it? Are you walking downhill or uphill? Are you breathing easily, or are you breathing heavily? Is the road straight and easy to follow, or are there lots of twists and turns?

Invite kids to open their eyes. Ask everyone to take a deep, calming breath, and then place their palms together with fingers straight and fingertips touching.

Display the [Hand Prayer Slide](#). **Let's learn a hand prayer that we can use anytime to remember that, as followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit—who is God—leads us! In this prayer, we will use our fingers to spell “Holy Spirit” and then together say, “Lead me.”**

One finger at a time and starting with the thumbs, show kids how to separate each pair of fingers and bring them back together again (all while keeping the palms and other fingers touching). Each time a pair of fingers is separated and brought back together, say a letter. Go through each pair of fingers twice, spelling out the following in order:

“H”—Thumbs separate and come back together.

“O”—Pointer fingers separate and come back together. “L”—

Middle fingers separate and come back together. “Y”—Ring

fingers separate and come back together. “S”—Pinky fingers

separate and come back together. “P”—Thumbs separate and come back together.

“T”—Pointer fingers separate and come back together.

“R”—Middle fingers separate and come back together. “I”—

Ring fingers separate and come back together. “T”—Pinky

fingers separate and come back together.

When finished, everyone will clasp their hands together and say, “Lead me.” Then try it a second time together.

Leader Tip: Invite another children’s ministry leader, a church leader, or a parent to come in and read the words of the Holy Spirit below. Hearing a new voice will help kids engage even more!

Invite the kids to close their eyes again. Keeping hands clasped, invite them to imagine they’re back on the road, but this time they see an arrow directing them which way to go. Use the following words to invite kids to imagine the Holy Spirit speaking to them:

I am the Holy Spirit—God’s powerful, wise, and loving presence. I will never leave you. I am God, and when you follow Jesus, I’m with you and in you. Day and night, I will guide you. When you feel safe and at peace, I am with you. When you feel scared and alone, I am with you. I will lead you through all the twists and turns in life. I will help you follow Jesus through it all. Because I am leading you, you are led.

Close your worship response time by praying the “H–O–L–Y S–P–I–R–I–T, LEAD ME” hand prayer together.

Blessing Your Kids

Blessing: This week, may you notice the Holy Spirit leading and guiding you. May you give God praise for His Holy Spirit—God’s loving presence—who is available through Jesus, and may you follow Him faithfully each day.

GAME 3: COPY-CAT FREEZE

In this game, kids will copy the motions of the leader, except for the action that requires everyone to freeze. When the leader performs the “freeze action,” anyone who copies the leader instead of freezing is out!

Prior to the start of the game, choose one leader who is willing to act out different motions in front of the group. The leader can be a volunteer or an older kid in your group. With the leader, decide on the designated motion that will signal to kids that they should freeze. For example, putting both hands on the top of her head could be the chosen “freeze action.” Any kid who does not freeze when the leader places her hands on her head is out!

Make It Inclusive! To involve kids with physical limitations, invite them to help you spot the kids who didn’t freeze. Alternatively, have the leader and all the kids remain seated while playing, so their actions are limited to motions that can be done while seated.

Gather kids together. **Are you up for a challenge to see how well you can follow?** Pause for kids to respond. **OK ... let’s do it then!**

Invite your chosen leader to the stage area and introduce him to the kids. **Your challenge is to follow every action our leader performs. However, if he does the “freeze action,” you are not supposed to copy him!** Show the kids the predetermined “freeze action.” **Instead, if you see this movement, you freeze! If you don’t stay perfectly still, then you are out!**

Continue playing rounds until only one person is left. If a leader is having trouble getting kids out, suggest that he speed up his actions so that kids have less time to think before they start following. Play several rounds, as time allows, switching up the leader and “freeze action” each time. Then gather kids together.

When Jesus was on earth with the disciples, they had someone to lead and guide them—Jesus! Jesus knew He would be leaving His disciples, but He promised that He would not leave them alone; God would send them the Holy Spirit—His powerful, loving presence. People who follow Jesus today have that same Holy Spirit, who is God! In this game, you had a leader in front of you to imitate. Similarly, Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit to lead us. The Spirit will never leave us and will help us to become more like Jesus.

GAME 6: BOOKS OF THE BIBLE NOODLE RELAY

*Great game to use every week as practice and keep for future!

In this game, kids will practice putting the 66 books of the Bible in order using sliced sections of a pool noodle!

Leader Tip: Using three different colors of pool noodles will help kids learn and remember the order of books. For example, if using one yellow, one green, and one blue noodle, kids will know to start with the books on the yellow noodle before moving on to the ones on green, and so on.

Ahead of time, slice three standard (approx. 55") pool noodles into 22 donut-shaped pieces, each slice 1.5"–2.5" in height. You will have 66 pieces total. With a permanent marker, write the name of one book of the Bible on each donut-shaped piece. Then cut a vertical slit at the back of each piece so that you can easily slide it on and off a PVC pipe or garment rack.

Old Testament books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

New Testament books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation

Using PVC pipe or a portable garment rack (vertical or horizontal can work!), set up a stand on which kids can slide each of the 66 donut-shaped noodle pieces in the order of the books of the Bible.

Use this game to introduce kids to the books of the Bible or as a review of them! Invite kids to work together to put all 66 books of the Bible onto the rack in order (or, for starters, challenge them to order just the Old Testament or New Testament books).

Encourage them to open their own Bibles to the table of contents for guidance. And play the game either as a team-building activity in which all the kids work together, or set it up as a competition by timing groups to see which group can put the books in correct order fastest. Return to this game week after week, and cheer kids on as they get better each time!

