

Sunday, August 23rd – **READ THIS!**

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Because the Holy Spirit Leads Me, I Am Led

SCRIPTURE: John 14

WORD OF WONDER: Exodus 15:11b

Read [John 14:15–21, 25–26](#). People today have so many voices competing for their attention. Social media and news media. Talk radio and podcasts. Ads on the internet. Ads on the interstate. It feels like everything everywhere is always shouting: “Look at me” or “Go this way” or “Trust this,” they say. I think that’s why people sometimes latch onto the wrong things. When life feels chaotic, it’s natural to long for an anchor in the storm, and it’s easy to grab after whatever’s making the most noise.

Followers of Jesus are not exempt from the chaos, but Jesus hasn’t left us without help in the world. We have an anchor that never fails—a helper who is always with us, dwelling deeply in our hearts. We have the Holy Spirit.

If you are a follower of Jesus, then God’s powerful, wise, and loving presence is leading you. The Holy Spirit is with you, comforting and encouraging you as you follow the way of Jesus. He gives wisdom and understanding. He plants the words of Jesus deep in our hearts and helps us see through every counterfeit.

What difference would it make if you trusted God’s presence today? What would you be able to do? Who would you be able to reach? Because the Holy Spirit leads you, you are led. Will you walk in step with Him today?

—**Michael Rade**

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Contributor to Wonder Ink

JESUS PROMISES THE HOLY SPIRIT

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Holy Spirit is one with God the Father and God the Son. He is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence, empowering believers to honor God and follow Jesus. The Spirit brings wisdom and knowledge of God's Word, guiding and encouraging God's children.

WHAT?

Before Jesus died on the cross, He comforted His disciples by promising that the Holy Spirit would come to them after He went to be with the Father. The Spirit would be their helper, teaching them all things and reminding them of Jesus' words.

WHERE?

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit's coming during His Passover supper with the disciples in an upper room of a house in Jerusalem. Shortly after, Jesus and His disciples crossed the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was arrested before His crucifixion.

WHEN?

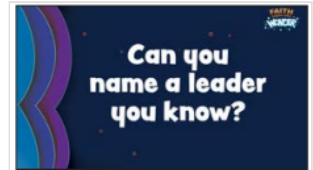
This story took place shortly before Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion. Jesus and His disciples were in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Holy Spirit would later come on the disciples during Pentecost, after Jesus' resurrection and ascension.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

In the book of Ezekiel, God promised to give His people new hearts by placing His own Spirit within them ([Ezekiel 36:26–27](#)). This promise was realized when the Holy Spirit came to Jesus' followers, empowering all believers to reject sin and walk in newness of life.

Welcome Question

What You Need: [Holy Spirit Welcome Question Slide](#)



What You Do: Warmly welcome kids by name. Show them the Welcome Question. Invite kids to share the names of as many leaders as they can. They can name people they know personally or well-known leaders they have heard about in the news, school, church, etc. Also encourage them to tell each other why they think those people are leaders. If you have younger kids, be sure to read the question for them.

What You Say: **Can you name a leader you know?** As kids answer, invite them to imagine all the different places where someone might be willing to follow a good leader.

A leader is someone who guides or gives direction to those following him or her. Today we'll hear about the most important leader of all. And when we follow Him, we are led by His powerful, wise, and loving presence. But first, it's time to be curious.

Curiosity Questions

What You Do: Ask the following "I'm curious" questions. Say "I'm curious ..." before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one.

What You Say:

I'm curious ...

- **If you had to pick between being a leader or a follower, which would you choose? Why?**
- **What makes a good leader?**

Preteen STEM Activity: Make It Move

What You Need: strong magnet wands (1 per 3–4 kids), paper clips (1 per kid), [Make It Move Slide](#), [Make It Move Maze Sheet](#) (1 per kid or 1 per 3–4 kids), [Holy Spirit Wonder Truth Slide](#)

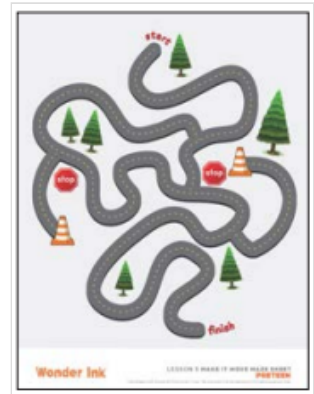
What You Do: You will need one [Make It Move Maze Sheet](#) for every 3–4 kids. Gather strong magnet wands; you will need one for every 3–4 kids.

Display the [Make It Move Slide](#), and set a [Make It Move Maze Sheet](#) on a table and a paper clip near the start of the maze. (The magnets should be out of sight.) Gather kids around the table so they can see the maze.

What You Say: Do you think I can get this paper clip through this maze without touching it? Allow kids to respond. If they think you can, invite them to share how they think you'll do it. Next, reveal a magnet wand. Then carefully lift the sheet with the paper clip on it. Holding the magnet in one hand and the maze in the other, place the magnet under the sheet and use it to direct the paper clip through the maze.

Now invite kids to try doing the activity themselves! Hand out copies of the Make It Move Maze Sheet, magnets, and paper clips to each kid. Or if you want kids to work together, have them gather in groups of 3–4 kids and give a set of supplies to each group. Give kids several minutes to have fun with their magnets and mazes! Kids can race one another to see who can guide their paper clips through their maze the fastest, or they can simply experiment to see what happens with their paper clips (or iron fillings) when they move their magnets in different directions. Walk among the kids, letting them show off what they are doing and discovering!

Explain some of the science behind the activity: A *magnet* is a rock or metal that can pull certain types of metal toward itself because of a force called *magnetism*. Magnets can work across distances, so a strong magnet doesn't have to be touching the magnetic object in order to pull it toward itself.



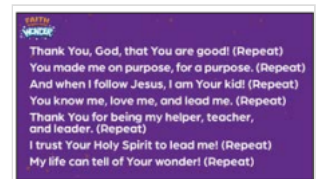
Gather kids together and display the [Holy Spirit Wonder Truth Slide](#). **You all did an amazing job using magnets to lead your paper clips through the maze! We are like the paper clips in this activity. When we believe in Jesus and trust Him as our Savior, He promises we will have the Holy Spirit to help, teach, and lead us every day. The Holy Spirit is God's powerful, wise, and loving presence in our lives, and today's Wonder Truth is **BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS ME, I AM LED.****



Declaring God's Wonder

What You Need: Holy Spirit Declaration Slide

What You Do: Display the [Holy Spirit Declaration Slide](#). Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.



What You Say:

Thank You, God, that You are good! *(Kids repeat.)*

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. *(Kids repeat.)*

And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat.)*

You know me, love me, and lead me. *(Kids repeat.)*

Thank You for being my helper, teacher, and leader. *(Kids repeat.)*

I trust Your Holy Spirit to lead me! *(Kids repeat.)*

My life can tell of Your wonder! *(Kids repeat.)*

God's Big Story

What You Need: Bibles (1 per kid), [Holy Spirit Title Slide](#)



What You Do: Display the [Holy Spirit Title Slide](#). Explain to kids that they're going to hear about a promise Jesus makes to everyone who chooses to follow Him. Guide kids to find the Gospel of John in their Bible's table of contents. Help them find [John 14](#), reminding them that chapter numbers are larger than verse numbers.

What You Say: Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Read [John 14:15–21, 25–26](#) aloud as kids follow along.

In Awe of God's Wonder

What You Do: Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God's story.

What You Say: The disciples walked with Jesus for about three years. They ate and laughed and cried together. How do you think the disciples might have felt when Jesus told them He would be going away? Invite them to share their ideas with a neighbor before sharing with the whole group.

How do you think the disciples might have felt when Jesus told them God would send them the Holy Spirit—God's powerful, wise, and loving presence—to be with them forever? Rather than rush to call on the first raised hand, allow some extra time to think and wait before calling on anyone.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

—Exodus 15:11b (NIV)

You are majestic and holy. Your glory fills me with wonder. You do amazing things.

—Exodus 15:11b (NirV)

What You Need: Bible, balloon, Word of Wonder Slide [NirV](#)

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any latex allergies within your ministry before doing this activity. **ONLY LEADER SHOULD HANDLE BALLOON.**

Today we learned about the Holy Spirit—God's powerful, loving, and wise presence—who is with all Jesus-followers. What an amazing gift! Let's practice our Word of Wonder as a way of telling God how incredible He is! Open your Bible to [Exodus 15:11b](#).

Next, hold up a deflated balloon where everyone can see it. Recite each phrase of the verse, pausing to fill up the balloon with air. Once finished, tie it off. Then repeat the verse. Connect the idea that blowing up the balloon is kind of like being "filled" with God's glory. The more you allow the Lord in your life to lead and guide you, the more you will continue to grow in God's wisdom and knowledge, much like the balloon grows when filled with air.

Elementary Questions

- **Who did Jesus promise God would send to the disciples?** (*the Holy Spirit*)

- **What other names did Jesus use to describe the Holy Spirit?** (*“Spirit of truth,” “Friend,” and “Holy Spirit.”* See [John 14:17, 26](#).)
- **As Jesus-followers, the Holy Spirit is our friend! What does it mean to be someone’s friend? What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to be your friend?**
- **The promise of the Holy Spirit was for Jesus’ first disciples and for everyone who follows Jesus today. How does that make you feel?**
- **Who is someone that doesn’t know and follow Jesus? Who is missing the friendship and help of the Holy Spirit in their lives?**

Jesus promised that God’s powerful, wise, and loving presence that led Him would also be available to everyone else who follows Him. Let’s spend some time in prayer thanking God for the Holy Spirit and praying for those who don’t know and follow Jesus yet.

Make It Inclusive: Understanding and answering open-ended questions can be difficult for some kids. Modify questions to help all kids participate by changing questions into yes/no format, offering answer choices, and/or providing extended wait time for kids to process.

Small Group Prayer Time

Begin your prayer time by thanking God for making a forever relationship with Him possible through Jesus and for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Invite kids to ask God to help them pay attention to the Spirit at work in them and to respond to His lead. And close by encouraging kids to think of someone they know who doesn’t know and follow Jesus and to pray silently for them, asking God to reveal His love to them.

Elementary Responding in Worship: Holy Spirit, Lead Me

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Holy Spirit, Lead Me Slide](#); [Hand Prayer Slide](#)

What You Do: Display the [Holy Spirit, Lead Me Slide](#) and gather kids together. Invite kids to close their eyes and imagine the following scene:



What You Say: Imagine you are walking down a road by yourself, and there are no signs helping you know which way to go. What do you notice as you walk down the road? Pause after each question for kids to think and imagine quietly. Is it daytime or nighttime? Is it nice and warm outside, or is it bitter and cold? As the wind blows, are you moving with the wind or against it? Are you walking downhill or uphill? Are you breathing easily, or are you breathing heavily? Is the road straight and easy to follow, or are there lots of twists and turns?

Invite kids to open their eyes. Ask everyone to take a deep, calming breath, and then place their palms together with fingers straight and fingertips touching. Display the [Hand Prayer Slide](#). Let's learn a hand prayer that we can use anytime to remember that, as followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit—who is God—leads us! In this prayer, we will use our fingers to spell "Holy Spirit" and then together say, "Lead me."



One finger at a time and starting with the thumbs, show kids how to separate each pair of fingers and bring them back together again (all while keeping the palms and other fingers touching). Each time a pair of fingers is separated and brought back together, say a letter. Go through each pair of fingers twice, spelling out the following in order:

- "H"—Thumbs separate and come back together.
- "O"—Pointer fingers separate and come back together.
- "L"—Middle fingers separate and come back together.
- "Y"—Ring fingers separate and come back together.
- "S"—Pinky fingers separate and come back together.
- "P"—Thumbs separate and come back together.
- "I"—Pointer fingers separate and come back together.
- "R"—Middle fingers separate and come back together.
- "I"—Ring fingers separate and come back together.
- "T"—Pinky fingers separate and come back together.

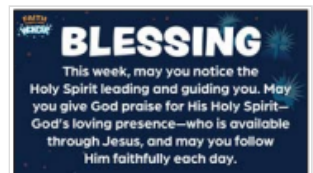
When finished, everyone will clasp their hands together and say, “Lead me.” Then try it a second time together.

Invite the kids to close their eyes again. Keeping hands clasped, invite them to imagine they’re back on the road, but this time they see an arrow directing them which way to go. Use the following words to invite kids to imagine the Holy Spirit speaking to them: **I am the Holy Spirit—God’s powerful, wise, and loving presence. I will never leave you. I am God, and when you follow Jesus, I’m with you and in you. Day and night, I will guide you. When you feel safe and at peace, I am with you. When you feel scared and alone, I am with you. I will lead you through all the twists and turns in life. I will help you follow Jesus through it all. Because I am leading you, you are led.**

Blessing Your Kids

What You Need: [Holy Spirit Blessing Slide](#)

What You Do: Display the Holy Spirit Blessing Slide. Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.



What You Say:

Blessing: This week, may you notice the Holy Spirit leading and guiding you. May you give God praise for His Holy Spirit—God’s loving presence—who is available through Jesus, and may you follow Him faithfully each day.