

LESSON 1



THE EARLY CHURCH IS ESTABLISHED

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Pentecost

Pentecost, one of the three major annual Jewish feasts, marked the completion of the barley harvest. On this holiday, about fifty days after Jesus' resurrection and ten days after His ascension, Jewish people throughout the Roman empire gathered in the city of Jerusalem to observe the festival of thanksgiving (Lev 23:16).

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit came down fifty days after the crucifixion. Its coming was marked by the sound of a rushing mighty wind and tongues of fire. This fulfilled John the Baptist's words about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire (Lk 3:16), and Prophet Joel's words about the Spirit's outpouring (Jl 2:28-29). The Spirit enabled the apostles to speak in tongues they had not experienced before, allowing the people of many nationalities gathered there to hear their native languages being spoken. As a result, the people were able to see the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles

In Acts 1:26, the disciples were called apostles. Disciple means "follower" or "learner"; apostle means "messenger" or "missionary." During the life of Jesus, the disciples followed Him and He treated them like students. But they had a different role after the ascension of Jesus Christ. They had the special responsibility of preaching the gospel and spreading the news of Jesus' death and resurrection.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

The believers in Jerusalem set good examples for everyone to follow. They gathered together frequently for fellowship, prayer, and teachings by the apostles. They also shared all that they had. They recognized that they were all part of God's family and that it was their responsibility to help one another in any way possible.

It is important for your elementary students to develop this same attitude of worship. At this age, they enjoy worshipping with their peers. With encouragement and guidance, they can learn to commit themselves to the work of God. Lead a discussion on what fellowship means to them. Allow them to brainstorm the many ways they can be like the believers of Jesus' time. To encourage them to participate in God's work, assign specific tasks for them to do during each class (e.g., cleaning up, wiping the board, or collecting the books/materials). By beginning to work for God at this age, they will gradually come to appreciate the responsibility and role they play as a member of God's household.

BIBLE TEXT

Acts 2; 4:32-40

BIBLE TRUTH

The first church in Jerusalem grew as Christians worshipped and worked together.

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To encourage the students to take part in God's church and work.

MEMORY VERSE

"But do not forget to do good and to share."

(Hebrews 13:16a)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus, we pray. Thank You, Lord, for bringing us to church safely so that we can worship You. Last quarter, we learned about how You died on the cross and resurrected to give us salvation. You are the living God and You give us the precious Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, we are about to begin a new quarter. Please help us understand Your words and teachings so that we can be good Christians. We need Your continuous guidance always. Hallelujah! Amen.

VOCABULARY

Pentecost: Jewish festival celebrated at the end of the barley harvest

disciple: follower, learner

apostle: missionary, messenger

ascension: the act or process of going up

REVIEW

Last quarter, we learned about the life of Jesus. While He was on earth, He went many places to preach the word of God. He also helped and healed many people. In Jesus' last week, after His grand entry into Jerusalem, He spent a lot of time with His disciples, teaching them more about God's kingdom. He shared Holy Communion with them, washed their feet, and prayed with them. Then, Jesus was crucified. But as He had promised, He resurrected three days later and stayed in the world for another forty days to teach His disciples. Jesus instructed them to spread the gospel of salvation to the people. The disciples were strengthened, and they bravely witnessed for God.

BIBLE STORY

The Holy Spirit Comes

Before His ascension to heaven, Jesus gave His disciples the important mission of preaching the gospel and caring for the church members. But because Jesus was no longer going to be in the world, He told them to wait in Jerusalem for something very important that would help them spread God's message of salvation. Jesus was talking about the Holy Spirit.

The disciples of Jesus were probably dreading the time when Jesus would ascend to heaven. He had been their Master and Teacher. Boys and girls, if someone close to you who teaches and guides you all this time suddenly needs to go away, how would you feel? How would you react if you were one of His disciples?

Nonetheless, the Lord said to them that He would not leave them alone. Although He was going to ascend to heaven, the Lord promised to send down the Holy Spirit to be with them and to guide them.

After Jesus went back to heaven, Peter and the other disciples stayed in Jerusalem, meeting every day and praying together. They waited patiently for Jesus' promise.

Ten days after Jesus' ascension, the people in Jerusalem gathered to celebrate the Pentecost. It was a special time to thank God for the harvest. The disciples were all praying together in one place. As they prayed, there was suddenly a sound like a rushing mighty wind that filled the house where they were staying and tongues of fire appeared and rested on them. This was the promised Holy Spirit. It filled the apostles, and they began to speak in tongues. They prayed so loudly that the people who had gathered to celebrate the Pentecost began to wonder what was happening. Among the crowd, there were devout Jews who came from many places outside of Jerusalem. They were shocked when they heard their native language

being spoken by the believers who were praying at that time. So the people began to talk among themselves and they wanted to know what all this meant. Some people were amazed, but others thought that the disciples had simply drunk too much wine and didn't know what they were saying.

Peter Comes Forth and Speaks Courageously

The disciples were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Now they realized the importance of the strength from God. After receiving the Holy Spirit, Peter stood up and went to speak to the crowd that had gathered. He realized that the people were in awe. But first, he wanted to correct those who thought they were drunk.

Peter said to the crowd, "What I have to say is very important. You must all listen carefully. We are not drunk, as some of you think. It is only nine in the morning."

Peter spoke with power from God and all the people listened with interest.

Peter continued to say, "What you have just seen and heard is the power of the Holy Spirit from God. Jesus told us that He would give us the Holy Spirit to help us. This is proof to you that Jesus is indeed God. You crucified Jesus on the cross but He has risen and is now in heaven."

3,000 Are Baptized

When the people heard this powerful message, they felt ashamed. They were cut to the heart. Now they believed in Jesus and were sorry that they had crucified Him.

The crowd cried out, "What should we do now?"

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

The people who heard this were glad they still had a

chance to change their ways. They admitted their sins and were baptized. On that day, three thousand were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Now, they were part of God's family.

The Members Share Everything

After that day, the members of God's family met often and talked about Jesus. It was the beginning of regular worship and similar to how we go to church these days. The disciples taught the people about Jesus and what He did while He was on earth. They also sang hymns and prayed together. It was a joyous time for everyone.

However, some of the members did not have a lot of money. They had very few clothes and sometimes, they didn't even have enough food to eat. Their brothers in church who had more money thought that they should

help them, so they decided to share with the ones who had less.

One of the believers who wanted to help was called Barnabas.

"I have a big field," thought Barnabas. "I can sell the land and share the money with the members of God's family."

So Barnabas went and sold his field. He gave the money to the leaders of the church. He knew that Peter and the other apostles would use the money to help the poor people by buying them clothes and food to eat. The other members who could help also shared what they had so that no one in God's family had to suffer. They knew that Jesus wanted them to share and help one another in every way possible.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the _____ (Holy Spirit).
2. Peter told the crowd to repent and be _____ (baptized).
3. The believers _____ (shared) everything so that no one would be in need.
4. The Holy Spirit came the same day Jesus ascended to heaven. False; ten days after.
5. On the Day of Pentecost, over three hundred people got baptized. False; three thousand.
6. Why did some people in the crowd think that the apostles were drunk? Because the apostles were speaking in tongues, which they had never seen or heard.
7. Why did Jesus promise to give His believers the Holy Spirit? So they would have the power to preach and live godly lives.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"But do not forget to do good and to share." (Hebrews 13:16a)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. mighty wind
2. fire
3. baptized, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit
4. False; the people in the crowd heard the disciples speaking their native languages.
5. "But do not forget to do good and to share." (Hebrews 13:16a)
6. To wait in Jerusalem for the promised Holy Spirit.
7. The Holy Spirit gave him strength.
8. Barnabas
9. They listened to the word of God, sang hymns, prayed together, and shared everything with one another.
10. We can speak words of kindness and care for them by praying for them, especially those who are weak in faith and in health. The Bible teaches us that we need to pray and care for one another.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

Testimony: "For Everyone Who Asks, Receives"

In 1984, my family and I were baptized in the True Jesus Church. I was a teenager then. I did not understand the importance of religious education. I was not keen to go to church. As a result, I did not know the teachings of Christianity. Believers used to visit me. After each visit, I would attend a service or two, but would stop after that.

When I was in my first year at college, I started to seek God. I learned that I needed to receive the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of my salvation. But I did not know how to pray for the Holy Spirit. I became worried. A friend I spoke to invited me to attend a charismatic church. I went. Much to my delight, the talk was on how to pray for the Spirit. The speaker said that the Holy Spirit would fill me if I prayed with my hands raised and face lifted, saying "Hallelujah." When the preacher laid hands on me, I fell backwards. But I felt no Holy Spirit filling me. I stood up and felt a little ashamed. I watched the others praying. There was a boy who fell backwards on the floor. He was shouting in agony and was foaming at the mouth. I went home utterly confused.

I related the incident to a religious education teacher in the True Jesus Church. He explained to me that if it was truly the Holy Spirit from God, no one would be physically thrown backwards, foam in the mouth, or be in any agony. For God is a God of love, joy and peace. I felt ashamed before God. So great were my feelings of guilt and shame that I cried instantaneously. I went home and prayed, asking for the forgiveness of God.

The following morning, I felt my guilt and shame lifted. I thanked God for answering my prayer. I promised myself I would never again attend the services of other churches.

In 1988, I attended a student spiritual meeting at the True Jesus Church in Jakarta, Indonesia. On one of the nights, I had a dream. In the dream, I was praying in a field. Suddenly, a strong gust of wind blew, accompanied by a loud sound. I swayed slightly but remained upright. Due to the strength of the wind, my body and tongue vibrated. I had the same dream twice. It was strange. The following morning, I went to church with the confidence that I would surely receive the Holy Spirit. I prayed with faith and great fervor. When I uttered, "Hallelujah," my body and tongue suddenly started vibrating. I could neither control my tongue nor understand the words uttered. I was crying and my heart was filled with joy, for the Lord had answered my prayer. After the prayer, I was very joyful.

I am convinced that the Lord Jesus truly loves His children. We must believe that our prayers will be heard by God and ought to persevere in our prayers. Our God is indeed a living God!

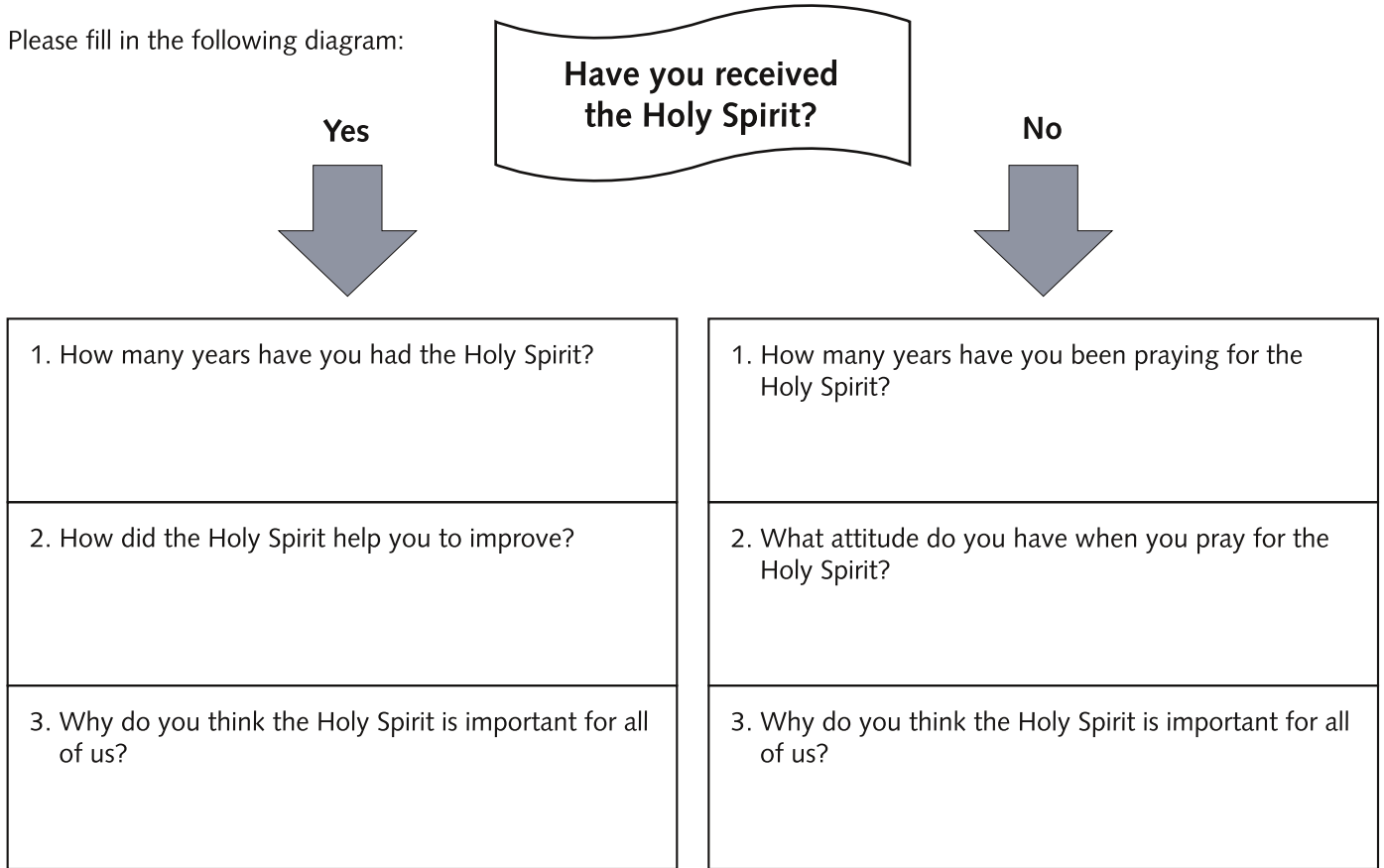
True or False

1. The Holy Spirit that we receive in True Jesus Church doesn't make us fall backward because there is no biblical teaching that says people fall backward when they receive the Holy Spirit. (True.)
2. It is important not to attend other churches and pray in the same manner because they don't have the same Holy Spirit as we do. (True.)
3. It is not necessary to repent to God when we sin. (False.)
4. When we repent and ask God for forgiveness, He will hear our prayers. (True.)
5. When we truly seek Him with all our heart and pray earnestly without doubt, God will grant us the Holy Spirit in His time. (True.)

A. Pray for the promised Holy Spirit

The Lord promised that after He ascended to heaven, He would send the Holy Spirit to the believers. The Lord loved all of His disciples, and He promised that He would not leave them to be orphans. Today, He loves all of us and wishes to give us the promised Holy Spirit, too. All we need to do is to pray earnestly and ask the Lord to send down His Holy Spirit to us.

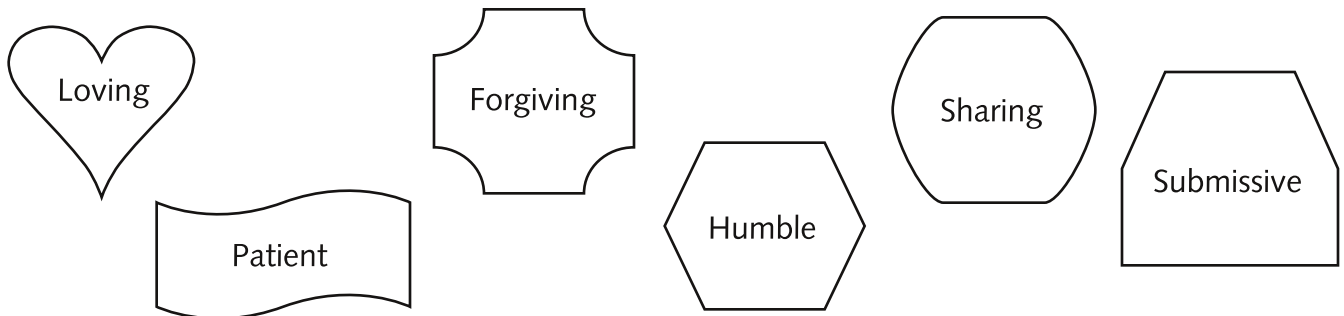
Please fill in the following diagram:



B. Living a life of fellowship with believers

After the disciples received the Holy Spirit and the numbers of believers increased, the church was established. All of the believers lived a life of fellowship with one another, sharing many things in common and showing care for one another.

In order for all of us to live a life of peace with our brothers and sisters in church, we need to have these following characteristics:



Pick any 2 of these good characteristics and give some examples of what you can do to help the brothers and sisters live a life of fellowship in the church.

ACTIVITY

1 In the Church

Objective: To help students identify ways they can share within the church.

Instructions: Remind the students that everyone who is a part of the church can share in its work. In each section, discuss whether your students can do what is listed. Let them suggest others ways to help. Afterwards, have each student choose one thing they will do to help this week.

I can share: my Bible / my hymn book / my pencils / my offerings.

I can pray for: the pastor / my teachers / my friends / those who are weak.

I can say to people: "Jesus loves you" / "Welcome to True Jesus Church" / "I will pray for you."

I can help: clean up the church / the teacher in the class / the elderly.

2 I Can...

Objective: To help students identify things they can do within the church.

Instructions: Look at the word search carefully. They are many words hidden within it. They are all things that you can do in church. The words are horizontal and vertical and can be backward or forward. Some words share letters with other words. See how many you can find! Good luck!

share preach pray clean help obey offer

W	S	H	A	R	E
P	R	E	A	C	H
R	C	L	E	A	N
A	J	P	O	L	R
Y	E	B	O	S	T
D	O	F	F	E	R

E1 Year 3 Book 3 Lesson 1—The Early Church Is Established

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: The first church in Jerusalem grew as Christians worshipped and worked together.

Lesson Objective: To encourage the students to take part in God's church and work.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Hebrews 13:16a)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Fill In the Blank

mighty wind	fire	Holy Spirit	baptized	Jesus Christ
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1. When the disciples were praying, there was suddenly a sound of a rushing _____.
2. As the Holy Spirit came upon the believers, tongues of _____ appeared and rested on them.
3. "Repent and be _____ in the name of _____ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the _____."
4. **True or False:** Everyone in the crowd understood what the disciples were saying in their prayers. _____

Short Answer

5. Write down this week's memory verse without looking.

6. What did Jesus ask His disciples to do after His ascension to heaven?

7. Why do you think Peter had the courage to preach to the crowd?

8. Who sold his field and gave his money to the church?

9. What did the believers do when they gathered together?

10. What can you do to show your love towards your brothers and sisters in church?

