Preschool–Grade 6

# Pentecost

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

**Main point:** God kept His promise and poured out the Holy Ghost. When the crowd asked, "What shall we do?", Peter gave a plain answer, and that answer is still for us and our children today (Acts 2:37–39).
**Bible passage:** Acts 1:4–14 and Acts 2:1–47. Students read Acts 2:1–13 and Acts 2:36–41 out loud themselves.
**Memory verse:** "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." *Acts 1:8 (KJV)* and "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." *Acts 2:38 (KJV)*
**You need:** a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
**Before class:** read Acts 1–2 and Joel 2:28–32. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

## 1. Opening game: The Big Question (5–10 minutes)

Ask students to call out questions people ask that really matter, from small to huge ("What's for dinner?", "Which team will I make?", "What will I do when I grow up?", "Is God real?"). Write them on the board. Students vote on the three most important. Ask: *What makes a question important? Who would you trust to answer the biggest ones?* Say: "Today a crowd of thousands asked one of the most important questions in the Bible, and Peter answered it."

## 2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

**Tell the beginning in your own words:** After His resurrection, Jesus told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem for "the promise of the Father": they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost "not many days hence" (Acts 1:4–5). He said they would receive power and be His witnesses (1:8). He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight (1:9). They went back to an upper room and continued with one accord in prayer, with the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brethren (1:13–14). Pentecost was a feast God gave Israel; the word means "fiftieth," for the fifty days counted to it (Leviticus 23:15–16).


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**Read out loud: Acts 2:1–13.** Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **fully come** (2:1): had arrived; **with one accord**: all together, with one mind
- **cloven tongues like as of fire** (2:3): split flames that looked like fire; **sat upon**: rested on
- **gave them utterance** (2:4): gave them the words to speak
- **devout** (2:5): loving and fearing God; **noised abroad** (2:6): talked about everywhere
- **confounded** (2:6): amazed and confused; **marvelled** (2:7): wondered
- **proselytes** (2:10): people from other nations who had turned to the God of Israel
- **full of new wine** (2:13): drunk (they mocked, but it wasn't true)

**Tell the middle part in your own words:** Peter stood up with the eleven and said these men were not drunk, since it was only the third hour, about nine in the morning (2:14–15). This was what Joel prophesied: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh," and "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (2:16–21). Peter preached Jesus of Nazareth, approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs. They had crucified Him, but God raised Him up, "because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (2:22–24). David wrote of it long before (2:25–31). "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (2:32), and Jesus had shed forth what they now saw and heard (2:33).

**Read out loud: Acts 2:36–41.** Old words in this passage:

- **assuredly** (2:36): for certain; **Christ**: the Anointed One God promised
- **pricked in their heart** (2:37): cut to the heart, deeply sorry for their sin
- **remission of sins** (2:38): sins sent away and forgiven, washed away
- **afar off** (2:39): far away, in place or in time
- **testify and exhort** (2:40): tell the truth and urge them strongly
- **untoward generation** (2:40): the crooked, stubborn people of that time
- **souls** (2:41): people

**Then read how the church began:** Acts 2:42–47. They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers, and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (2:47).


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## 3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. The believers waited and prayed with one accord before the Holy Ghost came (Acts 1:14; 2:1). What does waiting on God in prayer look like for you?
2. The crowd heard the wonderful works of God in their own languages (2:6–11). Why do you think God did it in a way people from every nation could hear?
3. Some mocked (2:13). Peter answered from Scripture, with no anger (2:14–21). What can we learn from how he answered?
4. Peter preached that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, was both Lord and Christ (2:36). Why did the people respond by asking, "What shall we do?" (2:37)?
5. Read Acts 2:38–39 again. What three things did Peter tell them, and who did he say the promise is for?
6. Acts 1:8 says the Holy Ghost gives power to be witnesses. Where is your "Jerusalem," the place right around you, where you could be a witness?

## 4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in Acts 1:8: **ye** means you; **witnesses** are people who tell what they have seen and know; **Judaea** and **Samaria** are the lands around Jerusalem; **the uttermost part of the earth** means the farthest places in the world. Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Acts 1:8 this week; keep working on Acts 2:38 next week too.


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## 5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "When the crowd asked, 'What shall we do?', Peter gave a plain answer, and he said the promise is for 'your children, and to all that are afar off' (Acts 2:39). God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, just as the believers did that day (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
*Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.*

## 6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. If I had been in the crowd on the day of Pentecost, what would I have wanted to ask Peter?
2. Who is one person in my "Jerusalem" I could tell about Jesus this week?
3. Write a short prayer thanking God for His promise and asking Him to help you live for Him.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

**This week:** read Acts 2 at home, and tell one person something Jesus has done.

## 7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for keeping Your promise and pouring out the Holy Ghost. Help us pray with one accord, answer with Your Word when people mock, and be Your witnesses wherever we go. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

**If a student asks about speaking in tongues:** answer honestly and warmly. The believers spoke with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4), and it happened again when the Holy Ghost fell on others later (Acts 10:44–46; 19:6). Peter said the promise is for "all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (2:39). Invite the student to talk with their parents and pastor.


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