

## THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH

All Activity Sheets

### KEY WORDS

CHURCH HOLY SPIRIT BIRTH DEVELOPMENT BODY OF CHRIST

### BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Acts 1

### LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children learn the role that the Holy Spirit played in the birth and development of the church

### MEMORY VERSE

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27, NIV\*).

### PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Luke, the “beloved physician,” wrote the book of Acts. It is a continuation of his account in the book that bears his name. After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples, and speaking to them he opened their minds so that they understood the Scripture and how they were fulfilled, for it was necessary for him to die and be resurrected on the third day, and to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem (Luke 24:46-47).

The disciples witnessed these events, for they walked with Jesus, received his teaching, observed the wonders he did; they saw the resurrection of the dead and witnessed Jesus’ ascension. The command not to leave Jerusalem suggests that the disciples were planning to return to Galilee. The religious leaders of Jerusalem had instigated Jesus’ death, and it was believed that they would persecute his followers.

But Jesus had other plans. He commanded them to wait in the city for the promise of the Holy Spirit: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1: 8)

This describes the power and work that the church of Jesus Christ has to do, the evangelization of the world. Power comes with the Holy Spirit. Every person filled with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit will feel the impulse to carry out God’s command. The Great Commission cannot be fulfilled without this power.

And while this was happening, the disciples persevered - they prayed constantly. They clung to prayer until the answer came (Acts 1:14; Luke 11:13).

What was the result? When the day of Pentecost came, and they were all together, a sound came from heaven like a strong wind, which filled the whole house. Those who were present saw what looked like tongues of fire rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages, which were recognized by the Jews who were in Jerusalem from several nations.

Fire, like the wind, symbolized the divine presence of the Holy Spirit that purifies and sanctifies (Exodus 3: 2; Malachi 3: 2-3). When the Holy Spirit fills the heart of the believer, he also empowers and purifies. We cannot have one without the other. What does this mean? That supernatural power was available to transform lives and equip the Church to obey the Great Commission.

The Holy Spirit filled them and purified their hearts so that they would be empowered to bring the knowledge of the gospel to every nation. Today this truth continues to be fulfilled. When we seek the power of the Holy Spirit in our life, the Holy Spirit fills us and helps us to be witnesses of Jesus.

## INTRODUCE THE LESSON

How do we present the concept of the Holy Spirit to children? Tell the group: "The book of Acts begins with the appearance of Jesus after his resurrection to his disciples, and his instructions to them during that 40-day period. Jesus reaffirms the promise of the Holy Spirit so that the disciples will be filled with the power of God to preach and make known the message of salvation."

Read the following Bible verses that describe the Holy Spirit and if possible write them on the blackboard or a large paper:

John 14:16 - Remains with us forever

John 14:26 - Teaches us and reminds us of the words of Christ

John 15:26 - Testifies about Christ

John 16:8 - Convinces the world about sin

John 16:13 - Guides us in truth

Romans 8:26 - Intercedes for us

Talk to your children about these verses.

## TEACH THE LESSON

Ask your children to follow along as you tell the story.

### Like a strong wind

Jesus' disciples were sitting together, talking about what they would do now that Jesus had ascended to heaven.

"I want to get out of Jerusalem," one of them said. "I'm tired of waiting for something to happen. If the Romans decide to come after us, they will easily find us!"

"We cannot go," said another. "Jesus said to us, 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father.'"

"But how long do we have to wait?"

"I thought Jesus would be back soon! And it has been a week since we saw him go to heaven; And those men dressed in white told us that he would come again, in the same way that he left. I think we should go to the place where we saw him ascend. What do you think?"

"Jesus told us to wait in Jerusalem, and that's where I'm staying!" said Peter, standing among the crowd of 120, encouraging them to continue praying. He said to them, "Jesus promised us that after the Holy Spirit comes, we'll be witnesses for him. Please have patience." As the group prayed, suddenly a sound came from the sky, like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house.

"What is that?" they wanted to know.

Then tongues like fire appeared, resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Outside were Jews from

all the nations under heaven visiting Jerusalem. When they heard the noise, many went to where the disciples were to see what was happening.

They were astonished and amazed, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?"

"This is incredible!" said another.

Others mocked the disciples and said, "They must be drunk."

Then Peter proudly stood up and with a loud voice began to preach to them.

"Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you. Listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk. If you had listened to what the prophets said, you would know that God promised to send His Spirit to all people, and this is what is happening here today. Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

"Oh no!" cried some. "We crucified the Promised One!" Then they asked the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Peter said to them, "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."

"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."

## CONNECT THE LESSON

### Review

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #279-A and #279-B and use it to help review the lesson.

### Activity: A human silhouette

Give your group Student Activity Sheet #279-C with the silhouette of a human body. Explain how the church is the body of Christ (Romans 12:4-5). The body has only one head (Christ), and within it is the brain, which is responsible for sending messages to the body, telling it what to do (run, breathe, eat, sleep, etc.).

To get on our feet, the brain sends orders to two hundred muscles, and then they all work together. Christ is the head of the Church. And since the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit are one, they will guide us (the body of Christ) in truth and tell us what we should do (Colossians 1:18).

When you are done with the explanation, let the children color in the body however, they would like to.

Challenge the students to take home their activities to share the lesson with their families and friends.

## PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Review the verse (1 Corinthians 12:27). Write it on the board/poster and repeat it with the children. Then cover a word and repeat the entire verse, including the missing word. Continue covering words until they can say it by heart.

### Activity: If I was Peter

On Student Activity Sheet #279-A and #279-B, have your children find the section titled "A Big Change" and have them write in the speech bubbles what Peter said in each situation. Ask them, "How could Peter's reactions be so different? What caused the big change?" (Have them share their responses with the group.)

### Activity: He makes the difference

Use Student Activity Sheet #279-D to remind the group that the Holy Spirit "Makes the difference". The church uses many names and symbols to refer to the Holy Spirit. Say: "How do these symbols represent the Holy Spirit?"

Dove: peace and love

Fire: purification, cleanliness

Wind: power

He is also comforter, guide, and defender.

**Activity: The birth of the early church**

On the same activity sheet, have your children find and circle the words hidden in the word search. The words are listed below the word search.

## **WRAP-UP**

### **Pray**

To conclude, have a time of prayer with your children, asking the Holy Spirit for help so that you all can be Christ's faithful witnesses.

### **Encourage**

Encourage the group to faithfully witness to their family and friends this week.

### **Invite**

Thank your children for their attendance and announce something about the next lesson to increase their interest. Help them welcome visitors.