



The Spirit Unleashed

(based on Acts 2:1-13)

The disciples were waiting. Jesus had told them to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit, but it seemed as if they had been waiting forever.

“How long will it be?” they asked each other.
“When will the Spirit come?”

“What if the Spirit has already come and we didn’t realize it?” some of them wondered.

Still they waited.

And waited.

And waited.

Soon it was the day of Pentecost, the festival celebrating the spring harvest. All of the people came to Jerusalem to give thanks for new grain.

Jesus’ disciples were gathered in Jerusalem, waiting and praying. It had been fifty days since Jesus’ horrible death and his remarkable resurrection. Suddenly there was a loud sound from heaven like a fierce wind. It filled the whole building with its sound. The disciples had never heard anything like it. They looked at each other with wide eyes. What was going on?

Then it happened. The Holy Spirit came upon them. Swirling and powerful, the Spirit came like fire, moving from one person to another. Everyone was filled with power just as Jesus promised. They all began talking in different languages as the Spirit helped them to speak. The noise was incredible.

Now there were many people staying in Jerusalem. Many visitors from faraway countries had come to the city to celebrate the festival of Pentecost. When they heard the noise, a huge crowd gathered. They were astonished because all of them heard their own language being spoken.

“Aren’t all these people from Galilee?” they asked. “We are from many different countries, yet all of us are hearing the message of God’s grace in our own tongue.”

“How is this possible?” they asked each other.
“What does this mean?”

Jesus’ followers knew what it meant. The wait was over. The Holy Spirit had come in power. Now they could go out and tell everyone the story of Jesus.



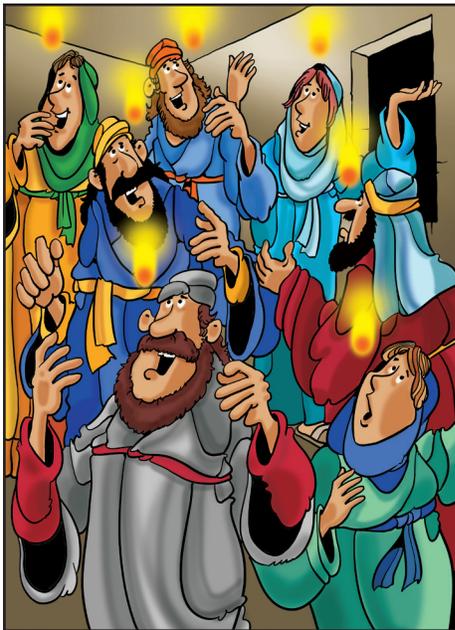
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Reread the story and invite everyone to add sound effects, sights, and actions for the Day of Pentecost. Use your bodies, voices, and art materials to capture the scene. Imagine the excitement!
- Provide everyone with bubbles and wands. Spend time blowing bubbles outside, letting the wind blow the bubbles in all directions. Wonder together how bubbles can remind us of the Holy Spirit. Invite people to finish the sentence “The Holy Spirit is like . . .”



Responding to God's Grace

- The people in the story waited and waited for the Holy Spirit to arrive. Invite family members to talk about times they waited, maybe on a long car trip, for a new baby to arrive, or to start a new school or job. Ask: “What did you do to pass the time? How did it feel to wait? How did it feel when the wait was over?” Invite everyone to make faces and actions for waiting times and for arrival times. Pray: “Thank you, God, for being with us both in the waiting and at the end of waiting.”
- Invite your children to make good news mobiles to share with friends or neighbors. Give everyone a wire clothes hanger; red, orange, yellow, white, and blue crepe paper; construction paper; and string or yarn. Help your children to wrap their hangers with strips of red, orange, and yellow crepe paper. Cut symbols of faith to tie and hang from the hanger. Ideas: flames—red, yellow, or orange; hearts—red; wind swirls—blue or white; water drops (for baptism)—blue. As your children work, make plans for who will receive the mobile. Ask the Holy Spirit to be with you and help you to share the good news of God’s love and Spirit in the world.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- In celebration and gratitude for the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost, dance with streamers and ribbons, singing “We Are Dancing in the Light of God.” Find the words and tune online or in a hymnal.
- Pray this prayer this week:

Thank you, Holy Spirit, for being in us and working through us to tell and show God's love. Amen.