

ALLEY SG – May 13-15, 2023

Today's Bible Story: Level Up (The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost) • Acts 2:1-41

Today's Key Question: When have you needed help?

Today's Bottom Line: God sent the Holy Spirit to help you

Monthly Memory Verse: *So we can say boldly, "The Lord helps me. I will not be afraid."* Hebrews 13:6a (NIRV)

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: bean bags (3 per group), bucket (1 per group), white board (1 per group), dry erase marker

What You Do:

- Divide kids into 2 teams and ask kids to gather with their teams on one end of your group space.
- Place a bucket at the other end of your group space.
- Give teams a few minutes to discuss and decide on a team name.
- Write each of the team names on the white board. You will be using this to keep score.
- Explain that you will be playing a game that tests their knowledge of today's Bible story. You will take turns asking teams various questions. If their team answers the question correctly, they will get three tries to toss a bean bag into the bucket.
- Teams will only be awarded points for getting bean bags in the bucket, not simply for answering questions correctly.
- Teams will receive one point for every bean bag that makes it in the bucket.
- If a team answers a question incorrectly, the other team has a chance to answer the question. If they answer the question correctly, someone on their team can throw two bean bags into the bucket.
- The game ends once all questions have been asked. Tally up each team's points and declare the winner!
- Questions to ask (sample answers provided include as much detail as possible, to account for all possibilities of correct answers):
 1. Once Jesus ascended to heaven, where did His friends go, and what were they doing? (*They returned to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit.*)
 2. What happened while the believers had gotten together to pray? (*They heard a rising sound like wind. Glowing flames appeared, hovering in the air. The fire separated into tongues of flame, which rested over their heads. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.*)
 3. Why did God give Peter and His other followers the ability to speak in different languages? (*There were people gathering in Jerusalem from all different countries for Pentecost. They all spoke different languages. Not all of them were believers in Jesus, so this enabled them to hear about Jesus in their own language so they could understand and believe in who He was.*)
 4. What was Pentecost? (*It was called the Feast of Weeks, and it was a time of celebration at the beginning of the wheat harvest.*)
 5. What was the crowd's initial reaction to the sudden ability of Jesus' followers speaking in different languages? (*Many of them were skeptical at first, thinking they were crazy.*)
 6. Who got up to speak to the whole crowd, to explain the story of Jesus? (*Peter*)
 7. What happened once Peter explained everything? (*About 3,000 people began to believe and ask to be baptized.*)
 8. What is our Bottom Line from today's story? (*God sent the Holy Spirit to help you.*)
 9. What is this month's virtue, and what does it mean? (*Confidence: Living like you believe God is with you.*)
 10. What is our Memory Verse this month? (*So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid." -Hebrews 13:6a*)
- After the game, ask the following questions for discussion:
 - What parts of this story stood out to you as odd or unique?
 - What does this story tell us about the Holy Spirit in our lives today?

- How can we rely on the Holy Spirit when we need confidence or when we're going through a tough time?
- Remind kids that God is big enough for anything we are going through. We can have confidence in knowing that the same God who sent tongues of fire and made people miraculously begin speaking in different languages, is also here for us and all that we are facing.

2. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Prepared "Verse Pellets" (2 sets per group), oversized die (one per group), Bibles

What You Do:

- Place the prepared verse circles face down in a row.
- Choose a volunteer to go first. They will roll the oversized die. Whatever number the die lands on, they will count that many circles forward.
- Have the child pick up the one they land on.
- Choose another kid to go next and repeat this process until everyone has had a turn to pick up a circle.
- After everyone has gotten one, hand out Bibles and instruct kids to look up the verse listed on their circle.
- Let kids take turns reading their verses out loud for the group and allow time for discussion.
- Ask questions to spark conversation such as:
 - Which of these verses stands out to you?
 - Put one of the verses in your own words.
 - Do any of the verses not make sense to you?
- Encourage kids to pick a verse that felt particularly meaningful to them so they can think about it throughout the week ahead.
- Explain that we have God's Word as a way for God to be here with us always.

3. Discussion Questions

Ask:

- When have you needed help?
- When you need help, from whom do you typically seek help first?
- How do you know when the Holy Spirit is guiding you?
- Do you ever hesitate to rely on God for help? Why or why not?
- How can believing the Holy Spirit is here to help you, build your confidence?

4. Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

What You Need: "Fire Decoder" Page (1 per pair of students), pens

What You Do:

- Put kids in pairs and give each pair a copy of the "Fire Decoder" Activity Page and a pen.
- Instruct them to work together in order to unscramble the letters in each of the fires and write the answer in the blanks next to it.
- After they have unscrambled each word, they will use the letters in boxes in order to fill in letters in the corresponding blank spaces for the secret message at the bottom of the page.

- Once everyone has had a chance to finish, let kids say what the secret message was. (*GOD IS WITH YOU.*)
- See below for answers to each scrambled word:
 1. Pentecost
 2. Tongues
 3. Languages
 4. Believers
 5. Holy Spirit
 6. Peter
 7. Jerusalem
 8. Confidence
 9. Wind
 10. Fire
- Ask:
 - When have you needed help?
 - Who helped you in those situations?
 - Who helped the believers in today's story?
- Take time to help kids understand that sometimes we are faced with confusing situations that feel like a bunch of scrambled letters. It can be tricky to figure out what things mean or to know how to make the right decision. But just like God sent the Holy Spirit to help everything make sense to the people who gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost, God has done this for us, too!

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Nothing

What You Do:

- Ask: What was today's Bottom Line? (*God sent the Holy Spirit to help you.*)
- Explain that God gave us the Holy Spirit as a way of promising to always be with us. When we have the Holy Spirit to help us and guide us, it allows us to see things in a whole new way.
- Prompt kids to think about how they have been able to see the Holy Spirit work in their lives. Maybe they had a big test or a performance and felt peace as they took on the challenge. Or maybe they were having a hard time getting along with a sibling and were able to maintain self-control and patience while interacting with this sibling.
- Allow kids to spend a moment in prayer, thanking God for the Holy Spirit's presence.
- Close in prayer for your group.

What You Say:

"Dear God,

Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us. Thank You for those specific times where we are able to look back and see how You were with us, guiding us along the way. Help us to recognize and acknowledge how You are continuing to work in our lives. We love You. Amen."