

## LESSON 1

## PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

## LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Works Through the Holy Spirit**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 16**GOD'S BIG STORY:** After Jesus goes to heaven, God sends the Holy Spirit to be our helper. God works through the Holy Spirit to lead Paul on missionary journeys to spread the good news.**WORD OF WONDER:** Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. —Romans 8:14

## CURIOSITY

## BELIEF

## FAITH

- Curiosity Activity: Sharing the News
- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Your Love For Me, Jesus Loves Me (remix)
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing



Holy Spirit Our Helper Preschool Spotify playlist



## LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Works Through the Holy Spirit

**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 16

**WORD OF WONDER:** Romans 8:14

We love to go hiking as a family. My kids are young and have logged more hiking miles than many adults! One thing that's important while hiking is following the signs. Signs saying go this way or that way. Signs saying how far you must go before reaching your destination. Signs saying you're here—you made it! It gives us comfort to have guidance when we're walking through the wilderness. Take a moment to read Acts 16:6–15 and remember that Paul and his companions are taking the gospel into unfamiliar territory. It'd be nice to have some guidance along the way.

What did you notice? Paul and his buddies had something better than hiking trail signs—they had the Holy Spirit. The Spirit guided them from place to place, saying, "Take the gospel here, not there," or "You made it. This is the place." We all want clear signs from the Holy Spirit to guide us, but those signs aren't always easy to recognize.

Like hiking, we must stay on the path to see the signs. What's important is that we continue to follow the path God has laid before us, trusting He is working through the Spirit to guide us when we need it. Sometimes that means we need a very clear sign from the Spirit, and other times it means we just stay on the path in obedience and trust that God knows what we need.

—Kramer Mize

Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 1 **FOR LEADERS**  
**PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

Paul, also called Saul, was a Jewish man from Tarsus. He was a Pharisee who persecuted the early church but became a follower of Jesus after encountering Christ on the road to Damascus. Paul proclaimed Jesus to the Gentiles (non-Jews) and endured much persecution himself.

**WHAT?**

While traveling with his companions, Paul was prevented by the Holy Spirit from entering Asia Minor or Bithynia (by-thin-EE-uh). The Spirit instead led him to Macedonia, where Paul preached to a woman named Lydia. The Lord opened her heart to accept the good news of Jesus.

**WHERE?**

Paul and his companions set out from Troas, a coastal city in present-day Turkey. They crossed the Aegean Sea and landed in Neapolis before heading to Philippi. These cities were part of Macedonia, which was located north of Achaia (uh-KAY-uh) in present-day Greece.

**WHEN?**

Acts tells the story of the growth of the early church after Jesus ascended into heaven. This story recounts part of what is known as Paul's Second Missionary Journey, taking place around AD 50. This was several years after Paul's conversion and well into his ministry.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

God promised Abraham that all peoples would be blessed through Abraham's family. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, makes the way for all people to be part of God's kingdom. In Acts, the Holy Spirit empowers Jesus' followers to spread this news to the nations.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

## LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

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**SCRIPTURE:** Acts 16

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## Welcome

### Slide: Series Welcome Loop

#### As kids arrive...

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

#### Video: Countdown

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

## Curiosity Activity: Sharing the News

**SUPPLIES:** globe or world map

Hold up the globe or map. **"Does anyone know what this is?"** Invite answers. **This globe (or map) shows us what the world looks like!** Invite a child up to point to a spot on the map. Point to the place that shows where you are. Then invite a child up to point to another place. Name the country.

**Do you know anything about that country?** Invite answers, but it's OK if the kids don't know. **People live there and some of them don't know about Jesus! How could we tell them about Jesus? Should we yell?** Have kids try yelling. **Hmm, I don't know. They're really far away. They probably can't hear us. Let's try another country.** Invite another child to point to a different place and ask kids if they know anything about it. If you know what language they speak or a food they like to eat, feel free to share.

**There are people here, too, and some of them don't know about Jesus either! Should we make a paper airplane that says, "Jesus loves you" and fly it over? Any other ideas? Wow, these are great ideas. Someone could go there to tell them.**

If there's interest, continue pointing out and discussing different countries.

**Today we're going to learn about a man who told everyone he met about Jesus, whether they were in his hometown or far away across the world. God worked through the Holy Spirit to help him tell everyone about Jesus!"**

**Leader Tip:** This conversation could get really silly, really fast! That's OK, because kids learn best when they're having fun. If they're getting too excited and you're losing them, simply wrap up the conversation and move on. You can also ask someone in your church who is from another country to share about where he is from.

## Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

**RESOURCES:** Tac the Cat puppet

Introduce the kids to Tac, the curious cat.

**Leader:** Hi, Tac! It's great to see you.

**Tac the Cat:** Hmmmmm ...

**Leader:** You seem distracted today. What are you thinking about?

**Tac the Cat:** I heard someone say that a missionary is coming to visit.

**Leader:** Wow! I love meeting missionaries.

**Tac the Cat:** Missionaries are my favorite! I love when a missionary visits! But I have a question ...

**Leader:** Yes?

**Tac the Cat:** What's a missionary?

**Leader:** Oh! It helps to know that. A missionary is someone who tells people about Jesus and serves other people! Often, missionaries travel to faraway places to tell the people there about Jesus.

**Tac the Cat:** That sounds amazing! I can't wait to hear from the missionary who is coming to visit and hear how that person has told others about Jesus. Do you think the missionary traveled to a faraway place?

**Leader:** Missionaries don't always travel far away. Sometimes they share God's messages right in their town. We can all tell people about Jesus wherever we go!

**Tac the Cat:** Yay! I am going to tell all the people I know how much Jesus loves them!

**Leader:** That's great! It reminds me of the story we're going to hear today about a missionary in the Bible who traveled all around sharing about Jesus with many people. We'll learn how the Holy Spirit helped him. The Holy Spirit can help us too!

**Tac the Cat:** That sounds like a great story. I can't wait! Now I'm going to go hear what the missionary has to say!

**"Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: Have you ever traveled anywhere far away? Is it hard for you to tell people about Jesus? Allow the kids to respond. How does God help us do this? Allow the kids to respond. We all see and hear things that make us curious. Did you ever stop to think about how God helps people all over the whole world get to know Jesus?"**

**SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH**

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD WORKS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT**. Today we'll discover how God works through the Holy Spirit!"

## Declaring God's Wonder

### SLIDE: DECLARATION

Encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

**Thank You, God, that You made me!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

**And I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

**Jesus loves me so much;** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

**His love for me is big.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

**The Holy Spirit leads me,** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

**And I can follow You.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

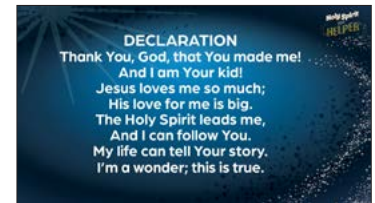
March in place like you're following the leader.

**My life can tell Your story.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

**I'm a wonder; this is true.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



## Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **God, thank You for sending Jesus to save us, and thank You for sending Your Spirit to help us. Thank You for helping us follow You and share the good news about Jesus. Help us learn how Your Spirit works in us as we follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

## Worship

"Today we'll learn how God works through the Holy Spirit. Let's sing together and praise God for how He works through the Holy Spirit!"

**WORSHIP VIDEOS: Your Love For Me, Jesus Loves Me (remix)**

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Acts in the Bible.

### Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** (Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (Point to yourself.)

**VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY**

# GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, purple cloth (sweater, shirt, bedsheet, or other cloth), scissors (prep only), several storybook Bibles (optional)

**RESOURCES:** God's Big Story Flame Sheet (5 copies)

Ahead of time, print five copies of the God's Big Story Flame Sheet and cut apart the flames. Choose six kid volunteers to act out the story in the front. These volunteers will be the three disciples, Paul, the Macedonian man, and Lydia.

**"After Jesus died on the cross, He rose from the dead. Jesus made the way for all people to be part of God's forever kingdom. For 40 days after that, Jesus was with His disciples. He taught them about God's kingdom. Then Jesus went to heaven to be with God the Father.**



**We have so many great ways to hear Jesus' story. We have church, books with stories about Jesus (hold up a stack of storybook Bibles), songs about Jesus, and we have the Bible (hold up the Bible). But a long time ago, the only way to hear the good news was to hear someone else talk about it. And back then, not many people knew that Jesus had lived and died and came back to life!**

**But before Jesus went to heaven, He told His disciples what was coming next in God's big story. God was about to send a special gift—the Holy Spirit! Hold up a flame picture. The Holy Spirit is God—our powerful, wise, and loving helper. The Holy Spirit isn't an actual fire, but when He first came, He looked like a flame on top of people's heads that didn't burn or hurt them. So we're going to use a flame to remind us of the Holy Spirit.**

**Leader Tip:** Why use a flame to represent the Holy Spirit? The Bible in Acts 2:3 describes that when the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, "They saw something that looked like fire in the shapes of tongues."

Give a flame picture to each of the three volunteers who are disciples. Have them hold it in front of them so the other kids can see. **The Holy Spirit came to God's followers and gave them power to spread the good news about Jesus.** Prompt your volunteers to repeat after you, "Jesus loves you." **God was at work. His kingdom was growing.**

**Later, a man named Paul became a follower of Jesus.** Assign another volunteer to be Paul. **Paul used to be against Jesus and His followers. Then Paul saw Jesus, and God changed his heart. The Holy Spirit filled Paul and helped Paul tell people about Jesus.** Give Paul a flame picture and prompt him to repeat after you, "Jesus loves you."

**Paul traveled around and told the good news about Jesus to everyone! He told people they could be saved and follow Jesus.** Direct Paul to walk to different kids and say, "Jesus loves you."

**One time, Paul and his friends traveled to a city that was far away. They did not know where to go next. Then Paul had a vision. A vision is a special picture from the Holy Spirit. Paul saw a man from a place called Macedonia (ma-si-DŌ-nyuh). The man told Paul to come there and help the**



**people.** Have another volunteer move over to the side of the storytelling space and say, “Come over here!” **Macedonia was on the other side of the sea. The Spirit showed Paul where to go next. Paul and his friends got into a boat. They went to Macedonia.** Paul can pretend to be in a boat.

**When they got there, they looked for a place to pray and worship. They found a group of women to talk to.** Give your final volunteer the piece of purple cloth to wear. **One of the women was named Lydia. She sold fancy purple cloth. She worshiped God, but she didn’t know about Jesus. She needed to hear the good news about Jesus. Paul and his friends talked to Lydia. She believed in Jesus!** Give Lydia a Flame Sheet. **She and her family got baptized with water to show that they followed Jesus, and that Jesus forgave them of their sins. Then Lydia invited Paul and his friends to stay at her house.** Thank all the volunteers and invite them to sit.

**The Holy Spirit was at work! He led Paul to Macedonia. Now Lydia trusted Jesus! Paul and his friends told other people about Jesus too. God’s kingdom grew. It is still growing today. More people are getting to know Jesus and trusting Him!** Invite each kid to tell someone nearby, “Jesus loves you!” Encourage them to say it with excitement. Make sure everyone has heard it from someone, then thank the kids for spreading the good news. **We can trust the Holy Spirit to help us too. We can remember that God works through the Holy Spirit.”**

## Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God’s big story:

### SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

**"Our Wonder Truth today is GOD WORKS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.

**A long time ago, God promised a man named Abraham that people of all nations would be blessed through Abraham’s family. Many years later, Jesus, who is a relative of Abraham, made the way for all people to be part of God’s family. The Holy Spirit gave Jesus’ followers the power to spread the good news of Jesus to all the nations. The news kept spreading until it got to us! And it keeps going!**

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for giving us the Holy Spirit to help us.

**Thank You, God for sending Your Holy Spirit to help us! Help us share Jesus’ love with others wherever we go. In Jesus’ name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

**Blessing:** May God work through the Holy Spirit in your life. May God’s Spirit help you live as chosen and beloved children of God.