

GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LOVE HOLY SPIRIT FORGIVE CALL GOD WITH US

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

John 14:1-27; Acts 2:1-4

MEMORY VERSE

“You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you” (Psalm 86:5, NIV*).

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To teach children that God is always with us through the Holy Spirit.

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

This passage is part of a series of lessons that took place after the Last Supper. This was the last opportunity Jesus would have to teach his eleven disciples. Judas had already abandoned the group after his treason.

Jesus had never spoken of this before; now his goal was to assure the eleven that he would always be with them by means of his Holy Spirit.

The word “counselor” is a legal term, but it has a defensive connotation, as in “a counselor to defend,” which means “someone who is called.” The Holy Spirit will always be with believers; its job is to guide us to truth and teach us all things. We also remember the words of Jesus when he said “I will be with you.” This refers to two occurrences:

1. When he revealed himself to his disciples (and other believers) after his resurrection.
2. His coming as the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

“Peace” or shalom was a common greeting between Hebrews, but Jesus uses it in this passage in an unusual way. The use of this expression refers to “salvation,” to the redeeming work that would be done for all who believed in him. A profound feeling of being spiritually well, based on the relationship we have with God.

The word “peace” in the Bible means life that God has made whole and complete, including all that which contributes to our good. This does not mean the absence of problems or conflict. Regardless, nothing and no one in this life can take away the peace that Jesus gives us.

The day of Pentecost took place fifty days after the Passover Sabbath of Easter week (Acts 2:1-4). The Old Testament refers to the day of Pentecost as the “celebration of the weeks” because there were seven weeks after the feast of the first fruits. The day of Pentecost is the most important event in the book of Acts. The Jews who did not live in Jerusalem traveled there for this celebration. For them, it was safer to travel by the Mediterranean Sea in the months of May or June (probable months of the feast) than to go in March or April.

When the Holy Spirit came, the disciples were all in the same place. The visible and audible signs of the wind and the fire marked its coming. Fire is the symbol of the presence of God, which fills the heart with purity and power.

ADAPTATION

Children often confuse God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. This is understandable as there are many adults who do this as well. The doctrine of the Trinity is essential to orthodox Christianity, but it is very commonly misunderstood. This lesson will help children know the difference. God is three Persons while being one God; this is difficult to understand and explain, but the church recognizes this as true and fundamental to the Christian faith.

The good news is tied to the fact that God has not left us alone. When Jesus prepared his disciples for his departure, he assured them that God would continue to be with them through the Holy Spirit. A Dictionary of the Bible & Christian Doctrine in Everyday English (Eby, Lyons & Truesdale: 2004) explains:

“Spirit is the quality, power, or force that makes a person alive and acting. Spirit cannot be seen, but it is real. This is true of both the Spirit of God and the spirit of people...The phrase Holy Spirit appears only three times in the Old Testament. But this is a very common way of referring to the Spirit of God in the New Testament...The New Testament refers to the Spirit in several important ways. He is the Spirit of God. He is the Spirit of the Lord. He is the Spirit of Christ...The Holy Spirit presents sinners with the claims of Christ and the gospel. He draws people to salvation (John 16:7-15). He makes faith possible and completely changes those who will believe (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2)...Thus, Christian moral virtues are the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ (Romans 8:2; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 5:22-23).”

Pray to the Lord and help your children find the presence of the Holy Spirit, God with us.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Children often have a well-developed sense of security. Tell the group: “God assures us he will always be with us. He does this through the Holy Spirit, which is the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus to his disciples that he would be with them until the end of the age.”

TEACH THE LESSON

Prepare well for this lesson about the Holy Spirit, as children are sure to have lots of questions. Prior to this session study John 14:1-27 and Acts 2:1-4 and be prepared to tell the story in your own words.

We recommend studying the topic and referring any doubts or questions to your pastor. Begin the class by explaining what God’s presence means to us today.

Remember to include songs that allow children to move and that are related to the lesson. Some suggestions include “God is Here,” “Holy Spirit, Fill My Life,” etc.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Three in One

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #140 for this lesson. Previously they learned about God, and about Jesus when he was on earth. Today they learned about the Holy Spirit and the ways in which he helps us. Explain that when we refer to God as Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit, we refer to the Trinity (God in three persons.)

On the worksheet, children see how a person can be three in one. This one woman is a wife, mother, and grandmother all at once. Highlight this and allow children to list various roles that we can fill while being the same person (for example, one may be a son, a brother, and a cousin; yet, he is one person).

Give them time to ask related questions. Be prepared to answer them.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Place the train cars made for this unit in a basket. Ask each child (or those interested) to take one of the cars. Then, tell them to place them in order. You will take the engine with the scripture reference.

Then, have the children with train cars line up. Ask them to place themselves in order according to the verse. Have them walk around the classroom. You can do this while you sing a song. Have a parade. Say that the train needs fuel, or that they need to pick up passengers, or that they have arrived somewhere. Repeat the verse for each “stop” you make.

You can do this activity in small groups to see which one puts the verse in order the fastest. The important part is that you are sure that all the children have memorized the verse.

If you can, give a simple prize to those who memorized the verse. Remember that children are motivated when they are rewarded for something they do.

WRAP-UP

Pray

End the class in prayer. Ask the children to form a circle and join hands. Ask if they have any prayer requests and include them.

Encourage

Help children remember what they should take home and share with their family and friends. Thank each one for helping during the session.

Invite

Give a brief review of the lesson and of the unit. Tell the children something about the next unit that will peak their interest so that they will not miss class. Tell them to invite their friends to also join the group.