



# DISCIPLES & THE EARLY CHURCH

## Unit 2 • The Jerusalem Church

### UNIT DESCRIPTION

This unit is based on the book of Acts, which serves as the bridge between the gospel writings and the epistles. Acts is the factual, historical account of the beginning of the Christian church. The events examined in this unit include the day of Pentecost, the story of Peter and Cornelius, Paul's conversion, and the corporate and individual work of the Holy Spirit.

These chosen events illustrate key developments in the early church, as it expanded from a local group of believers to a worldwide movement. As God powerfully worked through His church, individual lives were redeemed and transformed, giving glory to God. These lessons are intended to communicate that the power of the gospel was a dynamic force then, as it is now, in changing the lives of all those who believe.



# THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS

Disciples & Early Church • U2#1 1st-3rd Gr. • July 14, 2024

## Concept

God sends the Holy Spirit to live in all believers.

## Goal

Students will learn that God sends the Holy Spirit to live in all believers and grow them by relying on Him.

## Passage

John 14:16-18; Acts 2:1-38

Key Verse: "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38 (NLT)

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p><b>Learning Activity #1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Baby food jar with votive candle inside, 1/room</i></li> <li>• <i>Matches, 1 book/room</i></li> <li>• <i>Flashlight</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Learning Activity #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Picture books, 3/class</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Station:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>International Children's Bible Handbook</i></li> <li>• Toilet paper tube, 1/student</li> <li>• Transparent tape, 1 roll/class</li> <li>• Red tissue paper, ½ pkg./class</li> <li>• Yellow tissue paper, ½ pkg./class</li> <li>• Orange tissue paper, ½ pkg./class</li> <li>• Glue sticks</li> <li>• Scissors</li> </ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information (for the teacher)

Disciples & Early Church • U2#1 1st-3rd Grade • July 14, 2024

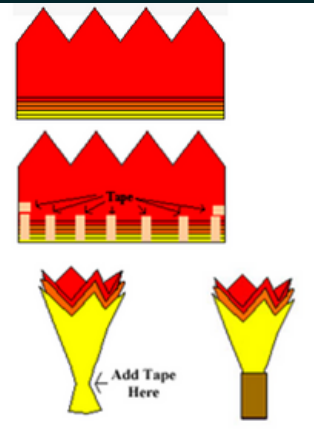
The day of Pentecost was a dramatic fulfillment of the promises that had been made by O.T. prophets and by Christ concerning the coming and personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. “We should not see the essence of this epoch-making event in the tornado sound, the sight of human tongues afire over each person’s head, and the gift of language (these were secondary matters, what we might call the trimmings). We should see the essence of it, rather, in the fact that at nine o’clock that morning the Holy Spirit’s new covenant ministry began, giving each disciple a clear understanding of Jesus’ place in God’s plan, a robust sense of identity and authority as Jesus’ person in this world, and an unlimited boldness in proclaiming Jesus’ power from his throne—the new elements that are so amazing in Peter’s sermon when we recall what sort of man he had been before. Jesus had promised that when the Spirit came he would empower the disciples for witness (Acts 1:5, 8), and Luke evidently means us to see in Peter, whose failures he had diligently chronicled in his gospel, a model instance of that promise being fulfilled. And he means us also to understand that this new covenant ‘gift of the Holy Spirit’—in other words, experiential enjoyment of this new ministry whereby the Spirit glorifies Jesus to, in, and through his people—is promised to all who repent and are baptized, from the moment their discipleship starts (2:38; see also 16:31-33).”[1]

What an awesome privilege we have to be bearers of the Holy Spirit as individuals and as the people of God, the Church. Pray this week that He will use you to glorify Him.

Additional Reading: John 14:25-26; 6:7-15; 1 Corinthians 3:16.

[1] J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit*, © 1984 by J. I. Packer, Fleming Revell Co., p. 89.

## Incorporation Lg. Group



### Activity Stations

#### • Craft – Flames of Fire

- **Instructions:** Cut two shapes out of each color of tissue paper as shown (the actual size should be about 10" by 10" – you should get about 6 pieces per sheet of tissue paper). These will be your flames! Lay each piece of tissue paper down on top of each other as shown here. **Note:** Each piece will overlap just by approximately ¼ of an inch! Tape along the bottom of the tissue paper to help hold it in place for the next step. Be very generous with the tape!
- Loosely roll the tissue so it forms a circle with the yellow on the outside and the red on the inside. Gather in together along the bottom, straight edge, tape. (Pictures to left.) Using a generous amount of glue, stick the tape end of your flame into one of the ends of the toilet paper tube. Let the glue dry, fluff up and spread out your flames a little bit, and you have your very own flames of fire!

#### • Research

- **Instructions:** Look at pages 168-69 of *International Children's Bible Handbook* for information about the Holy Spirit. Discuss the following questions with the students. Who is the Holy Spirit? What are some of the ways He worked in Bible times? How does He work today?

## Introduction Lg. Group

### Object Lesson – Part 1

You will need 3 teachers to do this object lesson. Follow the directions as you move through it.

**Teacher #1:** Would you like to see my new candle? It's really cool... I'm going to take it camping, and read with it in the dark... you want to see it? Someone turn out the lights so we can see how I can read with the light of this candle.

*(Teacher #2 produces candle and teacher #3 turns out the lights. Nothing happens.)*

**Teacher #1:** What's wrong with this darned thing?

**Teacher #3:** Did you light it?

**Teacher #1:** Well, no... But this candle should still work. What do you think, class? Maybe we need to tell this candle it needs to shape up and start shining! What do you think? No?

*(Teacher #2 waves the matches around to get students to suggest using the matches to light the candle, then hands Teacher #1 the matches. Teacher lights the candle.)*

### Debrief

Matches are needed to light the candle so the candle will shine through the glass jar. God wants His light to shine through people. But we are like the jar with the candle that needs to be lighted.

## Introduction Continued

We need God to give us the Holy Spirit so He can shine through us. Our key verse today is, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38 NLT). Repent just means to change our minds about sin. When we repent or admit that we sin and then ask God for His forgiveness, God forgives us and gives us the Holy Spirit. Today we are going to learn about the first time the Holy Spirit came to live forever in all the people who believe in Jesus. That day is called Pentecost. Pentecost is the day when God gave Christians the really great gift that He promised to them, the Holy Spirit.

## Transition

As I read the Bible passage about this day, you will all participate. If you made flames of fire, bring them with you.

## Lesson Lg. Group

**Instructions:** As the narrator reads this story, have the students act out what is read. The other teachers will mobilize the students and prompt them to play their role as the narrator reads their part. Don't worry, their parts aren't too difficult. This part of the lesson is designed to be lots of fun and somewhat crazy, so if things get a little chaotic, that's okay. The goal is for them to learn about Pentecost and to have fun in doing so. As you read the narrative, stop briefly for each group to respond with the assigned sounds or phrases when their part is read.

**Students' parts:** Believers, Roaring Mighty Winds, Flames or Tongues of Fire, The Crowd.

Now, I am going to read the story and you will act it out as we go. I will be the narrator and you are the actors. So, first I need you to volunteer to act out the parts. (Direct students to sit in the group of their choice.) Let's have a group of "believers" over here, some "roaring mighty winds" over here, "flames or tongues of fire" over here, and "the crowd," people who don't believe, over here. When I read the word "believers," all of you believers will say, "We love Jesus." When I read the words "roaring, mighty winds," all of you roaring, mighty winds will loudly whistle like the wind and make sound effects like the wind. When I read the words "flames or tongues of fire," all of you flames or tongues of fire will dance around the believers holding the flames you made on top of your heads. And when I read the words "the crowd," all of you in the crowd will say, "How can this be?!" Okay, let's practice. (Repeat their names several times so they can practice their parts.)

Listen and you play your parts while I read the Bible passage.

Seven weeks had gone by since Jesus' death and resurrection, and the Day of Pentecost had now arrived. As the **believers** met together that day, suddenly there was a sound like a **roaring, mighty wind** in the skies above them and it filled the house where they were meeting.

Then, what looked like **flames or tongues of fire**, appeared and settled on their heads. And the **believers** were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in languages they didn't know, for the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. Many people who believed in God, but didn't know about Jesus, were in Jerusalem that day for the religious celebrations, having arrived from many nations. And when they heard the **roaring, mighty wind** in the sky above the house and saw what looked like **flames or tongues of fire**, the crowd came running to see what it was all about. The people in **the crowd** were stunned to hear their own languages being spoken by the disciples. **"How can this be?"** they exclaimed. "For these men are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking all the native languages of the lands where we were born!"... **The crowds** stood there amazed and perplexed. "What can this mean?" they asked each other. But others in **the crowd** were making fun of them. "They've had too much wine, that's all!" they said. Then Peter stepped forward with the **believers** and shouted to **the crowd**, "Friends of Israel listen to what I have to say. It is not true that these men have had too much wine. They haven't had any wine. Listen to what God said, 'When the last days come, I will give my Spirit to my servants.' Now listen to what I have to say about Jesus. God gave proof that He sent Jesus to do tremendous miracles through Him, as you well know. God followed His plan and let you use the Roman government to murder Him and nail him to the cross. Then God brought Him back to life again, for death could not hold this man in its power... Therefore I clearly say to everyone in Israel that God has made this Jesus you crucified on the cross to be the Lord, the Messiah!" These words of Peter's moved **the crowd** deeply, and they said to him and to the **believers**, "Brothers, what should we do?" And Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38 NLT). For Christ promised Him to each one of you who has been called by the Lord our God, and to your children and even to those in distant lands!" Then Peter talked to them for a long time, telling about Jesus and how He had died for their sins. And those who believed Peter were baptized—about three thousand in all.

**Transition:** Excellent job, class. Now let's spend the next few minutes talking about what that day means to us.

Who remembers the name of this day when the Holy Spirit came to live in those who believe in Jesus? (It is called Pentecost.) Hundreds of years before Pentecost, God promised the Jewish people that He would send His Holy Spirit to teach and guide them. After Jesus went up to heaven, God sent His Holy Spirit to live in everyone who believed in Jesus. God's Holy Spirit still comes to live in everyone who asks Jesus for forgiveness of their sins. But we don't see things like flames of fire on peoples' heads as they did at Pentecost because God chose to make it very obvious in this special way when the Holy Spirit first came to live in believers. If you have made a decision to have a personal relationship with God through Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in you. Isn't that awesome? God Himself lives in you.

## Transition

### Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Let's light the candle.

#### Object Lesson – Part 2

**Instructions:** Light the candle from the Introduction. Turn the lights out, use the flashlight if needed and quickly finish with the following.

The candle represents the Holy Spirit and the candleholder represents us. How do you know if you have the Holy Spirit? Our key verse says, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). If you have received God's forgiveness for your sins, then you have the Holy Spirit. The lighted candles represent the Holy Spirit, and the jars represent us. If we are Christians, we want the Holy Spirit to shine out of our lives like the light shines out of the candleholders. As you learn to ask for and accept the Holy Spirit's help, you will begin to change. You will begin to think more like God and then act more like Him. This is because the Holy Spirit is giving you the ability. He is shining through you to show others what God is like. As we ask the Holy Spirit to help us, His light shines through us like the candle light shines through the jar.

## Transition

### Learning Activity#2 Sm. Groups

Let's get into small groups to talk about the person of the Holy Spirit.

As the Holy Spirit enters our lives, He makes God more personal to us and gives us the power to live our lives the way God wants us to live them. Through the Holy Spirit's power we can begin to change from the inside out.

The Holy Spirit helps each Christian to understand what is true about God and about us. He gives us the desire to get to know Him. He gives us the words we need to tell others about Jesus. And He brings to our attention when we have sinned so that we better understand His love, thank Him for His forgiveness and learn to ask Him to change us.

- What if you don't feel like you have the Holy Spirit? Does it mean He never came into your life or that He has left you? What do you do when you have a bad day, feel sad, afraid or mad at someone? (That is the best time to say to God, "I know the Bible says you are there and that you love me even though I don't feel like it right now. Help me, Holy Spirit!") The Bible promises that you have the Holy Spirit and He will never leave you. He will let you know that He is with you if you ask Him.
- If the Holy Spirit is always with you, why doesn't He always help you? How do we get the Holy Spirit's help? (Allow students time to answer.) How do you get anyone's help? You ask! Talk to God about the things you need help with. Sometimes we blow it and lose self-control. We can ask God's Holy Spirit to help us with self-control. Sometimes we get mad and feel bitter and angry even though we know it's wrong.

## Learning Activity# 2 Continued

- The Holy Spirit wants to help us forgive the people who make us angry, so that we can love them instead of wanting to get even! He doesn't always change us as quickly as we'd like so we have to keep asking and making the choices we know are right. He wants to change us to be more like Jesus and He will as we make choices to love others.

**Missions Prayer:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

## Transition

Let's play a game.

## Learning Activity# 3 Lg. Group

### Game - "It's in the Book"

**Instructions:** Divide the students into 3 teams. Line them up at one end of the room. Place 3 chairs at the opposite end, one for each team. Put some cut flames from the Activity Station in the three books. Give a book to the first player in each line. At the signal, the players will hold the book on their heads and walk across the room, around the chair and back. The player will put the book on the next player's head. That player will walk across the room, around the chair and back. Continue in the same way until all players have had a turn. The first team done is the winner. To add variety, play it again having the players hold the book and walk backward, hop, twirl, or whatever.

### Debrief:

In the game, the paper was put in the book. Because the paper was put into the book, wherever the book went the paper went. In the same way, the Holy Spirit has been put in everyone who has asked Jesus to forgive his or her sin. Because the Holy Spirit is in you, everywhere you go the Holy Spirit also goes. If you go to school, the Holy Spirit is with you. When you go to a friend's house, the Holy Spirit is with you. When you are in your bed at night and have a scary dream, the Holy Spirit is with you. God has promised that everyone who believes in Jesus will be given the Holy Spirit to live inside him or her.

## Optional Activity

Sing "Down in My Heart." Light the candle to remind the children that if they have asked for God's forgiveness the Holy Spirit lives in their hearts.