

# SPREAD THE SPIRIT

We can encourage others through the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2  
John 15:26, 27

## SESSION SUPPLIES

- ★ Bibles
- ★ newspaper and tape
- ★ drinking straws and paper
- ★ scissors and markers
- ★ food coloring or tempera paints
- ★ red, yellow, and orange tissue or construction paper
- ★ photocopies of the Whiz Quiz (page 114) and Power Page! (page 113)

## MIGHTY MEMORY VERSE

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? 1 Corinthians 3:16

*(For older kids, add in John 16:13a: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.")*

## SESSION OBJECTIVES

During this session, children will

- ★ understand that the Holy Spirit strengthens our faith
- ★ realize we can help others through the Holy Spirit
- ★ learn that God works through the Holy Spirit
- ★ express thanks for the Holy Spirit's help

## BIBLE BACKGROUND

Have you ever been in the position to speak out for Christ or convict someone of the truth, yet you chose to remain silent? Too often our own insecurities, shyness, or personal fears prevent us from boldly standing on God's Word or witnessing about Jesus. When the Holy Spirit arrived, Peter could have succumbed to these same human fears and frailties—but what changes might there have been if three thousand people hadn't accepted Jesus and been baptized on that glorious day of Pentecost? When the flash and fire of the Holy Spirit came upon Peter, he was turned into a dynamo for God and was given the words and wisdom to speak the truth about Jesus. Peter spread his passionate faith to a host of others, and look at the powerful

results! Can we do any less? Thank you, Spirit, for the fire, the fortitude, and the faith that only you can bring us!

Kids often hear that children are to be seen and not heard. But not when it comes to witnessing for Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit! Kids need to understand that it's important to testify about Jesus and that the Holy Spirit will direct their words and give them wisdom about when to speak boldly, when to serve passionately, and how to spread their faith to others. Use this lesson to help kids realize that just as a fire spreads in dry brush, so the flame of the Holy Spirit will ignite "dry souls" for Christ!

## POWER FOCUS

Before kids arrive, spread newspapers on a table and set out drinking straws, food coloring or tempera paint, and paper. To protect kids' clothing, you may wish to make instant paint "shirts" by cutting arm holes in the sides of paper grocery sacks, cutting off the bottom of the sacks, and cutting up one side. When kids put the sacks on backwards, their clothes will be protected from any splatters.

Gather kids and ask them to name things that spread or become larger. Suggestions might include rings in a pool, love, a cold, an oil spill, or even peanut butter on sandwiches! Then say: **There are lots of things that spread by themselves or with a bit of help. Some things that spread aren't good, such as colds and viruses. But others are very good, such as love or kindness. Let's see how this food coloring spreads on paper.**

Hand each child a piece of paper. Have children drop several drops of food coloring or paint on the papers, then use drinking straws to blow the droplets very gently. The color will wiggle and spread across the paper in interesting and unusual designs. Challenge kids to spread the thin runners of color clear across the page and from top to bottom.

As kids spread the color around their papers, say: **The air you're blowing through the drinking straws is really helping you spread the color a long way across your pictures! We can't see the air, but we see how it helps spread the paint. How is this like how the Holy Spirit helps us spread love, kindness, and encouragement to others?**



## Lesson 12

Invite kids to share their responses, then say: **We can't see the Holy Spirit with our eyes, but we can see the things the Spirit helps us do. Today we'll be learning about how the Holy Spirit helps our own faith grow and empowers us to help others by spreading faith, God's love, encouragement, and more to people everywhere!** Ask:

- ★ **Why is it good to help others? to encourage them? to love them?**
- ★ **How does helping spread God's love and Jesus' forgiveness bring others closer to God? bring us closer to God?**

When the pictures are finished, set them aside to dry. Then say: **The Holy Spirit helps us overcome our own troubles and strengthens our own faith, but God's Spirit also enables us to help others by strengthening their faith. One way we help others is by telling them about Jesus. Let's discover how the Holy Spirit gave Peter the wisdom and courage to help others by telling them about Jesus.**

### POWER POINTERS

Tell kids that the Holy Spirit is represented in many ways throughout the Bible, such as a dove, the wind, and tongues of fire at Pentecost.

### THE MIGHTY MESSAGE

Before class, cut red, orange, and yellow tissue or construction paper into flame shapes, six flames for each child.

Gather kids and ask them to tell about times they have told others about Jesus or God's love. Encourage kids to tell how they felt when they shared their news and how the other person responded.

Say: **I can't think of anything better than telling someone about Jesus. But it's not always easy to talk in front of a lot of people or to know what to say even if we're only talking to one person! Peter discovered that the Holy Spirit gives us courage to speak and the right words to say. Our Bible story comes from Acts 1 and 2. Listen to this poem retelling the story of how the Holy Spirit helped Peter tell others about Jesus. You can follow along with the actions.**

Read aloud the following poem, which is based on Acts 2. When you read the part about the tongues of fire, toss the paper flames into the air over the heads of the kids. If some kids in your class can read, photocopy the poem for each reader and let kids take turns each reading a line of the poem.

**It was after Jesus had risen to heaven  
That Peter was gathered with the other eleven.**

**The disciples were waiting for Jesus' promise of power;  
They just weren't sure of the minute or hour.**

**When, whoooosh! A great wind from heaven blew all around**  
(have kids blow like the wind),

**And what seemed to be flames came tumbling down!** (Toss the  
paper flames over kids' heads.)

**The Spirit of God had arrived with a start—**

**And everyone there praised God with his heart!** (Say, "God is  
great!")

**A crowd gathered 'round; they stared in surprise—**(stare in surprise)

**They couldn't believe their ears or their eyes!** (Rub your eyes in disbelief.)

**Then Peter stood tall, and he planted his feet—**(stand tall and straight)

**And the Spirit gave Peter the words he should speak.**

**Peter spoke to the crowd of God's Word and God's will,**

**And he told them that Jesus was alive with God still!**

**Peter told them of Jesus, then said "Everyone,**

**Repent and be baptized in the name of the Son!**

**Then the Holy Spirit shall come to you, too—**

**God gave this fine promise to me and to you!"**

**And because the Spirit told Peter what to say,**

**Three thousand accepted Lord Jesus that day!** (Lead kids in a round of  
applause and cheering.)

Say: **Wow! The Holy Spirit gave Peter lots of courage to speak up for  
Jesus, and he also gave Peter the right words to say!** Ask:

★ **How did Peter help the people that day? How did the Holy Spirit  
help the people?**

★ **What might happen if we never told anyone about Jesus?**

★ **How can the Holy Spirit help us tell others about Jesus?**

Say: **The Bible promises us that the Holy Spirit will help us tell others  
about Jesus.** Read aloud John 15:26, 27. Then ask:

★ **What can we tell others about Jesus? about God? about the Holy Spirit?**

Have each child collect three paper flames (you'll use the rest later), then  
invite kids to write on each flame the name of one person they can tell about  
Jesus this week. When the flames are finished, have children tape them to the  
tops of their blow paintings.

Say: **The Holy Spirit gives us confidence, courage, and the right words  
to tell others about Jesus. See if you can tell the people whose names  
you listed something about Jesus this week. When we put our faith and**

love for Jesus into action with the help of the Holy Spirit, we're serving God and helping others at the same time.

In the story of how the Holy Spirit came to help Peter speak with courage, the flames and wind represented the Holy Spirit. Now let's use the rest of our pretend flames to play a lively game as we learn more about how the Holy Spirit helps us spread our faith to others!

Help children mark Acts 2 in their Bibles with the blue bookmark ribbons they've been using for several weeks. If kids don't have their bookmarks, let them use 8-inch lengths of blue ribbon and the Bible icons from page 123 to make them.

Encourage kids to refer to the story often and to share the story about Peter at Pentecost with their families tonight.



## THE MESSAGE IN MOTION

Have kids sit together closely and say: **In the Bible story about Peter and the Holy Spirit, the tongues of fire came from heaven and sat above the people's heads and shoulders. In this game, you can either sit or lie down. I'll choose someone to toss the paper flames over you. If a paper flame lands on you, you can pop up and tell something about Jesus, God, or the Holy Spirit, such as "Jesus loves and forgives us" or "Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be our helper!"**

Choose someone to toss the paper flames. After children have said things about Jesus, God, or the Holy Spirit, choose a new tosser. Continue until each child has tossed the paper flames and until all the kids have had a chance to say something about Jesus, God, or the Holy Spirit.

When you're done playing the game, gather kids and ask:

- ★ **What are important things people should know about Jesus? about God? about the Holy Spirit?**
- ★ **How can knowing these things change someone's life? increase their faith? increase our own faith?**
- ★ **What can you do if you're shy or don't know what to say to someone about Jesus?**
- ★ **How can prayer help us have courage to work through the Holy Spirit?**



Have each child collect three more paper flames and write words about Jesus, God, or the Holy Spirit on the flames. Tape those flames around the blow paintings. Then invite children to cut or tear out more paper flames to make “fiery frames” of flames around their paintings.

As kids work, have them practice telling each other things about Jesus, such as how Jesus died for our sins so we could be forgiven and live close to God.

When the pictures are complete, say: **Hang these lovely pictures up in your rooms to remind you to call upon the strength of the Holy Spirit to make you courageous so you can tell others the important, life-changing news about Jesus.**

Now let’s take a look at the Mighty Memory Verse and see what it says about depending on the Holy Spirit to help us help others!

## **SUPER SCRIPTURE**

Have kids form pairs and take turns asking the two questions that make up 1 Corinthians 3:16. For example, one partner will say, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple,” and the other child will say, “and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” Let pairs ask their questions in front of the class, then have the class respond with, “Yes we do, and we’re so glad!” If you have older kids, have them also repeat the extra challenge verse in unison, then have the rest of the kids give a round of applause. End by repeating the Mighty Memory Verse in unison two times.

Say: **When we have God’s Spirit in our lives, he’s also within our hearts. Listen as I read a verse from the Bible—see if you can discover what the Spirit helps us have in our hearts.** Read aloud Romans 5:5, then ask:

- ★ **What two things does the Spirit help us have in our lives?** (Re-read the verse and pause after the words “hope” and “love.”)
- ★ **How can having hope and God’s love help our faith grow?**
- ★ **How can our faith help someone else’s faith become even stronger?**

Say: **When we have the Holy Spirit in our lives and hearts, we also have hope. And we can pass hope on to others through the Holy Spirit’s power by being encouraging, helpful, kind, compassionate, and loving—as well as by teaching others about Jesus. Isn’t it great that we have the Holy Spirit to help us spread hope, love, and kindness to others?** Ask:

- ★ **What can you do this week to pass hope on to someone?**
- ★ **How will you ask the Holy Spirit to help you?**

Say: **God's Spirit is a wonderful friend and helper. And when we depend on the Holy Spirit to help us spread our faith, hope, and love to others, we find even more faith in our own hearts! Let's tell the Holy Spirit how glad we are that he helps us in such amazing ways!**

## **A POWERFUL PROMISE**

Have kids sit in a circle and ask for a moment of silence, then say: **We've been learning about how the Holy Spirit helps us spread our faith, hope, and love to others in amazing ways.**

**We've also discovered that the Holy Spirit not only gives us the courage to tell others about Jesus but also gives us the right words to say. And we've worked on our Mighty Memory Verse, which says (pause and encourage children to repeat the verse with you), "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?"** If you have older kids, repeat the extra challenge verse here.

Hold up the Bible and say: **I'm so glad Jesus promised the gift of the Holy Spirit and that he kept his promise to us! We need God's Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives so much! Let's make our own promise to let the Holy Spirit help us spread our faith to others this week. We can use the names of the people on the paper flames. As we pass the Bible around the circle, we can say, "I will spread my faith with the help of the Holy Spirit!"** Pass the Bible until everyone has had a chance to make a promise. Then end with a prayer asking God for the Holy Spirit's help in spreading faith and love to others.

Before kids leave, allow five or ten minutes to complete the Whiz Quiz from page 114. If you run out of time, be sure to do this page first thing next week. The Whiz Quiz is an invaluable tool that allows kids, teachers, and parents see what kids have learned in the previous three weeks.

Close by singing the Holy Spirit song from page 96. Sing it to the tune of "Jesus Loves Me" as kids gently sway back and forth with their blow-painting pictures and rustle the paper flames.

End by reading Romans 15:13 and saying this responsive good-bye:

Leader: **May the Holy Spirit be with you.**

Children: **And also with you!**

Distribute the Power Page! take-home papers as kids are leaving. Thank children for coming and encourage them to keep their promises this week.

