

NEW BEGINNINGS

Bible Basis: Acts 1:2–11; 2:1–6, 23–24, 32–33, 42–47; 8:4–8; 9:1–9, 17–19

Key Verse: All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in languages they had not known. The Spirit gave them the ability to do this. —Acts 2:4, NIV

Bible Point: God gives his people the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can live inside me.

Resource: *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 28: “New Beginnings”

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

As the children gather, have them stand in a large circle. If you have more than twenty in class, break into groups of no more than twenty. You may want to separate boys and girls into different groups. Have the group hold hands. Then ask the children to knot themselves up. They can twist under arms, step over hands, cross to the other side of the circle—but they may not let go of each other’s hands. Let them tangle themselves up for a few minutes, then stay in that position for the discussion.

- Tell me something great about being connected to other people.
- If I said you had to wait like this for a long time, how would you feel?

Say, **In the Bible story today, we’ll hear about a group of people that weren’t sure what they were tangled up with. Jesus told them to go to Jerusalem and wait. Let’s find out what happened there.**

STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

Stuff You Need: copies of *The Story for Kids*; Bibles; *The Story Elementary Trading Card 28*; poster board; marker; tape; Cloud, Fire, Light Activity Sheet, paper, pencils

Tell the story from *The Story for Kids*, Chapter 28. You can also have the children find Acts 1 and mark it in their Bibles. Then, use the Cloud, Fire, Light Activity sheet present the story.

A New Community

Ahead of time, prepare three posters. Put one of these words on each poster: Cloud, Fire, Light. If you’re artistic, add drawings. Set up three stations around the room. Put a poster at each station, along with a Bible. Cut apart the story segments on the Activity Sheet and leave the appropriate portion at each station. If you have a large group, you might want to provide more than one set of supplies at each station.

Have the class form pairs or trios. Give each group a sheet of paper and a pencil. Say, **Today's Bible story has three scenes, a Cloud scene, a Fire scene, and a Light scene.** Point out the stations you've set up. **Go to each station and read the paper you find there. It will tell you what part of the Bible to read. After you read everything, write down anything you find that is "new."** Remember, you might not see the word "new," but something new could still be happening.

Get children started at the Cloud Station, then let each small group work at its own pace to go through the three stations. When everyone is finished, gather as a large group to recap the story. Ask the children to tell you what they discovered at each station. Summarize the story and discuss the "new" items found. (For instance, new Spirit, new part of life for Jesus' disciples, new good news for everyone, new life for Saul, new community of believers.)

Close by saying, **After Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, he was taken up in a cloud. Then the Holy Spirit came to his friends in tongues of fire. And finally, Saul's life was changed by a bright light and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. God gave his people the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can live inside us, too, when we believe in Jesus the way the people in the story did.**

After you have told the Bible story, give each child a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 28*. Ask the children to look at the picture and tell you about what the tongues of fire are. As a class, read the key verse from the back of the card or from the Bible. Ask:

- **What gift did God give his people?**
- **What happened to Saul on the way to Damascus?**

Say, **The Holy Spirit was not just for Bible times. The Holy Spirit lives in us, too, when we believe in Jesus.**

Collect the cards for now. You'll send them home with the children later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Choose any or all of these activity options to help your class explore the lesson further.

OPTION 1: LIVING PICTURES

Stuff You Need: Bibles

Optional: Bible-time clothes, props

Divide the class into three groups and give each group one part of the story—Jesus going to heaven, the Holy Spirit coming, and Saul meeting Jesus. The groups don't have to be the same size. The groups should talk about their part of the story and decide on three parts to picture. When it's their turn, they should freeze in poses to show the scenes. When everyone has shown their scenes, talk about why they chose those parts of the story to show. If you have a large class, each picture can be done by different children.

OPTION 2: TANGRAM STORIES

Stuff You Need: Tangram Stories Activity Sheet

If possible, duplicate the activity sheet on colorful cardstock or sturdy paper. Have the children cut apart the shapes. Briefly review the main events in the Bible story: Jesus went to heaven, the Holy Spirit came, and Saul met Jesus on the way to Damascus. Encourage children to arrange the tangram shapes in ways that illustrate characters or elements from the Bible story. Children may want to work together to create an entire scene.

- Which part of the story was the best part for you?
- What would it mean to have the Holy Spirit in your life?

Say, **God's gift of the Holy Spirit is for all his people. That includes you!**

OPTION 3: THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

Stuff You Need: The Gift of the Spirit Activity Sheet, markers, pens

Say, **When God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples after Jesus rose, it was to give courage and strength to the believers so that they could go out and spread the Good News! What does the Holy Spirit do for us today?** Give an activity sheet to each child. Have the children write words on the flame that describe how the Holy Spirit has influenced their life. Have them color the flames a bright color to match the spirit that is in them. Share some of the words/gifts.

OPTION 4: GOD GIVES GIFTS

Stuff You Need: poster board, markers

God has given us so many gifts. Everything we have and everything we are is a result of his great love for us. The Holy Spirit is another one of those great gifts. Just like when the Spirit came upon the disciples, the Holy Spirit is available to all of us. He gives us strength and wisdom to accept and believe in God and in Jesus as our Savior.

Divide the class into small groups. Assign each of the groups a person of the Trinity, making sure that at least one group has each of the persons. Instruct the groups to brainstorm together a list of gifts that we receive as believers in the Trinity, in particular the part of the Trinity they were assigned.

Give a sheet of poster board to each of the groups and have them draw a large triangle in the center of the paper. Within the triangle have the groups write about or draw about the gifts that we have received. Share with the larger group.

STEP 4: GOING HOME

Pray together, thanking God that he sent the Holy Spirit. Make sure each child takes home a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 28*, Activity Sheet(s)/Crafts, and the Parents' Page.