



SESSION

1

# Jesus teaches



**MEETING AIM**

To see how God sent the promised Holy Spirit after Jesus had returned to heaven.



**BIBLE PASSAGE**

Acts 1:1-11; 2:1-42



**BACKGROUND**

The book of Acts is really a continuation of the book of Luke and follows the story from where Luke finished, with a very slight overlap describing Jesus' instructions and the Ascension. At the end of Luke, Jesus has appeared to his disciples after being raised from the dead. He promises to "send you what my Father has promised" (Luke 24:49a), and tells the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until that happens and they are "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49b). These events are retold at the beginning of Acts and we see the promised gift of the Holy Spirit arrive.

**+ CIRCLE TIME**



As you begin the session, invite the children to sit together in a circle and pass around a simple object. When a child has the object, they can share their response to the question. Sometimes it's helpful to have a sand timer so you have time for each person to share if they want to. If a child doesn't want to say anything, they can just pass on the object. Ask the children to share their most surprising moment this week.

**+ SAYING HELLO**



**You will need:** speech bubbles drawn on or cut out of paper; pens

Give out the speech bubbles and ask the group to tell you as many different ways of saying hello in other languages as they can. Write each one on a different speech bubble. Perhaps, have Google translate on hand to look up hello in other languages that they suggest. Give each child one of the speech bubbles to hold for the story.

**+ BIBLE STORY**



**You will need:** tablecloth; loaf of flat bread; bowl of red grapes

Ask the group to tell you what happens at the end of the Easter story. What happens to Jesus? And then what happens that's surprising?

**Say:** After Jesus is raised from the dead, he appears lots of times to his friends and talks to them about a gift that God was going to give them. He told them to make sure they stayed in Jerusalem until that happened. The gift was going to be something called the Holy Spirit. Jesus' friends wanted to know all sorts of things, but Jesus said they didn't need to know everything - just that the Holy Spirit would come and, when he did, they would have power to do amazing things. Then one day, as they were talking, Jesus rose up in the air and disappeared into the clouds. Suddenly, two angels appeared and told the friends that Jesus had gone, but one day he'd come back in the same way they saw him go.

Ask the group to imagine they are Jesus' friends in Jerusalem. How might they be feeling now? Worried? Excited? Expectant? *Ask the children to act this way now.*

The friends were all together in one room when suddenly they heard the sound of a violent wind filling the room. *Ask everyone to make the noise.* Then things got even stranger - they could see what looked like flames resting on each of their heads. *Gently touch each person's head.* And then, to top it all off, they all started speaking in languages that they didn't even know! *Ask everyone to say their hello word from the speech bubbles all at once.* All of these things were signs that the Holy Spirit had come. We remember this day as Pentecost.

There were lots of people in Jerusalem from all over the world and they could hear their languages being spoken. They were amazed and wondered what on earth was going on.

Some people, of course, made fun of the disciples. But Peter, who was one of Jesus' close friends, stood up and started to tell everyone the wonderful story about how Jesus had come and done amazing things, been killed on a cross but then had risen to life again. And now the Holy Spirit, who had been promised in the Jewish holy book for ages and ages, had come. The people couldn't believe their ears and 3,000 of them decided to follow Jesus too.

**+ CHATTING TOGETHER**



Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

- What's your favourite part of the story?
- Is there anything you have a question about?
- How would you have felt if you were the first people to meet the Holy Spirit like this?
- What do you think will happen next in the story?
- Does anyone know what kind of things the disciples could do now because the Holy Spirit was living inside of them?

**+ CREATIVE RESPONSE**



**You will need:** card strips about 5cm wide and long enough to go around a child's head; tissue paper or craft foam in fiery colours; scissors; stapler

Let everyone cut a bunch of flame shapes out of the coloured tissue paper or foam. Staple the card strips so that everyone has one to fit their head and then use the stapler (or a glue stick if you like) to fix the flame shapes in the middle at the front. As you work, talk about the part in the story where the disciples had flames on their heads.

**+ PRAYER**



**You will need:** flame shapes cut from paper or craft foam

Explain that the Holy Spirit coming changed everything for the disciples. They had power to do what Jesus had been doing up until now - healing people and being peace. It also changed everything for the people who decided to follow Jesus on that first Pentecost. We still have the Holy Spirit if we follow Jesus, and we too can ask God to change things in big ways. Ask the children to write something they would like to see changed on a flame. Give them some suggestions: "I would like to see my friend come to know Jesus", "I would like my mum to feel better", "I would like to not be so worried about school".

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