

SMALL GROUP

TODAY'S WONDER TRUTH: THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US STRENGTH



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:

Armor of God
(Ephesians 6:10-17)

POST-LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

- Who wrote the letter to the Jesus-followers in Ephesus, which is called Ephesians in the Bible? (*Paul*)
- Can you fill in the blank? Paul compares the Holy Spirit's protection against the devil's tricks to putting on _____ . (*a suit of armor*)
- What are the pieces of the armor of God? Name as many as you can! (*belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes ready to tell God's story, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Holy Spirit*)
- What does the armor of God help us to do? (*Possible answers: stand strong against the enemy's [the devil's] tricky plans, stand firm in obedience to God, resist the devil's tricks*)
- Who helps us stand strong against the devil's tricky plans? (*the Holy Spirit*)
- When has the Holy Spirit helped you to be strong and do what was right?

Welcome Question

- Who is the strongest person you know? If kids hesitate to raise their hands, invite everyone who ate cereal for breakfast to share an answer to the Welcome Question.
- Today we're going to hear about someone who can help us be strong, but it might be a different kind of strength than what you're imagining. I can't wait to share with you.

Curiosity Questions

- What do you think it means to be strong?
- Do you think there are different types of strength? What is something you're strong in?

Curiosity Activity: Who's the Strongest?

- Gather the kids into groups of about 10. If you have fewer than 10 kids total, work together as one group! Place a basket or box containing beanbags in front of each group.
- **Today we're going to complete a challenge! Each group has a basketful of beanbags (or canned foods) in front of them. For this challenge, your group needs to get the basket and all the beanbags across the finish line on the other side of the room.** Point to the finish line. **Here's the catch: Your group can only make one trip across the room, and no one can lift the basket alone.**
- Instruct your volunteers to not allow any kid to carry the basket or box by himself across the room, even if the kid thinks she's strong enough! Instead, encourage creative thinking. Some possible solutions include having multiple members of the group carry the basket together or emptying the basket, giving each kid a beanbag (or empty basket) to carry.
- Congratulate groups as they complete the challenge.
- **It was fun watching you complete this challenge together! Carrying those baskets by yourselves would've been really hard. However, when your whole group worked together, you were stronger. Sometimes, following Jesus can be challenging as well. Just like you needed your group to help you complete the challenge, God gives us someone to help us follow Jesus. God gives us the Holy Spirit!**
- Today's Wonder Truth is **THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US STRENGTH.**

Word of Wonder Activity

- Ahead of time, print one set of the [Footprint Sheets NIV](#) for each small group. Cut out the footprint on each page. Shuffle the sheets in each set so they're out of order.
- **In our Word of Wonder for the Power of the Spirit series, Jesus tells His disciples they are going to receive power to tell people everywhere about Him. The Holy Spirit gives us strength! Let's say the verse together.** Open your Bible to Acts 1:8. Encourage kids to read Acts 1:8 several times together.
- **Today we've learned that we can receive the Holy Spirit's strength when we put on the armor of God. One of the ways the Holy Spirit gives us power is by making our feet ready to go tell others God's story. Let's put these footprints in order to help us remember our Word of Wonder!**
- Set out the Footprint Sheets or give one to each kid. Have kids work together to put the footprints in verse order. Once they're in order, challenge kids to step carefully from footprint to footprint, saying the verse as they go.

Responding in Worship: Put on the Armor of God

- Today we learned that God doesn't leave us on our own to face struggles in life. God gives the Holy Spirit to all followers of Jesus! The Holy Spirit is God, and when we follow Jesus, the Spirit is with us and in us. The Holy Spirit helps us to stand strong when God's enemy, the devil, tries to harm our relationship with God. One way the Holy Spirit gives us strength is through the armor of God. Paul compared how Jesus followers prepare for spiritual battles to how soldiers prepare for physical battles—by putting on armor. Like a soldier who is prepared for battle, we can be prepared each day to follow Jesus.
- Give each kid a copy of the [Armor Cutouts Sheet](#) and set out coloring utensils.
- **Let's take time to remember each piece of the armor of God. As we talk about it, you can color it on your sheet.** Talk through each piece of spiritual armor: belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes ready to tell God's story, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Holy Spirit.
- For each piece, ask kids these questions and give them time to respond as they color:
 - **What do you remember about this piece of armor?**
 - **How does it help protect us?**
 - **How does it help us live God's way?**
- Now give each kid a copy of the [Armor of God Template](#) and invite them to color the person to look like themselves.
- As kids finish coloring, continue: **The Holy Spirit gives us the strength to stand strong when we put on the armor of God. Let's cut out the pieces of armor and glue them onto the person that looks like you! As you glue each piece on, talk with God in prayer. Ask Him to help you put on the armor of God so that you can stay strong when the enemy tries to trick you and harm your relationship with God. Ask God to help you remember that He loves you, died and rose again to save you, and that when you follow Jesus, you're God's kid forever!**
- Set out kid-safe scissors and glue sticks. Give kids time to cut out their armor pieces and glue them onto their person templates. Circulate throughout the room during this time, praying quietly for each kid by name. When kids finish, encourage them to take their sheets home as a reminder to put on the armor of God every day!

SMALL GROUP PRAYER

God gives His Holy Spirit to everyone who loves and follows Jesus! The Holy Spirit is God—our powerful, wise, and loving helper. And when we follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit is in us and with us, giving us strength to do what is right and to show others God's love. Let's talk with God in prayer now and thank Him for giving us strength!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and pray for one another. Encourage them to think and share about areas in their lives where they need the Holy Spirit to help them to be strong. After kids share requests, you can invite several kids to pray for the group. If kids are not comfortable praying out loud, that's OK! You can lead this time of prayer.