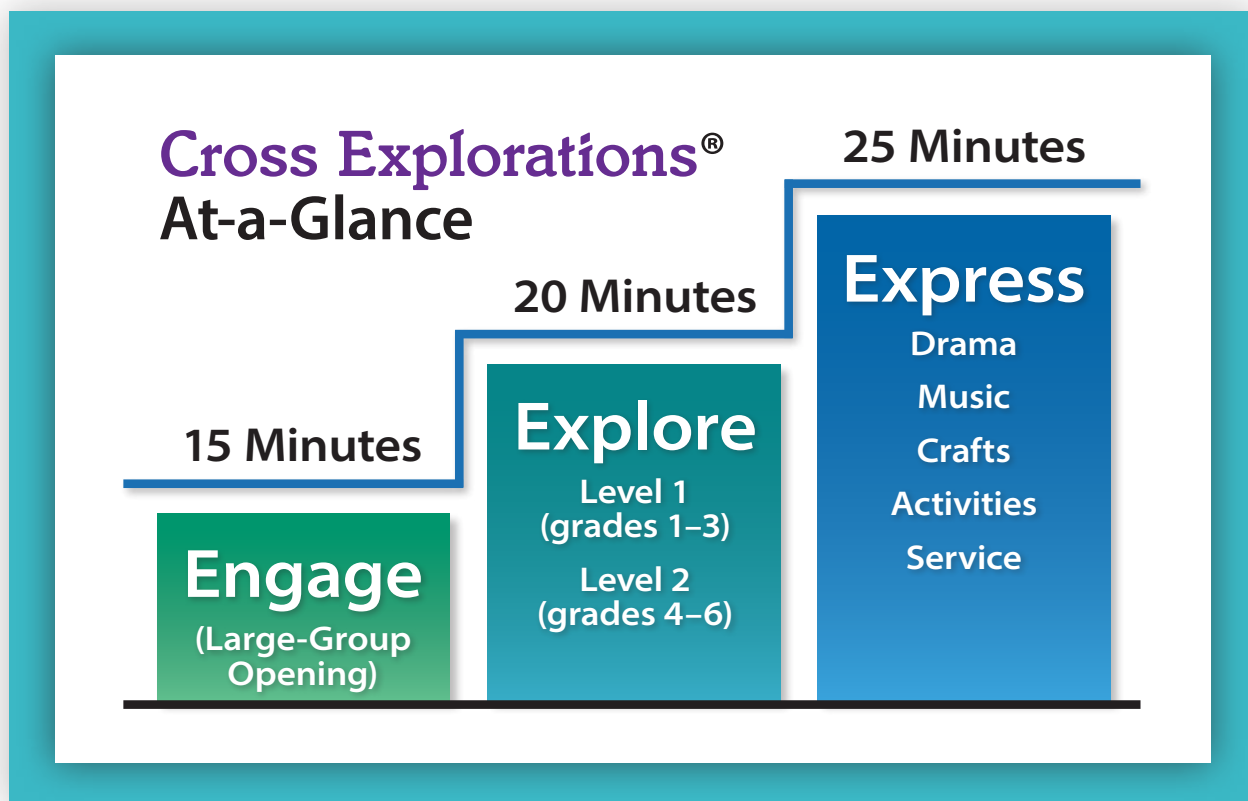




What's on the Express Activities & More CD?

The Express Activities & More CD gives you a choice of activities to help kids apply the Bible lesson to their lives. It includes science, music, games, snacks, service projects, and more, organized by week and by type of activity. Choose activities that fit the time you have available and the talents of your volunteers.

Do not expect to do all the activities each week. Rather, vary the ones you choose from week to week so students get a chance to experience different types of learning. If you use Cross Explorations in a Midweek setting, use any extra time to include additional small-group Express options.

The Craft Patterns folder on the Express Activities & More CD has patterns for the crafts you will find in the separate Craft Booklet in the Cross Explorations kit.

Site Leaders

Cross Explorations site leaders do what they do best! If you love helping kids apply the Bible truths in the lessons through music, games, science activities, themed food options, service projects, and the like, you'd make an excellent site leader for the Express activities on this CD. Recruit people with other talents or strengths to lead activities you are not as comfortable doing.

Site Location

Express sessions offer flexibility for meeting locations. You may choose to meet in separate classrooms that are set up for specific sites or in one larger space.

If you have multiple sites in one space, use rolling dividers, moveable walls, or even fabric panels to block sight and sound distractions. Food options will sometimes require kitchen access.

The Holy Spirit Leads the Apostles

New Testament 5 • Activities at-a-Glance

Lesson	Activity	Food	Service
1	Tongues of Fire	Fruit-of-the-Spirit Vine	
2	The Weak Made Strong	The Right Medicine	
3	Give a Hand	Sin and Forgiveness Faces	
4	God's ID Card	Christian Symbols	
5	Falling Scales	Blindfold or Faith?	
6	Shining God's Light on the World	Light Snack	Fringed-Fleece Fun
7	Clean and Unclean Animal Sort	Pigs in Blankets	
8	Set Free!	Breaking the Chains	Helping Children of Prisoners
9	Church Workers Game	Spread the Word	Expressions of Thanks
10	Removing Sin's Stain	Many Backgrounds, One Source of Salvation	
11	Finding Jesus	Coated in Forgiveness: Purple-Glazed Shell Cakes	
12	Sing-Off and Dance-Off Competition	Jesus Sets Us Free	
13	Wavy Waters Parachute Play	Edible Boats	Disaster Relief

The Holy Spirit Leads the Apostles

New Testament 5 • Lessons at-a-Glance

Lesson	Lesson Title / Scripture	Key Point
1	God Sends the Holy Spirit Acts 2:1–21	At Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church. Through Word and Sacrament, God gives us His Holy Spirit to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus.
2	Peter and John Heal the Lame Man Acts 3	We are all lame beggars before God. Through the Means of Grace—God’s Word and Sacraments—God gives us faith to believe in Jesus as our Savior and grants us forgiveness, the cure for all sin.
3	God’s Servant Stephen Acts 6–7	We are crushed and enraged at the accusations of God’s Law, but the Gospel brings peace and quietness. In church, the pastor speaks the same Word of God as Stephen speaks in Acts 7:60, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them,” and gives us peace through the Words of the Absolution, “for His sake [God] forgives you all your sins.”
4	Philip and the Ethiopian Acts 8:26–40	As He came to the Ethiopian, our Lord comes to us in our weakness, for we cannot by our own reason or strength come to Him. Through the Means of Grace, the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies us, keeping us with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.
5	The Conversion of Paul Acts 9:1–31	Through the Law, we are crushed by the weight of our sin, and like Paul, we are enemies of God, unable to save ourselves. As God revived Paul through Ananias, He revives us through the proclamation of His Word and the administration of His Sacraments, granting forgiveness, life, and salvation to all who believe.
6	Dorcas Acts 9:36–43	In the life of Dorcas, we see that God leads us to do good works that glorify Him and point others to the saving light of Christ!
7	Peter and Cornelius Acts 10	In church, we receive the Good News that, although we are judged unrighteous and deserving of death, God mercifully declares us holy, righteous, and innocent because of Christ and His work.
8	Peter’s Escape from Prison Acts 12	Like Peter, we may suffer because of the sins of others, but God’s will is always done. His Word is never proclaimed in vain, but breaks the chains of sin that bind people and sets them free.
9	Paul’s First Missionary Journey Acts 13–14	Just as God sent Paul and Barnabas to spread the Gospel, so today He sends pastors and missionaries to preach the Gospel, baptize, and administer the Lord’s Supper in mission fields around the world.
10	Paul and Timothy Acts 15:1–16:5	Human reason believes, as many did in Paul’s day, that we must do something to be saved. Yet the answer is always Jesus, Jesus, only Jesus, whose resurrection from the dead sealed our salvation and absolved the world.
11	Lydia Acts 16:11–15	Just as God worked His miracle beside the river, clothing Lydia with Christ in Baptism, so God works His miracles in pulpits and fonts around the world, destroying the work of Satan by washing away sins in water combined with God’s Word and clothing believers with His righteousness.
12	Paul and Silas in Prison Acts 16:16–40	Just as God opened the prison, granting Paul and Silas freedom and new life, so Christ by His crucifixion and resurrection frees us from the prison of our sins and grants us life eternal.
13	Paul Sails for Rome Acts 27	As Christ was with Paul and his companions in a perilous sea voyage, so He is with us, holding us up, keeping us with Him in the ship of the Church, and casting all our sins into the depths of the sea.



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Tongues of Fire

Lesson 1

God Sends the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1–21

Key Point

At Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church. Through Word and Sacrament, God gives us His Holy Spirit to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus.

Purpose

At this great public gathering of the Church, God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers. It was quite an event—believers heard a sound like the blowing of a violent wind. They saw what looked like tongues of fire coming to rest on everyone there.

Use this activity to make a pattern that looks like the branching out of tongues of fire.

You Need

- ☐ CD or DVD jewel cases
- ☐ White paper, 8½ × 11
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Ketchup
- ☐ Molasses

Do This

Remove the CDs or DVDs from the jewel cases. Slip out the covers and playlists.

Trace around one case on the white paper. Make two cutouts. Place the paper in the jewel cases and trim to fit. Close the cases and put them with the white paper facing up on a table or counter.

Shake the ketchup bottle to make sure it's mixed well. Squeeze out a large drop about the size of a quarter onto one jewel case.

Pick up both cases and press them together firmly, holding one case so that it's perpendicular to the other so the spines don't bump.

Turn the cases upright and pull them apart carefully. There should be some resistance. Place the two cases on the table face up to see and preserve the pattern.

Using two other jewel cases, or after washing these, try the activity again with molasses. The molasses pattern spreads out quickly and disappears. Putting the cases and the molasses in the fridge for a few minutes before you begin the activity keeps the pattern intact a while longer.

Understand It

The branchlike patterns you see in the ketchup and the molasses are called “fractal patterns.” They look like random patterns, but they are actually the predictable results of mathematical equations.

If you divide a fractal pattern into parts, you get a nearly identical smaller copy of the whole. You can see fractal patterns in leaves, seashells, ice crystals, and river beds—even in lightning strikes, human lungs, and galaxies.

Make the Point

Jesus promised believers that after His death, He would send a Comforter, one who would enable them to sustain their faith and to trust in Him. “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth” (John 14:16–17). This is the promise of the Holy Spirit, who indwells every believer.

Have a student read Acts 2:1–3: “When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly here came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.”

Ask Do you think the believers were expecting to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that day? **Jesus had promised His disciples ten days before that God would send the Holy Spirit. But they did not know when that would**

happen. Between Jesus' ascension and Pentecost, the believers met together each day, about 120 of them (Acts 1:15).

There were also many devout Jews gathered together on the day of Pentecost to give thanks to God and to present offerings for the year's harvest. The occasion, also called Shavuot, was (and still is) celebrated every year on the fiftieth day of the Passover, a commemoration of the Jewish exodus from slavery in Egypt led by Moses. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit was a surprise. The crowd was "bewildered" and "amazed," the Bible says. Wouldn't you be?!

Have you ever seen tongues of flame in a bonfire or a fire in a fireplace? Have you heard the wind whipped up by a storm? Students might describe a thunderstorm they experienced or watching a fire burn in a fireplace.

Say Fire and wind are strong forces of nature that everyone recognizes. It's no wonder the writer of Acts described the coming of the Holy Spirit this way. These manifestations were indescribable because they revealed God's miraculous activity.

Ask Has a tongue of flame ever come down on your head? **While children may laugh when you ask this, you can tell them that although they have not experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the way the early Christians did, as believers, they indeed are filled with the Holy Spirit. They receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in Baptism.**

Have a student read Acts 2:38–39. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself."

Ask So why do we need the Holy Spirit?

Accept thoughts.

Say As sinful people, we think that faith begins with us. We think we should understand God and trust Him through our own efforts. Or, we think we can do good works and please God on our own. But Jesus told His followers to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit came, He gave them power to witness to Jesus and brought many people to faith that day.

The Holy Spirit is also the one who works in us. He calls each of us through the Gospel and gives us the saving knowledge of Jesus, gathering us into His Church. The Holy Spirit gives us forgiveness, life, and salvation. The Spirit also makes us holy in God's sight—He sanctifies us.

God gave Peter and the other apostles special gifts to accomplish His will. Peter could not have preached a sermon like he did, where thousands came to faith in Jesus, without the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives His gifts to each member of the Body of Christ—not just to church workers, but to me and you too. Discuss gifts the Spirit gives.

For instance, some people have been given the gift of teaching. Others have the gift of encouragement and are always trying to cheer others up. Some people have the gift of helping others or visiting those who are sick.

Have kids share gifts the Spirit has given that they see in themselves or their classmates. See Romans 12:3–8 for help.

Say We are all different, but we all have gifts from the same Holy Spirit, who has promised to be with us always.

Fruit-of-the-Spirit Vine

Lesson 1

God Sends the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1–21

Key Point

At Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church. Through Word and Sacrament, God gives us His Holy Spirit to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus.

Purpose

The Holy Spirit creates faith in us, helps us to hold on to our faith, and enables us to become more like Jesus.

Learning about the fruit of the Spirit described in Galatians 5:22–23 will help students understand that we are saved by grace through faith and that the good works we do are a response of faith to God first loving us.

You Need

- ☐ Newsprint or other brown paper on a roll
- ☐ Tape to attach vine to wall & to attach grape bunches to vine
- ☐ Fruit of the Spirit handout (end of activity)
- ☐ Cardstock
- ☐ Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- ☐ Pens or pencils for each child
- ☐ Scissors for each child

Do This

Before children arrive, use brown paper to make a vertical stem with a horizontal vine made out of twisted newsprint or other brown paper on a roll. Tape or otherwise fasten the vine to a wall.

Photocopy the Fruit of the Spirit handout onto cardstock for each student, plus an extra one to use as a sample.

Prepare a sample grape bunch with your name on the stem and with the grapes colored. Tape your grape bunch to the vine so that it can be removed and put back up again.

Tell the children that the words in the grapes are all things the Holy Spirit helps us to have in our lives.

Have younger children color their grapes while you explain the fruit of the Spirit. Older children can print a short example of each fruit of the Spirit in its grape.

Make the Point

Take your grape bunch off the vine.

Ask If I pulled grapes off a real grape vine, would the grapes stay alive and keep growing? **No.**

Say Just like grapes need to be attached to a vine to live and grow, we need to be connected to Jesus to be forgiven and to go to heaven.

Ask How do we stay connected to Jesus?
We become connected to Jesus through faith in Him that comes from Baptism and God's Word. The Holy Spirit works through God's Word, Baptism, and Holy Communion to keep us in faith.

Say After Jesus died, came back to life, and went up to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to help us. The Holy Spirit gives us faith to believe in Jesus and makes us spiritually alive as God's children. Once we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit also helps us to live as the Bible tells us we should.

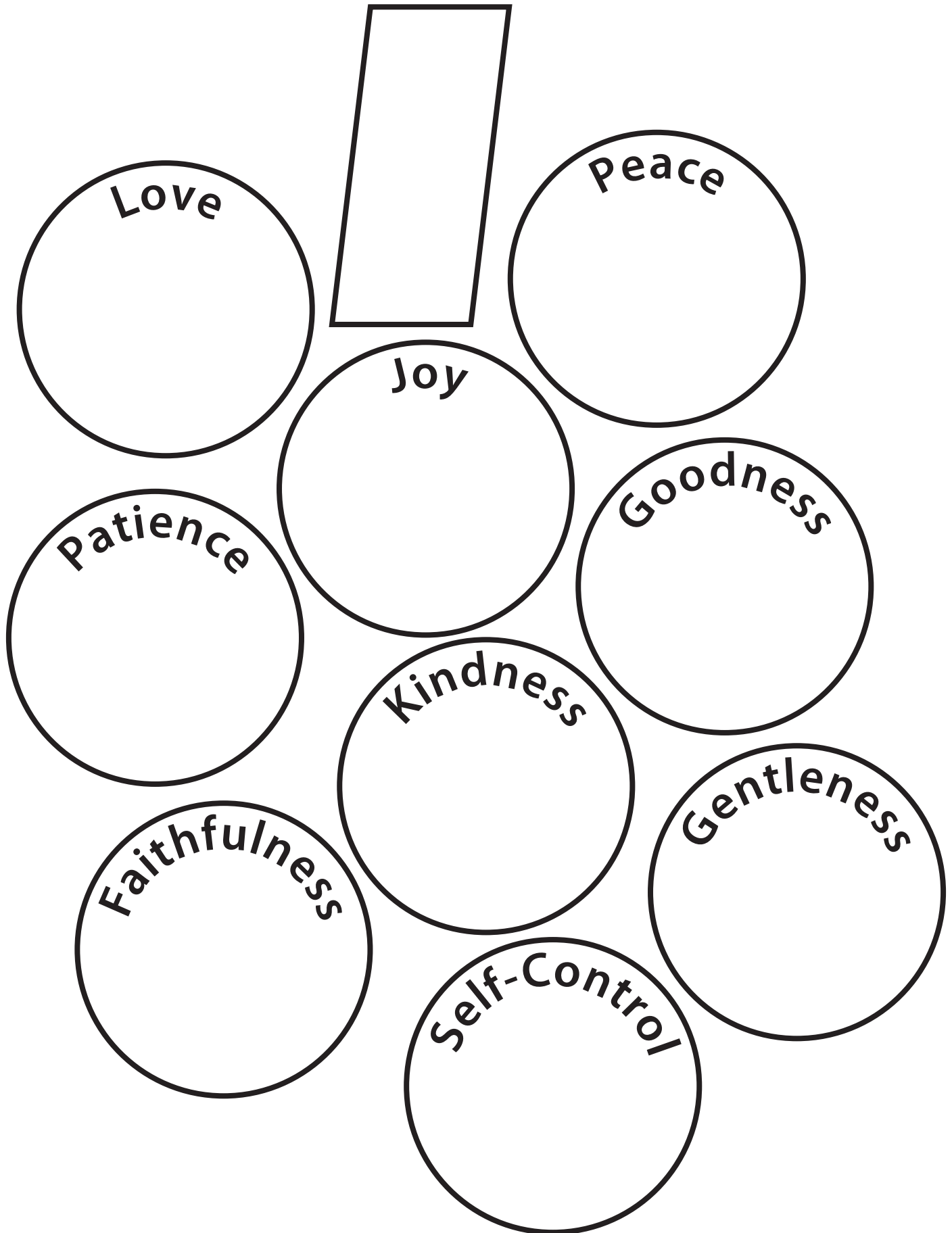
Ask What feelings and behaviors does the Holy Spirit help us have? Accept answers. Point students to passages such as Galatians 5:22–23, which lists the fruit of the Spirit, and Colossians 3:12–17, which describes what the new life in Christ looks like.

Say In the same way that grapes grow when they are attached to a living vine, the Spirit produces this fruit in those who are attached to Jesus.

Help students understand that they cannot produce fruit on their own power, but when they stay rooted in God's Word and Sacraments, the Holy Spirit works through these to keep their faith alive and growing. The Means of Grace are their spiritual food source.

Before enjoying the snack, lead students in a table prayer.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT



The Weak Made Strong

Lesson 2

Peter and John Heal the Lame Man

Acts 3

Key Point

We are all lame beggars before God. Through the Means of Grace—God’s Word and Sacraments—God gives us faith to believe in Jesus as our Savior and grants us forgiveness, the cure for all sin.

Purpose

The man who was lame had no reason to expect a miracle. He just wanted a few coins so he could buy something to eat and survive another day. Instead, from Peter and John, he received health and new life.

By making a loose material into a solid material able to bear weight, let’s imagine the man’s joy as he tries out his new legs and finds them sturdy.

You Need

- ☐ Plastic water bottle, empty & dry
- ☐ Chopstick (as long as the bottle)
- ☐ Uncooked white rice
- ☐ *Optional:* Funnel or large envelope & scissors

Do This

Fill your bottle with dry rice to about 1 inch from the top. Either pour the rice from a bag with a narrow opening or cut a corner from an envelope to make a pouring spout. (A funnel works only if it has a wide opening.)

Plunge the chopstick into the bottle and try to draw the chopstick back out. What happens?

Using the chopstick, stab the rice repeatedly to pack it tightly in the bottle. You can also tap the bottle on the table.

Add more rice. Pack the rice again, and add more, if there is room.

Plunge the chopstick into the bottle again, all the way to the bottom. Try drawing it out. What happens?

Understand It

The first time you lift the chopstick, it comes out easily. Because there are gaps of air between the grains of rice and nothing to stop your movement. The second time you try to pull the chopstick out, it doesn’t come out. You can pick up the bottle using only the chopstick!

This is because of friction. When you pack the grains of rice tightly, you decrease the air gaps. The rice grains push against one another, against the sides of the bottle, and against the chopstick, creating friction that holds the chopstick in place.

Make the Point

Ask Have you ever given to someone in need or helped someone in need?

Children might say they’ve given money to the church or to a charity to provide food or housing for the poor. They might say they volunteer at an animal shelter. As a family, they might have served meals at a soup kitchen or donated clothes to a veterans’ organization. Some children might even have given a donation to a person begging on a city street. It takes courage to try to help and love to want to help.

Say At the start of our demonstration, the rice was “weak”—it did not hold up to the chopstick. In the Bible story, the lame man’s legs were weak. They did not work to hold him up.

Ask What did he want from Peter and John? **Children might say the man needed money to eat. If he was lame, he could not work. In those days, no one made accommodations for those with disabilities to make it possible for them to work. Begging was this man’s only source of income. He asked the disciples for money so that he could buy food to survive for another day. He had no hope for a better life.**

Ask What did Peter and John do for the man instead? **They healed the man's legs and made them strong again.**

How were Peter and John able to heal this man? Were they doctors? **Children might recognize that they performed a miracle, the way Jesus had during His life on earth. Their power and authority to do this was given to them by Jesus. They told the people who wondered about it, "We did not make the man better. God did."**

Say Peter and John restored this man to full health. They knew Jesus had passed on to them His authority to overrule nature. Yet, miracles like these are meant not to dazzle people but to lead them to faith.

Peter told the amazed people who witnessed the lame man's healing, "[Jesus'] name—by faith in His name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health" (Acts 3:16).

Then he told how God had sent Jesus to be our Savior. He told them to be sorry for their sins and believe in Jesus. Many of them were sorry and came to faith.

Through faith in Jesus, we are forgiven of our sin sickness, too, and restored to full spiritual health. Through Him, we have new life and can "walk" as His children. Let's think about that.

When Peter saw the lame man and the curious people, he responded in faith as God's child by saying, "We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). He told others about Jesus.

Ask How did the lame man respond when he was healed? **He leaped and praised God.**

What are some ways you can respond in faith and live in thanksgiving to Jesus today? Let children share ideas.

The Right Medicine

Lesson 2

Peter and John Heal the Lame Man

Acts 3

Key Point

We are all lame beggars before God. Through the Means of Grace—God’s Word and Sacraments—God gives us faith to believe in Jesus as our Savior and grants us forgiveness, the cure for all sin.

Purpose

Use this activity to illustrate the special medicine our Savior provides for us against sin.

You Need

- ☐ 3 or 4 index cards or paper strips, each labeled with a physical disease or problem, such as flu, a broken leg, a headache
- ☐ 1 card labeled SIN
- ☐ Plain cookies, 2 per student
- ☐ Small tubes of frosting used for writing, available at supermarkets
- ☐ Decorating sprinkles
- ☐ Paper towels or napkins

Do This

Each student decorates a cookie to symbolize medicine for earthly maladies. Then each student decorates a Jesus cookie to illustrate that we need our Savior to heal us of our sins.

Make the Point

Ask Have any of you ever been sick? Yes.

What was wrong? Answers will vary.

Did you have to take medicine for that? What did your parents or the doctor say? **Answers may include how medicines help bring down a fever or help pain go away.**

Say Pretend you’re the doctor and I’m sick. Let’s see what I have . . . Read one of your physical-disease cards aloud.

Ask What do you think I should take for this? **Students will name different medications, the use of casts, and so forth.** Repeat with other cards; do not use the SIN card yet. Hand out one cookie to each student, and set out the tubes of frosting and the sprinkles.

Say Okay, let’s pretend the cookie is medicine. Use the frosting to turn one of your cookies into a fancy pill for one of our problems.

Have students write on and decorate one cookie only for this part. Give help, if needed.

Say I have one card left. Let’s see what’s on it. Read it aloud: **Sin!**

Ask What medicine can we prescribe for that? **Jesus, because He died to take away our sins.**

What can you put on a cookie to show how your sin sickness is taken away?

Accept design ideas such as a cross or Jesus’ face.

Hand out a second cookie and let the students decorate it. Summarize the point as they work.

Say In today’s Bible lesson, God gave Peter and John the power to heal a man who could not walk. God gives us parents and doctors and medicines to help us feel better when we are sick too. But it is God’s power that heals us. Sometimes God doesn’t make us better right away.

Ask Does that mean God doesn’t love us? **No!**

Say God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to heal another kind of sickness that we all have. This sickness is inside us. It is our sin sickness. Because of Jesus and His work on the cross, God forgives our sins and promises us a home in heaven.

Ask What did the man who was lame do when he was healed? **The man leaped up and praised God for healing him.**

Say We can thank and praise God too.
How? Let students suggest ways, which include worship, giving thanks, praise, even doing loving service for others in God's name. Let's thank Him now in prayer.

Pray Dear Savior, thank You for coming to heal us from our sins. Thank You for loving us and giving us this snack. Amen.

Finish decorating and eating the cookies!

Fringed-Fleece Fun

Lesson 6

Dorcas

Acts 9:36–43

Key Point

In the life of Dorcas, we see that God leads us to do good works that glorify Him and point others to the saving light of Christ!

Purpose

God calls us to faith in Jesus through Baptism and His Word and makes us “salt” and “light.” Through His power, we do acts that help others and give glory to God.

In this activity, your students will “let [their] light shine before others” (Matthew 5:16) by making fleece scarves to give to shut-ins, nursing-home residents, or convalescing members of the congregation.

For a larger project, search for instructions for fleece throws on the Internet.

You Need

- ☐ For each scarf, 3 precut pieces of coordinated fleece in different colors, cut 5 inches wide by 60 inches long (shorter if the scarf is for a child), stitched together lengthwise down the center
- ☐ Regular or pinking sheers
- ☐ Red craft paper to make gift tags that say “From the loving hands of the children at [your church name].”
- ☐ Ribbon or yarn to attach tags
- ☐ Bibles

Do This

Ahead of time, cut out the fleece and stitch three coordinated pieces together lengthwise down the center to make 60-inch-long 3-layer scarves.

Organize the students to work in pairs.

Students take turns using scissors to make cuts ½-inch apart from the outside edge to the stitched line in the center of the scarf. Take care not to cut through the stitching. When all the cuts have been made, fluff out the edges.

Write “From the loving hands of the children at [your church name]” on the board for children to copy onto gift tags.

Option: For students who have trouble cutting through layers, use a hand-over-hand technique to strengthen their efforts.

Make the Point

Say Today, we are making scarves to give away. How does that remind you of our Bible story? **Dorcas made tunics for others. Yes, Dorcas did good works. She sewed clothes for those in need. When she died, Peter heard about the good works she had done. Let’s read what Jesus said about doing good works.**

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 5:16, this week’s Bible memory verse.

Say God wants us to be shining lights so that others can see the good works we do and glorify God. Each of us can be a light wherever God puts us.

Ask Where are some places God has put you? Accept answers.

Say Today, let’s work together to make scarves. God can use our hands to help one another and the people at [name the place you will take the scarves]. **We will cut this fleece and make fringe for these scarves.**

As the students work, talk with them about how we become “salt” and “light.” Remind them that we are not salt and light because we are perfect. We could never be perfect. It is through God’s love that we are transformed to live for others to the glory of God.

Since Jesus has made us His children in Baptism, we are lights that point to Jesus as the way to the Father; we are like valuable salt because we are useful in spreading the Gospel and helping others.