



UNIT 29 | SESSION 1

## JESUS GAVE HIS FOLLOWERS A MISSION

ACTS 1

### KEY PASSAGE:

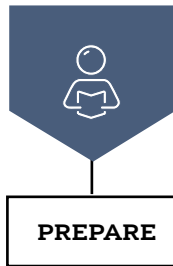
Galatians 5:22-23

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us do God's work. One day, Jesus will return to make all things new and to rule as Lord over all.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

Today's passage is found in the first chapter of the book of Acts. Although Jesus' time on earth was coming to an end, He promised to leave His followers with a special Helper and Guide. God fulfilled His promise to remain with us, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit, He also provided the power to accomplish the mission of His church.

What was Jesus' overall mission for His church? Better yet, how were the apostles supposed to accomplish this feat in Christ's absence?

Jesus' departure meant great uncertainty for His people. He proclaimed the restoration of God's kingdom, but His apostles could not seem to recognize His power at work. Though they requested a timeline for their troubles, the Lord directed their attention away from the passage of earthly time and instead toward the power of His Holy Spirit.

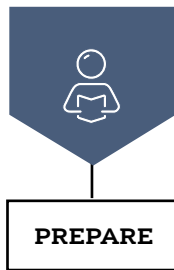
As He did with His early followers, the Lord has called us to be witnesses of His good news to the world. He may not give us the answer to every one of our questions, but He does give us the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim His good news with our words and actions. From Judea to Samaria, near and far, there is no place His power and purpose cannot reach. Knowing we lack the ability to do His will on our own, He provided

His Holy Spirit to aid us on this mission. Jesus even declared in John 16:7 that it is better that He leave us and grant us the Spirit's power in His place.

As you lead kids this week, consider the truth that the Holy Spirit has already provided us the strength needed to witness to the next generation of Christ followers. While we may not understand His timing or plans, we can trust in His ability to provide what is needed to do His will. Help your class see that the Holy Spirit empowers us to face life's uncertainties and to live on mission for His kingdom, leading others to place their trust in the God who provides all we need.

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Disciple:** the Greek word *mathēteuō* means "to make a disciple; to teach, to instruct." Jesus used this verb in Matthew 28:19.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



#### WELCOME

##### Activity Page

- ☐ "Find the Differences" activity page

##### Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ raisins, 20
- ☐ water
- ☐ clear carbonated beverage
- ☐ clear cups, 2

##### Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ dry erase board
- ☐ dry erase marker



#### LEARN

##### Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

##### Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

##### Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

##### Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Gave His Followers a Mission" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ New Testament Israel Map (optional)

##### Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 29, Session 1" questions from kids video

##### Missions Moment

- ☐ "Life and Legacy of C.W. Pruitt" missions video
- ☐ world map

##### Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



#### LOVE

##### Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



#### LIVE

##### Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ "Panda Notebook" printables, 1 per kid
- ☐ lined notebook paper, 5–10 sheets per kid
- ☐ dry erase board

##### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ domino sets, 1 per group

##### Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “Who helps you when you can’t do something by yourself? How do they help you? How does it make you feel when they help you?”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Find the Differences” on the activity page.

**SAY** “Great job noticing all the differences in the two pictures! Today, we will learn how Jesus went back to heaven, but how He also promised to send the Holy Spirit.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### ☐ OPTION 1: DANCING RAISINS



Gather about 20 raisins, water, a clear carbonated beverage, and two clear cups. Display the raisins to the kids and ask them if raisins can dance. Explain that you will perform a quick experiment to see if raisins can dance.

Fill a cup with water and then add 10 raisins. Prompt kids to see if anything happens. Tell kids that the plain water had no “power” to make the raisins dance. Next, fill the other cup with the clear carbonated beverage and add the other 10 raisins. Prompt kids to see if anything happens. Point out how the raisins dance by ascending, or rising up, and then falling back down. Pour out the liquids and dispose of the cups and raisins.

**SAY** “The carbonation, or bubbles in the liquid, gave ‘power’ to the raisins and helped them ascend and dance. In today’s story, Jesus ascended on a cloud back to heaven, and He also promised to send the Holy Spirit to give power to His disciples as they become His witness throughout the earth.”

#### ☐ OPTION 2: BE MY WITNESSES



Tell kids that you are going to read off a list of 15–20 words and they must remember as many words as possible. Consider saying words such as “pumpkin, airplane, Bible, sandwich, hippopotamus, danger, gospel,” etc. Prompt kids to raise their hands to share the words they remember. Record the words they remember on a dry erase board.

Then invite two kids to the front of the room. Direct kids to pay attention to what they are wearing, the color of their hair, eye color, etc. Allow kids 15 seconds to remember as much about them as they can. Then direct the kids to step outside the room with another leader. Ask kids to tell you as many things as they can remember about their appearances. Write down their responses on the dry erase board.

**SAY** “You were able to remember many words and descriptions. As you retold what you heard and saw, you acted as a witness. Today, we will learn that Jesus called His disciples to be His witnesses and tell others all they had heard and seen about Him.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### INTRODUCE the Bible Story

#### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

- \* Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “Hi, kids! I’m [your name], and I can’t wait to share today’s Bible story with you. Let’s take out our Bibles as we get ready to hear today’s story. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Let’s turn in our Bibles to Acts 1. Acts is in the New Testament after the Gospel of John. [Assist kids in finding Acts in their Bible.] Our story today is all about how Jesus gave His followers a mission. Do you know what a mission is? [Allow responses.] A mission is like an important job. Jesus was about to go back to heaven, but before He did, He gave His disciples a very important job that they could only do with His power.”

worship \* I Believe \* offering.  
\* spirit of the Living God

#### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

**SAY** “For the next few weeks, we will learn how the church first began. Before Jesus returned to be with the Father in heaven, He gave His followers a mission. But this is a mission they would not be able to complete in their own power. Jesus would send the Holy Spirit to empower them to be His witnesses in the world.

\* We have a new big picture question to help us remember how important the Holy Spirit is in the lives of believers. Our question is, how does the Holy Spirit help Christians? Anyone have an answer to this question? [Allow responses.] Here is the answer we will learn: The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory. Let’s repeat those three ways the Spirit helps us. Hold up your fingers as we state those things together again. [Guide kids to repeat the three ways the Spirit helps us.] **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.**

#### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “Over the last several weeks, we have learned how God wants all people to know Him and that we can know Him through His Word. Even though the time had come for Jesus to return to His Father, the mission of helping others know Him had not ended. Today, we will learn how Jesus gave His followers a mission to go throughout all the world and be His witnesses.”





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LEARN the Bible Story



#### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 1. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Gave His Followers a Mission.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### JESUS GAVE HIS FOLLOWERS A MISSION

“After Jesus died on the cross and was raised from the dead, He spent time with His disciples. **At the end of His time on earth, Jesus gave His disciples important instructions. First, He told them not to leave the city of Jerusalem. Jesus said the disciples should wait there until God kept His promise to give them the Holy Spirit.**

Jesus reminded the disciples of John the Baptist. John had baptized people with water when they turned away from their sin and turned to God. **Jesus said that in a few days, the disciples would be baptized too. Not with water, but with the Holy Spirit.**

**“Lord, are You giving the kingdom back to Israel now?” the disciples asked.** God was with His people—the Jews—but they looked weak. The Romans ruled over them. The Jewish people wanted to have power over other nations.

**Jesus did not say yes, but He did not say no. “The Father knows when the time is right,” He said. Then Jesus said, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you. You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

**As Jesus’ witnesses, the disciples would tell people what they knew to be true. They would tell people the good news about Jesus in the city of Jerusalem, in the surrounding area of Judea and the nearby area of Samaria, and all over the world. The Holy Spirit would be with them to help them.**

**After Jesus said these things, He went up to heaven. The disciples watched Jesus until a cloud hid Him from their sight. All of a sudden, two men appeared. The men were wearing white clothes. These men asked the disciples, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come again. He will return in the same way that you have seen Him going into heaven.”**

**Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem, as Jesus had instructed them, to pray and wait.**

Christ Connection: Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us do God’s work. One day, Jesus will return to make all things new and to rule as Lord over all. ”

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Active listening:** Instruct kids to listen for the words “Holy Spirit.” Tell kids that when they hear these words, they should flex their arm muscles to be reminded that the Holy Spirit gives us power.

**Display a map:** Display the New Testament Israel Map and point to Jerusalem (H5), Judea (J3), and Samaria (F4) when you mention them in the story.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Before Jesus went back to heaven, He gave the disciples some very important instructions. He told them to stay in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit. He said they would be baptized, not with water, but with the Holy Spirit. What did Jesus say His followers would get when the Holy Spirit comes upon them? **[Allow responses.]** Jesus said they would receive power. What would this power help them do? **[Allow responses.]** The Holy Spirit helped Jesus’ disciples be His witnesses in the world. A witness for Jesus means that we tell others what we know to be true about Him. The disciples were to share all they had experienced with Jesus and preach the gospel.

The Bible teaches us that God there is only one God and that He is three equal, but different, persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is an active part in our salvation, and He comes to live in us when we become a Christian. The Holy Spirit is our Helper, teacher, comforter, and our friend! He helps us be witnesses for Jesus just like the disciples.

After Jesus gave His disciples this important mission, He was lifted up back to heaven until a cloud hid Him from sight. What did the disciples do after Jesus went away? **[Allow responses.]** They returned to Jerusalem like Jesus told them. They prayed and waited for the Holy Spirit. It would be the Holy Spirit who would help them with the mission Jesus gave them. They had to wait for Him and the power He would give them.

The angels told the disciples that Jesus would come back again. And He will! While we wait for Jesus to return, He calls us to be His witnesses. Like the disciples, we can share the truth of the gospel with people we know. ”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us do God’s work. One day, Jesus will return to make all things new and to rule as Lord over all. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 29, Session 1” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Do you think Jesus is going to come back one day riding on a white horse? How can we be sure?
2. How can you live out the mission Jesus gave His followers while you wait for Him to come back?

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display a world map and point to China as you tell this kids about the missionary.

**SAY** “ Cicero Washington (C.W.) Pruitt served as a missionary in China for over 50 years. While



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

he lived in China, C.W. Pruitt helped train leaders for the churches in China by starting a school to teach them about God and the Bible. Along with helping train church leaders, he also helped Lottie Moon, a woman missionary serving in China. C.W. served as a missionary in China during many hard times and throughout his old age. 33

Play the missions video. Close in prayer, thanking God for C.W.'s faithfulness to help Chinese people know about Jesus. Thank God for the school C.W. formed that continues to train leaders. Pray that many more missionaries will go throughout the world to be witnesses for the gospel.

### 6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Galatians 5:22-23 together.

Guide kids to create hand motions for the key passage. Pretend to be a tree while starting the key passage, then lead kids to perform actions for the nine fruits of the Spirit. For example, love could be shown by placing their hand over their heart, joy through a big smile, kindness by a pat on the back, etc. Then practice putting it all together.

**SAY** 33 Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be a Helper to His followers. The Holy Spirit not only empowers us to share the gospel, but He also produces fruit in our lives that shows others how Jesus has made us new by faith in Him. 33

Lead kids to sing "The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

### 7 PRAY (2 minutes)

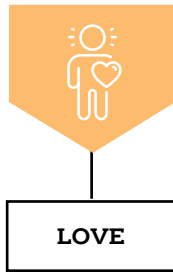
Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** 33 God, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to us! Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to be our Helper and to guide us in truth each day. Amen. 33

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**







## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### **LOVE** God by Applying the Story

#### **1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)**

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 1. Explain that the book of Acts is the fifth book of the New Testament following the four Gospels. Tell kids that it was written by Luke, a Gentile doctor. Explain that Acts is known as the division of church history because it teaches us how the church began and spread throughout parts of the world.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 1:8 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) and the Mount of Olives (H5) on the New Testament Israel Map.

**SAY** “ Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and they would receive power. But this power was not to make them greater than others or have super physical strength. The power of the Holy Spirit would come to help them be Jesus’ witnesses to all parts of the world.

Every person needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Jesus even told His disciples to share about Him with the people of Samaria who were considered their enemies. All people need to hear the gospel because faith in Jesus is the only way to be saved. ”

#### **2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)**

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “ Do we need help to share the gospel and live for Jesus? Why? ”

Tell kids that everyone needs help from the Holy Spirit. Explain that it was the power of the Holy Spirit that allowed the disciples to do the job Jesus gave them. Share that we cannot follow God in our own strength. Remind kids that God loves to help us through His Spirit.

**SAY** “ The Holy Spirit is our Helper. Has the Holy Spirit helped you? How? ”

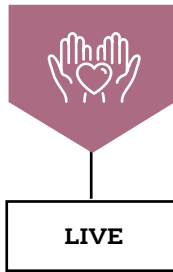
Answers will vary. Share a personal example of how the Holy Spirit has been your Helper. Discuss how the Holy Spirit helps us by leading us to faith in Jesus, reminds us of truth, guides us to follow Jesus’ commands, comforts us, shows us our sin, produces good fruit in our lives, helps us to pray, and is our seal of redemption.

**SAY** “ What is the fruit of the Spirit? ”

Review the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Lead kids to help define what each of these fruits looks like in the lives of believers. Provide examples of how our lives demonstrate the Spirit’s work in our hearts, minds, and actions.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### **LIVE** the Mission

#### **1 ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

##### ☐ **OPTION 1: PANDA NOTEBOOK**



Provide each kid with a “Panda Notebook” printable printed on cardstock, 5–10 sheets of lined notebook paper, and scissors. Lead kids to cut out the panda face. Then direct kids to cut the lined notebook paper into circles approximately the same size as the panda’s face. Assist kids in stapling the panda face and notebook paper together.

Tell kids that China is home to panda bears who live in thick bamboo forests, high in the mountains of central China. Write a short prayer on a dry erase board, thanking God for the work of missionaries. Provide each kid with a pencil and allow time for kids to copy the prayer in their notebook.

**SAY** “Over the next few weeks, we will continue to learn about the missionary C.W. Pruitt. You can bring your notebooks to church and use them to take notes or draw pictures about his work in China. You can also use your notebook to remember to pray for missionaries serving around the world.”

##### ☐ **OPTION 2: CHAIN REACTION**



Form kids into groups of three or four and provide each group with a set of dominoes. Challenge groups to set up their dominoes to set off a chain reaction. Explain that a chain reaction happens if the dominoes are set up one inch apart in a line, and then when one is knocked down they will all fall one after the other.

Allow groups one to two minutes to work together to set up the dominoes the first round. Then give them more time in the second round. Finally, challenge them to set up the dominoes, not in a straight line, but in a design and see if they can still all fall setting off a chain reaction.

**SAY** “You were able to create a chain reaction by knocking over just one domino. The same can be said of witnessing. If one person shares the gospel and leads one person to Jesus, then that person shares the gospel with someone else, and it continues until many have heard. Think how many people we could reach for Jesus if every disciple obeyed the command to be His witness!”

#### **2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.