



All Things in Common

(based on Acts 2:43–47)

After the day of Pentecost, the disciples told many people about Jesus. Soon many people in Jerusalem wanted to join them. They were baptized and became followers of Jesus.

They would get together every day to talk about Jesus and pray together. They would talk about the things Jesus did and the things Jesus said. The followers wanted to learn to live the way Jesus lived and love the way Jesus loved.

The Holy Spirit helped them to do the things that Jesus did. Sometimes they would heal the sick. Sometimes the disciples would do other miracles. It was an exciting time.

All the believers lived together in peace. They shared everything. Those who were rich shared their money with those who had none. Some of them sold their homes and shared the money so all had what they needed.

Every day they would meet in the temple to worship God. Then they would eat together. Those who had food would bring extra to share with others. Nobody went hungry. Everyone had enough to eat. It was wonderful.

The followers of Jesus loved to praise God. They would go out into the city to tell about God's love. Many people joined their community. Everyone was welcomed into the family.

Those who were lonely found friends.

Those who had no family were looked after.

Those who were sick were healed.

All knew they belonged. They knew God loved them. They wanted to love God too. Jesus had taught his friends how to love God by showing love to others, so that's what the first Christians did. They shared everything and loved each other. And the church grew and grew.



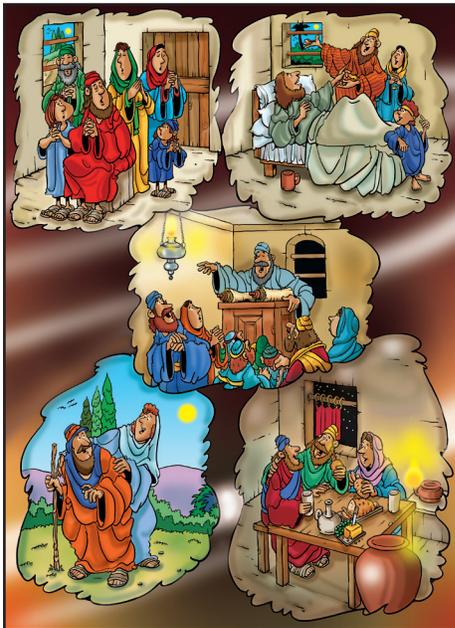
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Invite your children to draw a small circle in the middle of a big piece of paper and write “Jesus” or draw a picture of Jesus in the circle. Read the story again. Invite your children to draw a line from the circle, like a spoke on a wheel, each time they hear an action of Jesus’ followers. When the story is finished, help your children to draw one big circle to connect all the lines to make a wheel. In each section of the wheel, write a sentence or draw a picture of people following Jesus’ ways.
- Find or print a calendar page for the next month. Write all the family’s appointments, outings, and events in the squares. Wonder together how Jesus’ ways are part of your lives. Put stickers by playdates, dinners with friends, and church activities. Pray together: “Dear Jesus, make your ways our ways. Amen.”



Responding to God's Grace

- People who follow Jesus share, even if they have a little or a lot. Pick a day to be “Sharing Day.” Invite everyone to find one thing or way to share on that day. After the day, talk about what it was like to share. Was it easy or hard?
- Find a large crate or cardboard box and label it “Giving Box.” Invite everyone to look in drawers and closets at the clothes, toys, shoes, books, and games. Ask each person to pick out one or more items, in good condition, for the Giving Box. When the box is full, take it to a shelter or donation center. If your family has the resources, make the Giving Box a family ritual. If your family has limited resources, visit a donation center to receive goods as a family ritual.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- In celebration of following Jesus’ ways, think of someone who eats alone. Invite the person to have dinner with your family. Cook and prepare the meal together. Welcome your guest to your home and show God’s love at table.
- Pray this prayer this week.

*Dear God, help us to live and love like Jesus.
Amen.*