



8

The Promised Helper Comes

Key Theme

- God is faithful to His promises.

Key Passages

- John 16:5–15; Acts 2:1–24; Ephesians 1:13–14; Galatians 5:22–23

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how Jesus's promise of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled.
- Explain the work of the Holy Spirit in believers.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Write on the board, "Why did Jesus send the Holy Spirit?"



Studying God's Word

The Holy Spirit came to the disciples while they were waiting in Jerusalem. They were transformed and empowered by Him. Believers today receive the seal of the Holy Spirit when they are saved. The fruit of the Spirit is evidence that the believer is a new creation in Christ.

Study the Prepare to Share section.

Go Before the Throne.



Activity: The Work of the Spirit

The students will examine several passages that describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit in believers.

Student Guides

Pencils



Activity: Truth Be Told Review Game (Optional)

The students will review the lesson by playing a board game.

Truth Be Told Game Board and Answer Key

Game pieces for each team

Truth Be Told Question and Number Cards

Poster putty



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

Before Jesus left this earth to go back to His Father, He left His apostles with one last command. That was to go and preach the gospel, making disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things that He commanded (Matthew 28:19–20).

Before His death, Jesus had promised the apostles that He would send the Helper, the promised Holy Spirit who would be with them forever (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit would help them remember the things that Jesus had said (John 14:26) and equip the apostles to record these things in the Bible and teach them to others. Jesus also said that the Helper would not come until He went away. Only after Jesus was gone, would the Helper begin His work of convicting the world of sin, revealing righteousness and judgment (John 16:7–11).

Jesus was now gone and the disciples were waiting to receive the promised Spirit. It was the day of Pentecost. The English word “Pentecost” is a transliteration of the Greek word *pentekostos*, which means “fifty.” The word Pentecost was used by Greek-speaking Jews to refer to a Jewish holiday known as the Festival of Weeks, or, more simply, Weeks (*Shavuot* in Hebrew). This name comes from an expression in Leviticus 23:16, which instructs people to count seven weeks or “fifty days” from the end of Passover to the beginning of the next holiday.

Shavuot, (Pentecost) the second great feast in Israel’s yearly cycle of holy days, was originally a harvest festival (Exodus 23:16), but, in time, turned into a day to commemorate the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai. This was a major holiday for the Jews. Men from many nations were in Jerusalem as all males were required to travel to the sanctuary to worship on this holiday.

The disciples were gathered in one place for their observance of this first Pentecost since Jesus had died. They suddenly heard a sound from heaven, it was like rushing wind, and it filled the house. This rushing wind was accompanied by what appeared to be tongues of fire that came to rest above each of the disciples’ heads. As they marveled at these things, they were filled with the promised Holy Spirit. And then they began to speak with other tongues. Now because this was the major holiday of Pentecost, there were devout men there from many different nations. They heard the apostles speaking and were confused at what they heard because everyone heard them speak in their own language. It was an amazing

and marvelous thing as they realized Jesus’s apostles, the Galileans, were speaking, and yet all of the men heard them in their own language (Acts 2:1–8).

The Holy Spirit had come to Jesus’s disciples, just as Jesus promised He would. And the Bible teaches that everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ through the word of truth, the gospel of God’s salvation, will be sealed with the same Holy Spirit Jesus promised to His apostles. The Holy Spirit is a guarantee to believers of the promised inheritance—that is, the glory of eternity with God in heaven (Ephesians 1:13–14). Every believer in Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit living in him (John 14:17).

The Holy Spirit not only lives with the believer but He works in a believer’s life. He does this by changing the character, the wants, and the desires of the one who was saved—He enables the believer to become the new creation in Christ promised in 2 Corinthians 5:17. And every true believer, being a new creation in Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, will manifest the good fruit of the Spirit. This fruit includes love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).

We must keep in mind that the Bible tells us this is the Spirit’s fruit. It is brought forth in our lives ONLY for those who trust in Jesus. We could not bear more of the Spirit’s fruit (or any fruit) to God’s glory without the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In fact, this fruit is directed by God the Father. And in order to allow it to grow in our lives, we must abide in the true vine, Jesus Christ. For without Him we would bear no fruit at all (John 15:15–6).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The pouring out of God’s Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was a momentous event. It had been prophesied by the prophet Joel that in the last days God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh (Joel 2:28–32). Peter quoted from this passage in Joel as he preached to the Jews gathered in Jerusalem on that day (Acts 2:16–21). The day of Pentecost, the birth of the church, was the beginning of the “last days,” which will end when Christ comes for His people.

The coming of the Spirit was necessary for the future ministry of Jesus’s disciples. Look at the final words of Jesus before He ascended to heaven in Acts 1:4–5:

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,”

He said, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Jesus promised that the power of the Holy Spirit would come upon them. They would be given the boldness to go out and be witnesses for Jesus in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. After He had spoken these things, He ascended to His Father (Acts 1:8–9).

The future ministry of the disciples depended on them receiving the Holy Spirit and relying on His power. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit of truth, the Helper, would abide with them forever. This Spirit, who had dwelt WITH them, would now be IN them (John 14:16–17).

In the same way, all believers, at the moment of salvation, are baptized in the Spirit. When we believe, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13–14). This baptism of the Spirit is a one-time event. Paul told the Corinthians, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:13). The New Testament does not command believers to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. It is not an experience we are to seek, but rather it is God’s action performed on the believer at the moment of regeneration. Believers are, however, commanded to be filled with the Spirit, which means to be controlled by the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). To be filled with the Spirit involves confessing all known sin and dying to self. We yield ourselves fully to the Lord and depend on Him step by step as we walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). As we walk in the Spirit we will manifest the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23). This fruit will in turn show itself clearly as we live a life pleasing to God (Colossians 1:10), conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29), and in right relationship with those around us (Colossians 3:16–4:1).

It is staggering to see God’s providence at work throughout the Bible. And Pentecost is no different. God had providentially ordained that it would be during Pentecost that the Holy Spirit would descend from heaven. And during this time there were men from many countries present. Acts 2 mentions Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, and Rome. This list of nations recorded in Acts reminds us of the list of nations in Genesis 10 at the Tower of Babel judgment. At Babel, God confused the language

and dispersed the people around the world as judgment for their foolish pride. Now, at Pentecost, by His grace, God reversed the confusion experienced at Babel with the miracle of speaking in tongues. Now people of all languages could understand! And God’s purpose that the gospel be spread to all nations was launched way beyond the borders of Jerusalem to many nations as the men in Jerusalem that day returned to their homes.

In fact, the Bible tells us that after Peter preached the gospel, those who were listening were “cut to the heart” and 3,000 souls were baptized and added to the church (Acts 2:37–41). The Holy Spirit gave Peter the boldness to preach, and that same Holy Spirit brought conviction of sin and repentance. It must have been a glorious time as the apostles saw the fruit of their labors so quickly and so abundantly—all by the power of the Holy Spirit.

However, not all men responded positively to Peter’s preaching that day, in spite of the miracle of the languages. Even miracles will not convince mockers, who do not want to submit their lives to the lordship of Christ. And throughout the Book of Acts, we read of powerful conversions, but also violent opposition to the preaching of the gospel. As Christians we can expect the same response. But our confidence must remain in the sovereign, holy God and in the message of Jesus Christ whose name will demand that every knee will bow before Him, and every tongue will confess Him as Lord to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:9–11).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Holy Spirit, you came just as Jesus promised. You promise to teach, help, warn, and guide. You alone can transform sinners into believers and new creations in Christ. You empower believers to live in obedience to God’s Word and to manifest the fruit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in their lives. Holy Spirit, please stir in the hearts of my students to realize their sin and their need for a Savior. Give them a desire to live their life to God’s glory and seal them by your power as children of God for all eternity.

Review

This lesson marks our transition from the Gospels and the earthly ministry of Jesus to the book of Acts. Many people refer to it as the Acts of the Apostles. While that is true, it is also about the acts of the Holy Spirit who was the one empowering the apostles in the work they were doing. As Jesus left the earth, He promised to send the Holy Spirit.

? **Who is the Holy Spirit?** *The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity. He is God just as much as the Father or the Son.*

As we move from the ministry of Jesus on the earth, we are not moving into a period where God is absent, but one where God is still present on the earth and constantly at work. So our goal today is to get a little glimpse of the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.



► Write on the board, "Why did Jesus send the Holy Spirit?"



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

I know I said we were going to be in the book of Acts, but we need to get our bearings by stepping back to the night of the arrest of Jesus. In John chapters 13–17, we have an intimate and detailed account of the last few hours Jesus spent with His disciples before the Crucifixion. Let's read John 16:5–15 together and look at the promise Jesus gave to His disciples. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

John 16:5–15

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? **Where was Jesus going?** *To be with the Father who sent Him.*
- ? **How did the disciples feel knowing this?** *They were filled with sorrow.*
- ? **How did Jesus try to allay their feelings of sorrow?** *He told them it was to their advantage that He would go.*
- ? **Why would His absence bring an advantage?** *When Jesus left, He would send the Helper to them.*
- ? **Would the Helper come if Jesus did not go to the Father?** *No.*
- ? **Who is the Helper?** *Looking back to 14:15–17 and 14:26, Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit.*
- ? **How is the Spirit described in 14:17, 15:26, and 16:13?** *He is the Spirit of truth.*
- ? **What will the Spirit do at His coming based on verse 8?** *He will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.*

- ? **What specific sin is described in verse 9?** *The sin of not believing in Jesus as Lord and Savior.*
- ? **How does the Spirit’s presence convicting men of righteousness relate to the absence of Jesus?** *When Jesus was present, people were able to see righteousness personified. In His absence, the Spirit would now bring conviction of self-righteous ideas and attitudes.*
- ? **Who is “the ruler of this world” in verse 11?** *Satan.*
- ? **What judgment is in view in verse 11?** *While there is some disagreement, it is likely that this verse refers to the final judgment that is to come where Satan is to be cast into hell along with those who have not been found in Christ. Some understand this to mean their ability to rightly judge (discern) truth.*
- ? **Were these the final things Jesus wanted to teach His disciples?** *No. He had more to teach them.*
- ? **When would Jesus teach them more things?** *They would be taught more things after the Spirit had come.*
- ? **What would the Spirit do for them according to verse 13?** *He would guide them into all truth.*
- ? **In whose authority would He speak these truths?** *In the authority of the Son which is from the Father. Here we have a clear teaching on the roles within the Trinity.*
- ? **What types of things will the Holy Spirit tell of?** *He will reveal things that are to come. This is a reference to the prophetic words that would be recorded in Scripture in the future. We see this sprinkled through the New Testament epistles and especially in Revelation.*
- ? **How does the Spirit relate to the Son?** *The Spirit glorifies the Son by declaring or revealing truth about the Son as the Son has done those things given to Him by the Father.*
- ? **When will the Holy Spirit come?** *This passage does not tell us, but we know it must be after the Ascension, when Jesus goes to the Father.*
- ? **Let’s read Acts 1:3–8.** *Have someone read the passage aloud.*
- ? **When did this take place?** *(Verse 3). Forty days after the Resurrection.*
- ? **What instruction did Jesus give the disciples?** *To remain in Jerusalem until they received the Promise of the Father.*
- ? **How is the baptism they were to receive described?** *Rather than with water at John’s baptism, they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit.*
- ? **How long would they have to wait?** *“Not many days.”*
- ? **What would they receive when the Holy Spirit comes upon them?** *Power.*
- ? **What was the purpose of this power?** *To be witnesses of Jesus as they spread His message across the earth.*

Acts 1:3–8

Discover the Truth

It might strike you as a bit odd, but Jesus said that it was better for the disciples—and for us as disciples—if He went away rather than staying with them because He would send the Helper, the Holy Spirit. So, how

OMNIPRESENT

FAITHFUL

can it be better for us that Jesus is gone? Wouldn't it be better if Jesus were still there to answer more questions and give more instruction? Well, we might think that is the case, but Jesus tells us otherwise. The Helper would come to guide them into truth, to empower them as witnesses of the gospel, and to live within all of those who are in Christ.

? **What attribute of God is demonstrated by the fact that the Holy Spirit can indwell believers all over the earth at one time?** *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. This is an aspect of the omnipresent nature of God since He is present in all of these places at once. Jesus, having been raised with a glorified body, is now present in heaven and not on the earth.*

? **Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come to empower the believers. What attribute of God is displayed in the fulfillment of this promise?** *This demonstrates God's faithfulness to do what He says.*

In some Christian circles, the work of the Holy Spirit gets downplayed to the point that He is rarely mentioned. We need to be mindful that He IS the third Person in the Trinity and that He IS indwelling each one of us who has turned from sin and trusted in Christ. The same Spirit who empowered the disciples who walked with Jesus is the same Spirit who lives to empower us and guide us into all truth.



READ THE WORD

Acts 2:1-24

Now that we have looked at the promise of the coming of the Spirit, let's look at the fulfillment of that promise. Turn to Acts 2 and let's read verses 1 through 24. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? **When did this event take place?** *On the Day of Pentecost which is the Feast of Weeks described in Exodus 34:22-23.*
- ? **How many days after the Passover was this feast?** *It would have been fifty days, hence the name Pentecost, as described in Leviticus 23:15-16. This would also place it nine days after the Ascension, subtracting the full day Jesus was in the tomb.*
- ? **Why were there so many people dwelling in Jerusalem at this time?** *This was one of the three times each year that the Jewish men were to gather as a holy congregation to worship God. This was a celebration of the harvest where the firstfruits of the harvest and other sacrifices were offered (Numbers 28:26-31).*
- ? **Where were the disciples?** *They were in a house together. We can likely connect this back to Acts 1:12-13 as a house with an upper room where they were staying together.*
- ? **Who was present?** *In 2:1, we have a pronoun identifying the group in general as "they." Looking back in the text, 1:12-15 identifies the apostles by name, several women who were with*

them, and the disciples numbering about 120 people. The phrase “with one accord” appearing in 1:14 and 2:1 helps confirm this connection. It seems clear that there were both men and women present, especially in light of verse 4, which describes the Spirit filling all present.

- ? **What signs accompanied the coming of the Spirit?** *There was a sound like the rushing of wind that filled the whole house. This may be the sound referred to in verse 6 that got the attention of those in the area who then heard the praises of God. The Spirit is often compared to the wind (John 3:8; Ezekiel 37:9–10). There were tongues of fire above each of the believers. This is similar to His appearance as a dove at the baptism of Jesus.*
- ? **Who received the Spirit?** *All who were present in the house.*
- ? **What was the result of this filling of the Spirit?** *All of them began to speak with other tongues.*
- ? **Did each person pick the language?** *No, the Spirit “gave them utterance” as He saw fit.*
- ? **Based on the context of the passage, how could we describe these “tongues”?** *(Verse 6). They were understood by those of different countries as their own languages, so they were known languages, not indiscernible noises.*
- ? **What were the disciples saying in other tongues?** *(Verse 11). They were speaking of “the wonderful works of God.”*
- ? **How did the people around them respond?** *They were amazed and marveled.*
- ? **Why did the people find it amazing that they spoke so many languages?** *They identified the group as Galileans, so to hear them speaking in so many languages was amazing.*
- ? **What did some ascribe the miracle to?** *They suggested they were drunk with new wine.*
- ? **Who addressed the crowd?** *Peter stood up with the other 11 standing around him (with Matthias replacing Judas).*
- ? **What prophecy did Peter reference to validate this as a miracle of God?** *He pointed the crowd to the prophecy announced in Joel 2:28–32 to show them that God’s Spirit would be poured out so that men and women, young and old, would be empowered to do certain miracles, testifying of God’s works and the coming judgment.*
- ? **Who did Peter tell the crowd about?** *He spoke to them about Jesus of Nazareth.*
- ? **How did Peter point to Jesus as the Messiah?** *He used the miracles, wonders, and signs Jesus had performed as the basis. He also went on, in the portion from verses 25–36, to show other scriptural proofs.*
- ? **How did Peter relate these acts to the will of God?** *He clearly stated that all of this happened according to God’s predetermined plan.*
- ? **Who did Peter blame for Jesus’s death?** *He said “you have taken by lawless hands,” indicting those Jews and others in the crowd.*
- ? **How did Peter connect his message to the Resurrection?** *He told the crowd that God raised Jesus from the dead as it was not possible, in God’s plan, for Jesus to remain dead. He then went on to demonstrate this from other Old Testament passages.*
- ? **Looking ahead to verse 37, how did the crowd, in general, respond?** *They were convicted of the truth of Peter’s message and asked how they should respond.*

Discover the Truth

Jesus had promised to send the Spirit in power, and that is exactly what happened. That power was evident as the mighty wind came, the tongues of flame danced, and the voices were raised in praise to God to be heard by all the peoples gathered in Jerusalem. And not only was this a miracle, but Peter was able to show the crowd how it connected to God's prophecies about the Messiah and the coming judgment.

In our modern context, Peter didn't exactly preach a "seeker sensitive" message to the crowd. He basically stood up and explained to the crowd that they were responsible for the death of the Messiah. After Peter made his case from the Old Testament, many of the people recognized their sin, were convicted by the very Spirit that empowered the miracle, and asked what they needed to do to be saved. Peter's response was a command to repent of their sins and to be baptized in the name of Jesus with the promise of receiving forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Here Peter faithfully obeyed the command of his Lord delivered nine days prior. As we read at the end of Acts 2, having made new disciples of these 3,000 who responded to the call of God through the Spirit, the apostles taught them doctrine as they gathered at the Temple and went from house to house.





The Work of the Spirit

MATERIALS

- Student Guides
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

If you are in Christ, you have received the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit empowers us to do many things, but we might not recognize all the things that Scripture teaches about the Spirit's work in our lives.

In your Student Guides you will find the Work of the Spirit activity. Take a few minutes and examine each of the passages there, noting some of the different roles of the Spirit in the life of believers. *Have the students work in small groups to examine the passages. If time is short, assign passages to different groups and then share the results together.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Let's summarize these passages to see what the role of the Holy Spirit is in the life of believers.

1. **Ephesians 1:13–14**—*The Spirit seals us as the guarantee that God will raise us to new life in heaven to His glory.*

2. **Galatians 5:22–26**—*The Spirit produces the fruit of righteousness (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) in us, allowing us to walk in His power so that we do not fulfill the passions of our flesh.*
3. **John 14:15–18**—*The Spirit abides in us to help us obey Christ and be in fellowship with God.*
4. **1 Corinthians 2:10–16**—*The Spirit enlightens our minds to the spiritual truths that we were formerly dead to, helping us discern truth from error.*
5. **1 Corinthians 12:4–11**—*The Spirit gives gifts to each believer that he or she uses in serving the body.*
6. **Romans 8:12–17**—*The Spirit empowers and leads us to avoid the sins of the flesh and assures us of our adoption as children of God.*

While that is just a sample of all the Spirit does, these truths should give us great courage. God the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us, empowering us to do all that God has called us to do. I would encourage you to spend some more time this week looking through the additional passages at the bottom of your activity to develop a deeper understanding of the Spirit's work.





Truth Be Told Review Game (Optional)

MATERIALS

- Truth Be Told Game Board
- Truth Be Told Question Cards
- Truth Be Told Question Answer Key
- Truth Be Told Number Cards (or game spinner or dice)
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team
- Poster putty

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide your class into teams. Teams will take turns drawing a Truth Be Told Question Card. Team members will take turns answering the questions. They will quickly determine an answer and give it. If they are correct, they will draw a Truth Be Told Number Card and move that number of spaces on the game board. As play proceeds, follow the directions on the game board. Alternate between teams as long as time permits.

We are going to review now by playing "Truth Be Told." I'll put you into teams. Teams will take turns picking a question card

and answering the question. If the answer is correct, you will draw a number card and move your game piece that many spaces. All directions on the board must be followed. Return the used cards to the stacks. *Answers to the questions are provided on the Truth Be Told Question Answer Key on the Resource DVD-ROM.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the upper room and changed the lives of each believer. They left that room with courage and confidence and started preaching the gospel in Jerusalem! The same Holy Spirit lives in all Christians. He gives believers the power and strength to obey the commands of Jesus and the courage to tell others about Jesus. The Spirit makes all believers new creations in Christ!



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

As we think about the Holy Spirit, there is so much for us to consider. First, we have to remember that He is God dwelling in us just as Jesus promised. He is sent by the Father and the Son to work in our lives by conforming our wills to be more like Christ and empowering us to do all that we are commanded. And that has been the case for all believers since the Day of Pentecost when He came with power and signs for those gathered in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit testifies with our own spirits that we have been adopted by God, and He provides us with assurance of our salvation having been sealed by Him. As we strive to live lives of holiness worthy of the calling God has given us, He empowers us to display the fruits of righteousness and overcome the temptations of the flesh, the world, and the devil.

Our God is faithful to His promises. Jesus promised to send the Helper. The Spirit promises to seal us for the day of redemption. And the Father promises to raise us up to eternal life so that we may live with our triune God in an eternity filled with joyful worship and communion.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

- ? As you consider the work of the Holy Spirit, how has your thinking changed from the time that you were first saved (or even before your salvation)? *Discuss various answers.*
- ? How has your understanding of the work of the Spirit changed as a result of what we have discussed today? *Discuss various answers, listening for any misconceptions you may need to correct.*
- ? How are the events at Pentecost a reversal of the events of Babel? *God confused the languages and made divisions between people groups at Babel. But at Pentecost, God removed this barrier and clearly communicated the wonderful works of God through all of the languages that were present there so that the gospel could be proclaimed.*
- ? Peter stood before the crowd in Jerusalem and immediately jumped to an Old Testament prophet to explain the events they were seeing. Would the same type of proclamation be understood if we stood up on a bench in a park in our city? *While we should never shy away from proclaiming the truth of Scripture and even quoting from it, we need to make sure that our audience understands what we are saying. The crowd there in Jerusalem was made up of devout Jews and proselytes who would have understood who the prophet Joel was and his message. We need to be mindful that many in our culture have no real knowledge of the Bible and what it teaches, so we must explain things carefully and clearly, avoiding language that will not be understood.*
- ? Peter preached in power before the crowd, boldly proclaiming truth rather than denying Christ. What changed between the night of Jesus's arrest, when Peter denied knowing Christ, and his preaching at Pentecost? *Most people will point to two major factors. First, Peter had seen the risen Savior and had been restored by Him. Second, Peter had also been empowered by the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Spirit is the major reason that Peter could boldly proclaim those truths and continue to spread the truth of the gospel in the face of much persecution.*
- ? As you consider your own life and the fact that if you are in Christ then the Spirit of God is living in you, how are your own thoughts and actions out of sync with that truth? What can you do to change your thoughts and actions in this area? *We should be evaluating our own hearts and sharing our own struggles with others who can exhort and encourage us to grow in our dependence on the Spirit. Studying and meditating on a passage like Romans 8 could be a great place to start.*
- ? Gandhi is often held up as a wonderful example of a peaceful man. Was he demonstrating the Spirit's fruit of peace? Why or why not? Should Christians be seeking to emulate Gandhi? *Since Gandhi was not a Christian, believing in elements of Hinduism and Buddhism, we must say that He was not exhibiting fruit of the Holy*

Spirit. Only those who are in Christ have the Helper in them. Romans 7:5 and 8:8 remind us that those who walk in the flesh and not in the Spirit cannot please God, and the fruit of the flesh is death (see also Galatians 5:15–26). Christians should not hold Gandhi up as an example to follow. (Although it is not often reported, Gandhi was a vile man who practiced many things as part of his Hindu beliefs that Christians should have nothing to do with.)



MEMORY VERSE

Romans 1:16–17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for sending the Spirit to dwell in us.
- Praise God for His display of power and wisdom in empowering His children by the Spirit.
- Ask God for boldness and wisdom to be walking in the Spirit and not in the flesh.