

# THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

## PART 4: THE GOSPEL AT WORK

### LESSON 2 || THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PENTECOST

#### SESSION SNAPSHOT

**NARRATIVE PASSAGE:** Acts 2:1-41

**GOSPEL FOCUS:** John 16:5-14

#### STUDENT TAKEAWAYS:

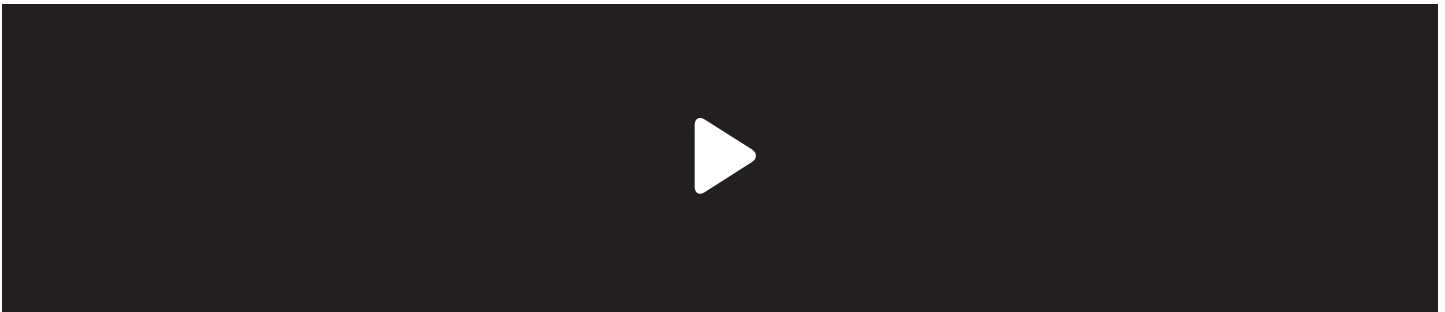
- Understand that from Pentecost forward, the promised Holy Spirit would permanently live within all who would ever come to faith in Christ.
- Understand that Pentecost represented the fulfillment of Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit to His disciples.
- Flesh out what it practically looks like to let the Holy Spirit guide their life.

#### OVERVIEW:

In this lesson, you'll continue tracing the Bible's big-picture story by looking at what happened at Pentecost when Jesus' promise of the coming Holy Spirit was fulfilled. The Spirit empowered people to speak in different languages so that people from various countries could hear the Gospel message. From that moment forward, the Spirit has dwelled inside believers. The Spirit's role in the lives of Christians is to convict and guide as well as to bring glory to Jesus. At the end of the lesson, your students will talk about what it looks like for the Spirit to guide their lives.

#### TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These short videos are designed to help you grasp the lesson's main point as you prepare to teach.



#### BIBLE BACKGROUND

*The Bible Background* is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you'll be studying.

- **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CONTEXT"?** In every YM360 Bible study lesson, we encourage teachers to help students know *who* wrote a particular book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **WHY TEACH CONTEXT?** Grasping the big-picture view of God's story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they're studying.

#### ACTS

- *Author:* Acts has long been held to be a letter from Luke, a Gentile physician, to a man named Theophilus, possibly a

benefactor of some sort.

- *Time frame:* There is some debate over when Acts was written. The suggested dates are between 70 AD and 80 AD.
- *Purpose:* The book of Acts is a second letter to Theophilus that tells the story of the early Church following Jesus' resurrection. The book begins with Jesus' ascension and His command to His followers to proclaim the Gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The rest of the book traces this journey as the early Church leaders proclaim the Gospel and plant churches.

## JOHN

- *Author:* The Gospel of John was written by John the Apostle, son of Zebedee. A fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus, John also penned the Book of Revelation and the three New Testament letters that bear his name.
- *Time frame:* The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- *Purpose:* John's stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his gospel: "*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*" John's goal seems to have been to clearly communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Son of God, the promised Messiah.

# LESSON PLAN

*The Lesson Plan contains four elements:*

- **GETTING STARTED**– An introductory activity designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- **THE STORY**– A section featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- **THE THREAD**– A special emphasis where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- **WRAPPING UP**– An application-focused segment helping teenagers ask the question, “How am I impacted by what I learned today”?

## GETTING STARTED

- *Goal:* To get students thinking about what it looks like for the Holy Spirit to move.
- *Set-Up:* Whiteboard to jot down some answers.

BEGIN with a conversation about the students’ understanding of the Holy Spirit and what it means to see Him move.  
**Ask something like:**

- **What’s the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers?**
  - *Answers will vary.* Don’t feel like you have to teach a full lesson on the Holy Spirit in answering this question. You may choose to correct any crazy thoughts, but for the most part, just allow students to work together to answer this.
- **Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit move in your life? Share a little bit about it.**
  - *Answers will vary.*
- **Have you ever seen the Holy Spirit move in a larger group of people? Share about it.**
  - *Answers will vary.*

NEXT, divide the whiteboard into four sections and write the following terms in each one: “youth group,” “church,” “school,” and “home.” **Then, ask your students the following question for each section and jot down some of their answers on the board.**

- **What might it look like for the Holy Spirit to move here? What might this look like?**

FINALLY, explain to the students that today you are going to look at the Holy Spirit moving through the early Church at Pentecost and see what the Holy Spirit wants to do in and through us.

## TRANSITION TO THE STORY.

## THE STORY

- *Goal:* For students to understand that from Pentecost forward, the promised Holy Spirit would permanently live within all who would ever come to faith in Christ.
- *Set-Up:* Students will need a Bible or a Bible app.

FIRST, explain that in this lesson, you’ll be looking at the Holy Spirit coming upon the early church and empowering them to minister the truth of the Gospel to the nations. If you’d like, use the Connecting The Dots section below to review or fill in the gaps between your last lesson and this one.

## CONNECTING THE DOTS

As you teach *The Thread*, there will naturally be some gaps in the story. This is an optional way for you to fill in some of the gaps between the last lesson you taught and this one. Use it to review or connect the dots to the events surrounding the passage.

- Jesus has ascended into Heaven and has left His disciples with a mission to go and tell the world of the grace found in the message of the Gospel.
- The disciples have been waiting in Jerusalem for Jesus' promise about sending the Holy Spirit to be fulfilled. While they have been waiting, thousands of people have come to Jerusalem from several nations to celebrate a festival.

Have your students turn in their Bibles to Acts 2. While they're finding it, you can use some of the information in the Bible Background to give them more context about the book of Acts. Also, explain to students that Pentecost was a time when the Jewish people came together for a feast to celebrate Moses' giving of the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai. The believers had gathered together, waiting for the promised Holy Spirit as Jesus had instructed them to do in Acts 1:8.

NEXT, read or have a student read Acts 2:1-15 and **ask something like the following questions:**

- **How would you have felt in that moment?**
  - *Answers will vary.*
- **What did this passage say about why the Spirit empowered them to speak different languages?**
  - *Answer:* So people from various countries could hear about the "wonders of God."
- **How did the skeptics explain the phenomenon?**
  - *Answer:* They said the people must be drunk.
- **What do you think made the difference in the two different groups' responses to the work of God?**
  - *Answers will vary.* A possible answer is the people's openness to the message. The Holy Spirit opened their hearts and minds to the Gospel.
- **How do you respond when you see God working in your life and the lives of people around you?**
  - *Answers will vary.*

THEN, explain to the students that Peter stood up, responded to the criticism, and gave a powerful sermon. Read or have a student read Acts 2:22-24 and Acts 2:36 as summaries of Peter's message. Then **ask something like:**

- **What was the heart of Peter's message?**
  - *Answer:* Jesus was crucified and buried but was raised from the dead and defeated death.
- **What does it mean that Jesus is Lord?**
  - *Answer:* It means that He is fully God. He demands our allegiance. It's unreasonable to pass Him off as merely a good teacher or prophet. If He is Lord, it means that He is in control of all things.
- **Is Peter's message any different than the message we're called to proclaim to those around us?**
  - *Answer:* No, we're called to spread the same message. It hasn't changed.
- **What does that tell us about the relevance of the Gospel?**
  - *Answer:* The Gospel is always relevant. We don't have to change it or dress it up for anyone. It's never irrelevant, and it doesn't need to be added to or taken away from.

NEXT, read or have a student read Acts 2:37-41 and **ask something like:**

- **What is the “gift of the Holy Spirit?”**
  - *Answer:* It is the Spirit coming to live within someone. It’s the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself living inside of us.
- **Was this a one-time thing that just happened to these believers? Or was it more?**
  - *Answer:* It’s something that was promised to all believers moving forward. Verse 39 tells us that the promise was for them, their children, and those that are far off. It’s for “all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Explain to your students that you will now explore how Jesus told His disciples that having the Holy Spirit would be better than having Him with them.

**IF STUDENTS DON'T HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, TRANSITION INTO THE THREAD AND LOOK TO SEE WHERE YOU CAN TRACK THE CONNECTION OF THE GOSPEL TO THE BIG-PICTURE NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE.**

## THE THREAD

FIRST, instruct students to turn to John 16. While they’re finding it, you can use the Bible Background information to give some context about the book of John. Then, say something like:

- So far, we’ve seen how the Holy Spirit filled the believers at Pentecost and how God worked in amazing ways through their words to bring people to a relationship with Jesus. Now, we’re going to go back to Jesus’ conversation with His disciples about the Holy Spirit.

THEN, read or have a student read John 16:5-7. Ask something like:

- How would you feel that Jesus would be leaving you so the Holy Spirit would come?
  - *Answers will vary.*
- How would you have felt on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit actually came?
  - *Answers will vary.*
- Do we live like we believe what Jesus promised? Do we live like we think it’s a big deal that we have the Holy Spirit inside of us?
  - *Answers will vary.*

NEXT, read or have a student read John 16:8-13. Ask something like:

- What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives?
  - *Answer:* He convicts, guides, and glorifies Jesus.

FINALLY, transition to the Wrapping Up section by saying something like:

- Before we finish today’s lesson, we are going to explore what it looks like for the Holy Spirit to both convict and guide us to truth as we seek to follow Jesus faithfully.

**IF YOUR STUDENTS DON'T HAVE ANY MORE QUESTIONS, TRANSITION INTO THE WRAPPING UP SECTION.**

## WRAPPING UP

- *Goal:* To help students flesh out what it practically looks like to let the Holy Spirit guide their life.
- *Set-Up:* You’ll need the Maps app on your phone to use as an example.

FIRST, show the students the Maps app on your phone. Ask something like:

- **How is the Holy Spirit like the GPS on your Maps app?**
  - *Answer:* They both serve as a guide, and they both convict. They both tell you where to go and to turn around when you head the wrong way.
- **If you don't pay attention to the map or have the volume turned off, you can get pretty off track. How can you keep the volume turned up in your spiritual life to be able to discern the Holy Spirit's leading?**
  - *Answer:* Spending time with God in prayer and Bible Study. Being sensitive to His guidance and conviction throughout the day.
- **What are some ways the Holy Spirit lets you know that you're getting off track?**
  - *Answers:* The Spirit accomplishes this through conviction, which can happen through reading the Word, the godly counsel of others, etc.
- **What are the things you let get in the way of being led by the Spirit? What keeps you from hearing or listening to the Spirit's leading?**
  - *Answers will vary.*

NEXT, add one section to the board you wrote on during the Getting Started section. Label it "Your Life." Ask something like:

- **At the beginning of the lesson, we put on the board what it would look like for the Spirit to move in these areas. What would it look like for the Spirit to lead and guide your life this week? Would your life be any different than normal?**
  - *Answers will vary.*
- **What are some practical steps you can take this week to be more sensitive to the Spirit's guidance throughout the week?**
  - *Answers will vary.*

FINALLY, wrap up your discussion by saying something like:

- **It's amazing to think that Jesus told us that it was better for us that He went away so we could receive the gift of the Spirit. That must mean the Spirit is a pretty incredible gift for Christians, but we take it for granted way too much. Think about this for a moment, if you are a follower of Jesus, the Creator of the universe lives inside of you and guides you through life. Let's be committed this week to clearing out the clutter that keeps us from hearing and following the guidance of the Spirit.**

Close your Bible study in prayer, perhaps thanking God for the gift of the Spirit and sensitivity to the Spirit's guidance throughout the following week.

- If you've purchased the corresponding devotional journal, remind students they'll be working through Week 41 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.
- If you're utilizing the digital devotions included in the Thread curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well that you want to share?
- Something that didn't work that you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).