

SMALL GROUP

TODAY'S WONDER TRUTH: THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US TO SHARE GOD'S STORY



WORD OF WONDER:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

- Acts 1:8

GOD'S BIG STORY:

Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit (Pentecost)
(Acts 2:1-6, 14, 36-41)

POST-LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

- What holiday were the people celebrating when the Holy Spirit came? (*Pentecost, the holiday when people celebrated the first crops of the harvest season*)
- What did the disciples hear when the Holy Spirit came? What did they see? (*They heard a sound like a strong wind. They saw something that looked like flames resting on top of each person.*)
- Who went outside and started to share Jesus' message with people? (*the disciples and Jesus-followers who were in the house*)
- How did the Holy Spirit change the disciples? (*Possible answers: The Holy Spirit gave them courage and boldness to share Jesus' message; the Holy Spirit helped them speak in other languages.*)
- How has the Holy Spirit changed you?
- When did you first hear the good news of Jesus and His love for you?

Welcome Question

- **When have you had to speak in front of people? How did it make you feel?** Allow kids to share their examples. Some feel nervous to speak in front of others, and some enjoy it. Help them think about why this is the case.
- **Sometimes it's hard to speak in front of others. Today we're going to learn about how God sent His Spirit to help His followers share His big story with others.**

Curiosity Questions

- When do you have to be bold or brave?
- Have you ever shared parts of God's big story with others? Tell about it.

Responding in Worship: Flames of The Spirit

- Today we heard in God's big story about how the Holy Spirit filled those who believed in Jesus and empowered them to share His story. Peter got up and boldly shared about Jesus to thousands of people. Does anyone remember what Peter did the night before Jesus died on the cross? Give the kids some time to think and respond. Remind the kids that Peter was so scared of what people might think of him or do to him that he pretended he didn't even know Jesus. Three different times, Peter denied that he even knew Jesus. (If you have time, you can look this up and read it from Luke 22:54–62.)
- Peter went from being scared to admit he knew Jesus to standing up in front of thousands of people so that they would know the good news about Jesus. The difference was that Peter was empowered by the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit lives in us today if we know Jesus! And the Holy Spirit can give us power to share God's story with others!
- Demonstrate these steps for the kids:
 - Trace one hand onto a sheet of construction paper, with your fingers touching. Explain that it's easiest to hold the pencil with your writing hand and to trace the other hand.
 - Cut out the traced hand. Show kids that it looks kind of like a flame!
- Give a sheet of red, yellow, or orange construction paper to each kid. (Be sure there's a mix of those three colors throughout the group.) Invite kids to trace one hand, fingers together, onto their paper and cut it out to make a paper flame. When everyone has their flame cut out, continue.
- When the Holy Spirit came and filled Jesus' disciples on Pentecost, something that looked like flames came and rested on each of them. These flames can remind us that when we follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit fills us too and helps us tell others about Jesus and His love! Let's spend some time praying and listening to the Holy Spirit.
- Invite kids to spread out with their handprint flame and 1–2 coloring utensils. Read the following prayer prompts and pause after each:
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to show you who in your life needs to hear about Jesus.
 - Write that person's name on your handprint flame or draw a picture of them.
 - Ask God to give you ideas for sharing His story with them and to give you courage to share.
 - Pray now for that person by name. Ask God to help their heart to be ready to hear about Jesus and receive His love.
- Set glue sticks or tape near the poster. Then, as kids finish praying, writing, and drawing, invite them to bring their handprint flame to the poster and to glue/tape it to the poster to create a paper fire.
- Close this time by saying a prayer for all the people represented by the flames of the fire.

Word of Wonder Activity

- In this activity, kids will do motions for key words in the Word of Wonder. Consider writing the verse on a whiteboard that all the groups can see or writing it on a posterboard for each group. Underline these key words and phrases: power, Holy Spirit, Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, earth.
- **Our Word of Wonder for the Power of the Spirit series are Jesus' words to His disciples. He promises they will receive the Holy Spirit, and on the day of Pentecost, that's exactly what happened! Let's say the verse together.** Open your Bible to Acts 1:8. Encourage kids to read Acts 1:8 several times together.
- If using, point to the whiteboard or posterboard with the Word of Wonder on it and challenge kids to do certain motions when they say the underlined words. (When we move our bodies, our minds remember things better!) Introduce them to these motions:
 - power: blow gently on hand and reach outward
 - Holy Spirit: point up
 - Jerusalem: take one small step forward
 - Judea and Samaria: take one medium step forward
 - earth: take a very large step forward
- Start by inviting all the kids to say the verse together and do the motions. If your group is up for a challenge, have your group stand in a large circle. Invite kids to go around the circle as quickly as possible, with each person saying just one word from the verse. Whenever a key word is said, everyone can do the motions.

SMALL GROUP PRAYER

God did an amazing thing when He sent the Holy Spirit to His people. God gives us the Holy Spirit too, which gives us the boldness to share His wonderful story with others. Let's thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit!

Ask a few of the kids to share some situations where they may feel nervous or afraid to share God's story. Spend some time inviting kids to pray, asking God to empower them through the Holy Spirit so that they can share His story with those who need to hear it.