

LESSON 2

JESUS SENDS THE HOLY SPIRIT (PENTECOST)

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Empowers Us to Share God's Story

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2

GOD'S BIG STORY: While celebrating the first Pentecost after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, the disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit and boldly proclaim the good news that Jesus is Lord!

WORD OF WONDER: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will tell people about me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria. And you will even tell other people about me from one end of the earth to the other. —Acts 1:8

- Welcome Question: When have you had to speak in front of people? How did it make you feel?
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder Activity
- God's Big Story
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Elementary Responding in Worship: Flames of the Spirit
- Preteen Responding in Worship: Mission Journals



INVITATION

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

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WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Empowers Us to Share God's Story

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2

WORD OF WONDER: Acts 1:8

Oh, to have been there ...

Read Acts 2:1–6, 14, 36–41 and imagine the scene: a mighty windstorm, tongues of fire, people suddenly speaking in languages they haven't learned, a crowd baffled by what they're seeing.

And convicted by what they hear.

The disciples wasted no time in taking their new languages out for a spin. They seized the opportunity the Holy Spirit put in front of them to share God's story with the growing crowd in the street.

Peter didn't mention that Jesus' disciples were fearful of arrest or complain about the high priest. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Peter went straight to sharing God's story and helping his audience see their part in it.

We—you, me, all believers—can do the same. We can share God's story not from our own strength but through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Don't let your kids hear this week's story as ancient history. Tell them that the same Holy Spirit who empowered Peter to share is the Holy Spirit living in them if they are followers of Jesus. When opportunities arrive, they too can share the good news of Jesus.

- How do you feel about sharing God's story with others?
- What might happen if you asked the Holy Spirit to give you opportunities to share God's story?
- How will you thank God for letting His story reach you?

—Mikal Keefer

Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 2 **FOR LEADERS**
JESUS SENDS THE HOLY SPIRIT (PENTECOST)

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Jesus gave Peter a special role as His “rock,” His chosen leader of the disciples and the early church (Matthew 16:18). He spoke to the crowds gathered in Jerusalem, including Jews from many different regions and backgrounds who had traveled to celebrate the festival.

WHAT?

God’s Spirit empowers the disciples to communicate the gospel through miraculous means. As Galilean men, they would have been native speakers of Aramaic. But when filled with the Spirit, their language was heard as if in each person’s native tongue.

WHERE?

Jesus told the 11 disciples who remained after Judas’ death to wait in Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit. Jerusalem contained the temple, the central location of the Jewish faith. From there, God spread the good news of Jesus throughout the wider world.

WHEN?

Pentecost is the Jewish festival that comes 50 days after Passover (in Greek, Pentecost literally means 50). This would be the first Pentecost feast following Jesus’ resurrection, since the resurrected Jesus remained with His followers for about 40 days.

CONNECTING TO GOD’S BIG STORY:

God promised Abraham that He would bless the whole world through his family (Genesis 12:1–3). In Acts 2, we see God fulfilling this promise when He sends the Holy Spirit to fill and empower His followers to share His story with people from many nations gathered in Jerusalem.

LESSON 2 ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN

Small Group

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: The Holy Spirit Empowers Us to Share God's Story

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2

WORD OF WONDER: Acts 1:8

Pre-Service Connection (15-20 min)

RESOURCES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils, board games or games

[Games & Activities Guide](#)

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

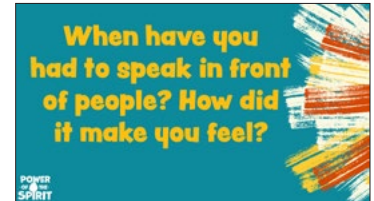
As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Use the Welcome Question and the following "I'm Curious" questions to engage kids. Say "I'm curious.." before each question and give kids an chance to think before answering each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

Consider having a whiteboard or poster for kids to write or draw answers to any of the 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.**



Make It Inclusive: Edit or adjust the Welcome Question if any of the kids in your ministry are nonverbal. For example, ask, "What's the biggest crowd you've ever seen?"

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. Then you will tell people about me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria. And you will even tell other people about me from one end of the earth to the other.

—Acts 1:8 (NirV)

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), whiteboard or posterboards (optional), dry-erase marker or permanent marker (optional)

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.

Leader Tip: Explain to kids that the disciples were in Jerusalem when they received the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jerusalem was nearest to them, Judea and Samaria were a little farther from them, and the ends of the earth were very far! The verse motions reflect these distances.

Make It Inclusive: If kids have limited mobility, they can form a circle in front of themselves with their arms to indicate Jerusalem (close to their body), Judea and Samaria (a little farther from their body), and the ends of the earth (as far away from their body as their arms can reach).

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Invite the kids to look up Acts 2 in their Bibles. Explain that the book of Acts tells how the followers of Jesus started to share His story after He went back to heaven. Acts is a book full of exciting adventures, made possible by the Holy Spirit empowering His people.

Acts 2 takes place during a Jewish festival called Pentecost, when many people from different nations were gathered in Jerusalem. The disciples were together when the Holy Spirit came in a powerful and visible way, just as Jesus had promised. This moment marks the beginning of the early church and the spread of the gospel to many nations. Peter then explains what is happening and clearly shares the message about Jesus. As you read, think about how the coming of the Holy Spirit changes the disciples and how people respond to the message about Jesus.

Ask one of the kids to read Acts 2:1–6 aloud. Invite someone else to read Acts 2:14 to the group. Then have a couple of others read Acts 2:36–41 to the group. Encourage the kids who aren't reading aloud to close their eyes as they listen so that they can picture the amazing things that are going on.

Leader Tip: Give kids the opportunity to volunteer to read aloud. (Avoid asking kids to read aloud if they haven't volunteered to do so.) Some kids struggle with reading, and others simply prefer not to read in front of others.

Elementary 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?**

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!

Leader Tip: For some kids, today might be the first time they hear the good news of Jesus and His love for them! Be ready to talk with them about what it means to believe in and follow Jesus! Consider referring to the Salvation Path resource and inviting your ministry leader and kids' parents into the conversation!

Preteen Questions

- **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 got up in front of all the people and told them the message of Jesus?** (Peter)
- **When the people asked what they should do, what did Peter tell them?** (Ask God for forgiveness, be baptized, and commit to being a follower of Jesus. Then they would receive the Holy Spirit!)
- **What holiday were the people celebrating when the Holy Spirit came? Why do you think this is significant?** (Pentecost, the holiday when people celebrated the first crops of the harvest season. The Holy Spirit coming would be the beginning of a great spiritual harvest when many people would become Jesus-followers, starting with three thousand that day!)
- **How did the Holy Spirit empower Peter and 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 does the Holy Spirit work in Jesus-followers today? How has the Holy Spirit changed you?**

God sent His Holy Spirit to empower us to share His truth with others. Let's take some time to pray, asking the Holy Spirit to fill us with boldness and wisdom.

Small Group Prayer Time

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.

Elementary Responding in Worship: Flames of the Spirit

SUPPLIES: butcher paper or posterboard, masking or painter's tape, glue sticks or tape, construction paper (1 sheet per kid in red, yellow, or orange), pencils (1 per kid), kid-safe scissors, coloring utensils, brown construction paper (optional)

RESOURCES: [Power of the Spirit Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, tape butcher paper or a posterboard to the wall at the kids' level. They will be taping/ gluing paper flames (made from their handprints) to the poster to make a collective fire. Consider creating paper logs out of brown construction paper and taping or gluing them near the bottom of the poster to form the base of the paper fire.

Make It Inclusive: Have precut handprint flames ready for kids who find it hard to use scissors or are unable to handle them. Consider also having adaptive scissors available.

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:

1. 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.
2. 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. Play music from the [Power of the Spirit Elementary Spotify playlist](#) during this time.

Close this time by saying a prayer for all the people represented by the flames of the fire.

Preteen Responding in Worship: Mission Journals

SUPPLIES: writing utensils, coloring utensils

RESOURCES: [Mission Journal \(1 per preteen\)](#), [Power of the Spirit Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print a Mission Journal for each kid. (Use two-sided printing and flip on the short edge.) Fold each journal in half to create a small, four-page booklet.



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Let's spend some time reflecting on our mission as Jesus-followers to share Jesus with others and praying for the Holy Spirit to empower us. Set out writing and coloring utensils and give a Mission Journal to each kid. Invite kids to write their name next to "My Name" on the front cover. Then spend a moment reading each page together. Give kids several minutes to write and draw in their journals as they reflect and pray quietly. Quietly play music from the [Power of the Spirit \(Elementary Spotify playlist\)](#) during this time.

After a few minutes, give kids who would like to share an opportunity to turn to a neighbor and show them their journal. Encourage kids to take their journals home and to continue praying each day for the Holy Spirit's help as they share Jesus and His love with others.