



Share Everything

(based on Acts 2:37-47)

Everything had changed. The Holy Spirit came down as fire and wind. The people in Jerusalem heard the Spirit arrive. They were amazed by what they saw and heard.

“What should we do?” the people cried. “We want to be followers of Jesus too.”

“Remember what Jesus said,” Peter replied. “Be baptized in the name of Jesus. God’s love will come on you and you will receive the Holy Spirit too.”

Thousands of people were baptized. It was the start of the very first church.

Everyone in the first church loved Jesus very much. They wanted to learn more about him. The disciples told them many stories. They explained how Jesus showed God’s love. They described how he died on the cross and came back to life. They talked about the things Jesus said.

Every day more people heard about Jesus and believed in him. The disciples could even help sick people get better just like Jesus had. They knew that God must be with them.

Day after day, the followers of Jesus gathered to worship God in the temple. Then they went to different homes to eat together. They remembered the last supper that Jesus ate with his disciples. Everyone felt close to Jesus even though they couldn’t see him.

The people in the church tried hard to live the way Jesus did. People who were rich would bring their money to share with those who didn’t have anything. Some people sold their houses and fields and used the money to help others.

Everyone liked the followers of Jesus because they were so kind. Hundreds of people decided to become disciples and so the church grew and grew.



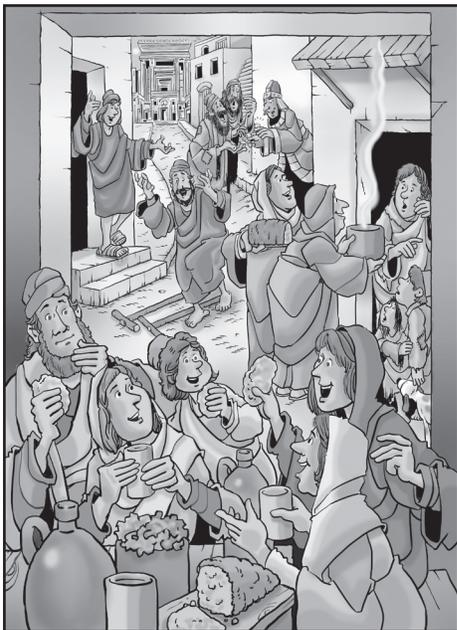
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Talk with your children about how your family came to be a part of your church. Joining your church helped it grow. Discuss how the church is helping your family grow.
- Ask your children from whom they have received kindness in your church.



Responding to God's Grace

- Brainstorm with your children the names of other people your family could invite to church. Ask your children when would be a special time to invite someone. How about VBS, rally day, a church dinner, or some other time?
- Ask if your family can be greeters one Sunday, welcoming people to church.
- How does your church show kindness in its community? Do you have a food pantry, a school supplies drive, or a ministry that helps to pay utility bills? How can your family help in these ministries?

Celebrating in Gratitude

- If there are pictures of your family members' baptism days, show the pictures to your children.
- The early Christians ate in one another's homes. Is there a family in your church you would like to know better? Could you invite the family for dinner in your home?
- Pray:

God, we thank you for calling us to be the church. Help us grow in the church, and help us grow your church. Amen.