

SMALL GROUP

TODAY'S WONDER TRUTH: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES



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:

Peter and Cornelius
(Acts 10:1-5, 9-17, 34-35)

POST-LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

- **God sent an angel to Cornelius! Who was Cornelius? What did the angel tell Cornelius?** *(Cornelius was a Roman military officer who was not Jewish. The angel told him God was pleased with his generosity and devotion to God. The angel also told him to send men to bring Jesus' disciple Peter to his home.)*
- **What did Peter see in his vision?** *(An enormous sheet coming down from the sky. On it were all kinds of animals that were considered impure and that Jews weren't allowed to eat.)*
- **What did the Holy Spirit tell Peter to do after he had the vision?** *(The Spirit told him to get up, go downstairs, and go with the men who were looking for him.)*
- **When Peter got to Cornelius' house, he understood the vision!**
- **What did the vision mean?** *(Possible answers: God doesn't play favorites! God wants everyone to be in a relationship with Him, even non-Jewish people!)*
- **Do you think Peter was surprised by the vision and by what it meant? Why or why not?**
- **God gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who believes! What does this tell us about God and what He is like?**

Welcome Question

- **What is your favorite food? What is your least favorite food?**
- **Today we're going to hear about a time God told Peter to eat something that Peter didn't think he should. Peter discovered something new, and we will too.**

Curiosity Questions

- **What are some of your family's favorite foods? Do any of them come from a specific culture or part of the world?**
- **Do you have any friends, neighbors, or family members who are from a different culture or part of the world than you? What new things (like foods, activities, or holidays) from their culture have you tried?**

Curiosity Activity: Continent Corners

- Ahead of time, make seven signs, one for each continent name: Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America. Tape each of the seven continent signs around the room.
- Gather the kids together for the game. **Today we're going to find out what you know about the continents of the world! There are signs posted for each of the seven continents.** Point to the signs. **I'll give you a clue, and you guess which continent the clue is about. Race to the sign that represents your guess, and we'll find out the right answer together!**
 - **This continent has the fewest people living on it.** (Antarctica)
 - **This continent has the most people living on it.** (Asia)
 - **This is the smallest continent.** (Australia)
 - **This continent has pink dolphins swimming in one of its rivers.** (South America)
 - **This continent has the most countries.** (Africa)
 - **This continent is where the hot dog was invented.** (Europe)
 - **This continent has the longest known cave system.** (North America)
 - **God loves people on this continent.** (Trick question: all of them!)
- **You all sure know a lot about different places! Who learned something new in that game?** Invite one or two kids to share what they learned.
- **There are lots of different kinds of places and people all around the world, and today we're going to find out that Jesus' good news wasn't—and isn't—just for one group of people in one part of the world. God doesn't just give the Holy Spirit to certain people.**
- Today's Wonder Truth is **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES.**

Word of Wonder Activity

- **Our Word of Wonder for the Power of the Spirit series talks about how the Holy Spirit helps us to share about Jesus. Let's say the verse together.** Open your Bible to Acts 1:8. Invite kids to read Acts 1:8 several times together.
- Have your group gather in a circle. After reading the verse several times together, invite kids to sit in a squat position, ready to pop (or jump) for a popcorn-style recitation of the verse.
- **Now that we've practiced our Word of Wonder a few times, let's see how we do when we say it together as if we're jumping kernels of popcorn. When I point to the first person, that person will pop up by jumping up out of his squat and saying the first word of the verse. The next person will pop up and say the next word in the verse. We'll continue to go around our circle, popping up and saying the words of the verse until we finish. Let's get ready to pop!**
- Indicate which direction around the circle you want kids to recite the verse; then have them jump up and say one word of the verse, one after another, until they have recited the whole verse.
- For a bigger challenge, have kids try to go around the circle as fast as possible. Time the group and see if they can beat their own time!

Responding in Worship: Dove Origami

- Set out coloring utensils and gather the kids together. Give each kid an 8" x 8" paper square.
- **Today we learned how God was pleased with Cornelius, a man who was not Jewish but loved God. God showed Peter that Cornelius could have a relationship with God. God invites each of us to have a relationship with Him too! And when we follow Jesus, God gives us the Holy Spirit, who is His powerful, wise, and loving presence. The Holy Spirit is God! And the Holy Spirit is for everyone who believes.**
- **To start, you're going to write "Holy Spirit" in the middle of your paper. Take a few minutes to think about the gift of the Holy Spirit. As you do, write or draw whatever comes to mind.**
- After a few minutes of drawing and writing, invite kids to share some of the things they reflected on.
- **The disciple John writes in the Bible about a time when the Holy Spirit came down from heaven "like a dove" to be with Jesus ([John 1:32](#)). The Holy Spirit is not actually a dove, but sometimes a dove is used as a symbol to represent the Holy Spirit. We're going to turn our papers into doves to help us remember the amazing gift of the Holy Spirit God has given us.**
- Give each kid a copy of the [Origami Instructions Sheet](#). Walk kids through each step, folding your own square into the shape of a dove as they follow your lead.
- **Now, you can keep this dove with you to remember how God has given the Holy Spirit to everyone who believes. If you trust and follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit is with you at this very moment! Think about a friend or family member you could teach how to make a dove this week. As you teach them, tell them all about the Holy Spirit.**

SMALL GROUP PRAYER

Our God is kind and wants a relationship with everyone! He gives His Holy Spirit—who is God—to live with and in every person who follows Jesus! Just like God sent His Holy Spirit to Cornelius, He will send His Spirit to all who believe. Let's take a moment to pray, thanking God for His Holy Spirit.

Invite kids to brainstorm the different ways the Holy Spirit works in the lives of those who believe. Encourage those who would like to pray to thank God for sending His Holy Spirit to everyone who believes and for the Spirit's work in our lives. Then encourage kids to share their own prayer requests and to pray for one another.