

**TEACHER NOTECARDS LEVEL 4, QUARTER A—  
EYEWITNESSES**

Use these Teacher Notecards as a reference when teaching *Explore Scripture*. Choose the outline form or narrative form based on your teaching style and preference.\*

Print on paper or cardstock. Fold in half, then fold again along the gray line. This will create a two-sided, notecard-sized piece for you to hold in your hand.

\*The narrative form has been edited to fit on these cards. Please see the full *Explore Scripture* sections of each lesson for more interactivity, application, and content.

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Big Idea: **Christians spread the Good News about Jesus from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.**

**Acts 1-28** [outline form]

Intro: *The Book of Acts shows how the Good News spread.*

Ask: *Why was it important that the Good News spread from Jerusalem?*

1. Understand the authorship of the Book of Acts (picture 4A.1).
  - *Luke—a physician and author* . . . . . *Colossians 4:14*
  - *Luke also wrote the Gospel of Luke* . . . . . *Luke 1*
  - *Luke paid high attention to detail.* . . . . . *Acts 1:1*
  - *Luke was an eyewitness to many events in Acts.* . . . . . *Acts 16:10*
2. Understand the reason for the Book of Acts.
  - *Full title—the Acts of the Apostles*
  - *Records the deeds of the early Church*
  - *Shows how the Good News spread* (picture 4A.2)



3. Understand the command to take the Gospel message to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).
  - *Stresses the power given by the Holy Spirit*
  - *Details the personal responsibility—to be witnesses*
  - *Identifies the scope of the mission—to the ends of the earth*

Conclusion: *The Book of Acts tells us about the apostles and how their witness spread Jesus' message. How exciting to witness the explosive power of God's message.*



Big Idea: **Christians spread the Good News about Jesus from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.**

**Acts 1-28** [narrative form]

Intro: *The Book of Acts shows how the Good News spread.*

Ask: *Why was it important that the Good News spread from Jerusalem?*

The Book of Acts was written by Luke around 60-65 A.D. His writings give us an eyewitness account of the early Church and how it spread the Good News of Jesus around the world. *Why is it important to have an eyewitness account?* (An eyewitness tells what he or she saw or witnessed.) *Have you ever been an eyewitness to something?* Encourage responses.

The Book of Acts is officially called “The Acts of the Apostles.” The author, Luke, was a physician and friend of Paul (picture 4A.1). An apostle was someone chosen by Jesus and sent forth to tell others what he had seen and known of Christ. The apostles were given the task to be witnesses to places that hadn't yet heard about Jesus. *What two apostles are featured in the Book of Acts?* (Peter and Paul.) *Would you have liked to be one of these apostles?* Encourage responses.



The apostles couldn't tackle this great assignment on their own. *Where did the apostles get their power to do the task?* (The Holy Spirit.) Jesus' first followers, now the Church, were centered in Jerusalem and needed to spread (picture 4A.2). They had already told or witnessed to the people in Jerusalem and now they were commanded in Acts 1:8 to go to the ends of the earth. Talk about areas of the world that today might be called the “ends of the earth.” *Why do you think missionaries today go to the “ends of the earth?”* Encourage responses. *Would you be willing to be God's witness to “ends of the earth?” Why or why not?*

Conclusion: *The Book of Acts tells us about the apostles and how their witness spread Jesus' message. How exciting to witness the explosive power of God's message.*



Big Idea: **Jesus commands His followers to proclaim the Good News to others.**

**Acts 1** [outline form]

Intro: *Jesus was seen by many people, taught His followers, and gave one last command before He returned to heaven.*

Ask: *Why was it important for Jesus to be seen by people after His resurrection?*

1. The risen Lord was on earth for forty days. Jesus kept His word about resurrecting, so we can trust His promises.

- *Many people saw Jesus alive (picture 4A.3). . . . . Acts 1:3*
- *Eyewitness accounts give proof that Jesus is alive. . . . . 1 Corinthians 15:3-8*
- *Jesus tells His followers to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. . . . Acts 1:4-5*

2. Before Jesus returned to heaven, He gave His disciples one final command.

- *The disciples would received power from the Holy Spirit . . . . . 1:8*
- *They would be His witnesses “to the ends of the earth.” . . . . . 1:8*
- *Jesus ascended into the sky (picture 4A.4) . . . . . 1:9*
- *Two “men” told the disciples Jesus would return from heaven . . . . . 1:10-11*



3. The apostles recognized their need to take the next step and obey Jesus.

- *The disciples returned to Jerusalem and spent time in prayer . . . . . 1:12-14*
- *Peter recognized in Scripture the need to replace Judas . . . . . 1:20*
- *The candidate had to have been with Jesus from the beginning . . . . . 1:21-22*
- *The disciples prayed and chose Matthias . . . . . 1:24-26*

Conclusion: *Jesus fulfilled His promise to rise from the dead and was seen by many people. These eyewitnesses proved that Jesus kept His promise. We can trust Him and be His witnesses.*



Big Idea: **Jesus commands His followers to proclaim the Good News to others.**

**Acts 1** [narrative form]

Intro: *Jesus was seen by many people, taught His followers, and gave one last command before He returned to heaven.*

Ask: *Why was it important for Jesus to be seen by people after His resurrection?*

Before Jesus was crucified, He promised to rise from the dead. Most people didn't believe Him—even His own followers were skeptical and didn't understand. We can always count on Jesus to keep His promises to us because He kept His promise to come back to life. He could have gone directly to heaven after His resurrection, but instead, He spent forty days on earth interacting with people (picture 4A.3). Let's turn to 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 and read one list of eyewitnesses who saw Jesus alive. Read this passage. His disciples saw Jesus alive so they could be eyewitnesses and share firsthand accounts of His resurrection.

Read Acts 1:1-8. During His forty days with them, Jesus taught His followers and even left them with a job to do. Jesus commanded His followers to proclaim the



Good News to others. That means as His followers, we are to tell about who Jesus is and what He did for us. This command is for all His followers—no matter who they are, when they lived, where they lived, or how old they are!

After Jesus gave His last command to be His witnesses, He did something amazing right before their eyes. Read Acts 1:9-11 (picture 4A.4). The apostles might have felt abandoned by their Friend, but Jesus never leaves us alone. Jesus had told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit's arrival. He explained that the Holy Spirit would give them power to carry out His commands.

Read Acts 1:12-26. The apostles chose to deal with their feelings of abandonment in a good way, according to verse 14. It was important that the new apostle they chose had heard Jesus' teaching, had witnessed His miracles, and had seen Jesus alive after His death. The apostles spent much time in prayer asking God to guide them in such an important decision. Now the twelve men were ready to be Jesus' witnesses throughout the world.

As we look more into the book of Acts, we will see how these men were faithful witnesses, proclaiming the Good News wherever they went. We need to faithfully do the same with our friends, families, and others.



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit empowers Christians to witness about Jesus.**

**Acts 2:1-21** [outline form]

Intro: *Jews gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came, and the disciples witnessed in foreign languages.*

Ask: *Why was it important for the Holy Spirit to come?*

1. The disciples were gathered in one place when the Holy Spirit came to them as Jesus had promised (picture 4A.5).

- *There was a sound like a roaring wind* . . . . . Acts 2:2
- *Tongues of fire came and rested on the disciples* . . . . . 2:3
- *The Holy Spirit filled them, and they spoke other tongues* . . . . . 2:4

2. A crowd gathered at the sound of the men speaking.

- *Jews from all nations had gathered for Pentecost* . . . . . 2:1
- *They were amazed to hear the men speaking in their own languages* . . . . . 2:6-11
- *They did not understand or believe what was happening* . . . . . 2:12-13



3. Peter addressed the crowd, explaining Joel’s prophecy concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit (picture 4A.6).

- *God will pour out His Spirit on all people* . . . . . 2:17
- *There will be wonders and signs* . . . . . 2:19
- *Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved* . . . . . 2:21

Conclusion: *The Holy Spirit came to the disciples, just as Jesus promised. We have the same power available to us! Praise God for His Spirit!*



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit empowers Christians to witness about Jesus.**

**Acts 2:1-21** [narrative form]

Intro: *Jews gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came, and the disciples witnessed in foreign languages.*

Ask: *Why was it important for the Holy Spirit to come?*

The Jewish people had gathered at the Temple in Jerusalem to offer to God their firstfruits from the harvest. Many traveled long distances from all around the world. This special celebration is called Pentecost—it was celebrated exactly fifty days after Passover. Today’s Bible passage lends itself to being acted in a melodrama style by the children. See the Teacher Guide for details.

Acts 2:1-4 When the day of Pentecost came, the apostles were all in one place. Suddenly, a sound like a blowing wind came from heaven and filled the whole house. They saw tongues of fire rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (picture 4A.5).

Acts 2:5-13 God-fearing Jews from every nation had come and were staying in



Jerusalem. When they heard the sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment. Each one heard his or her own language and was amazed. The Jews came from countries all over the world. They heard people telling the wonders of God in their own language. Amazed and perplexed, they asked, “What does this mean?” Some people made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Acts 2: 14-21 (picture 4A.6.) Peter stood up and in a loud voice said, “Fellow Jews, these men are not drunk. God said He would pour out His Spirit on all people. He will show wonders in the heavens and signs on the earth below. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Explain that Peter was quoting from a prophecy found in the book of Joel (2:28-32).

When Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to His apostles and other believers, it was rather dramatic. It drew a lot of attention by all the different nationalities present during the Pentecost festival. Peter stood up, raised his voice, and explained he was empowered by the Holy Spirit. Many heard and responded to the message and returned home with the Good News of Salvation. When we are followers of Jesus, we too are filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to share what we know about Jesus with others. Each one of us needs to be willing to serve God whenever and wherever He leads us, knowing the Holy Spirit will help.



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit unites Christians in one heart and purpose.**

**Acts 2:22-47** [outline form]

Intro: *Peter witnessed to the crowd, and many people believed in Jesus.*

Ask: *Why did Peter call the Holy Spirit a gift?*

1. Peter continued to preach to the crowd (picture 4A.7).
  - *Peter told the crowd about Jesus . . . . . Acts 2:22*
  - *Peter used their knowledge and reverence of King David . . . . . 2:25-28*
  - *The people were “cut to the heart” by Peter’s words . . . . . 2:37*
2. The Church was born on Pentecost as many people accepted Jesus by faith.
  - *The crowd asked Peter what they must do . . . . . 2:37*
  - *Peter told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ . . . 2:38*
  - *Peter said those that do would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit . . . . . 2:38*
  - *3000 people repented and were baptized . . . . . 2:41*

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3. The Church grew as believers were unified by the Holy Spirit (picture 4A.8).
  - *They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching . . . . . 2:42*
  - *They devoted themselves to fellowship, eating and praying together. . . . . 2:42*
  - *They were together, sharing their possessions and meeting daily . . . . . 2:44-46*
  - *God added more to their number as more people were saved . . . . . 2:47*

Conclusion: *The birth of the Church was a dramatic and thrilling event. Pray that God would continue to grow His Church in new and exciting ways!*

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit unites Christians in one heart and purpose.**

**Acts 2:22-47** [narrative form]

Intro: *Peter witnessed to the crowd, and many people believed in Jesus.*

Ask: *Why did Peter call the Holy Spirit a gift?*

Jerusalem was filled with people from every nation because of Pentecost. The twelve apostles met together in a room. *Who joined them in the room?* The apostles began to tell the wonders of God in every language, and the bystanders were amazed. Peter told the people prophecies from Joel (2:28-32) and he told them that everyone calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Read Acts 2:22-36. Peter told the crowd about Jesus and reminded them of Jesus’ many miracles (picture 4A.7). Then he reminded them that they had turned Jesus over to be crucified. But God raised Him from the dead. Peter reminded them of David’s own words from the Psalms that talked about the resurrected Christ to come. Peter made his final point when he declared that all Israel had crucified the Lord and Christ that God had sent to them—Jesus. Wow! Those were powerful words that were spoken by the power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the Holy Spirit

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was at work in the hearts of the people, and immediately they realized their sin.

Peter told the crowd the simple way to become a Christian. Read Acts 2:38. *What should the people do? What does it mean to repent? What is sin? What does it mean to be baptized? Why do you think Peter says the Holy Spirit is a gift?*

Wow, 3000 people came into a relationship with Jesus and received the Holy Spirit. We look back at this very time as the beginning of the Church.

All of those people did the most important thing they could ever do—they repented and asked forgiveness of their sins. But that was only the beginning. Now that they were part of God’s family, they wanted to grow in that relationship. Let’s read Acts 2:42-47 to find out how they could grow. The new believers were united together and wanted to spend time together, help others, pray, share, eat together, and praise God together (picture 4A.8). Something wonderful happened, because these new believers grew in Christ. *What does Acts 2:47 tell us?*

When we repent of our sins and put our faith in Jesus, we become members of God’s Church, too. It is fabulous to think that as we grow in Christ, so does our witness to others. The more people we tell, the more believers there will be who can celebrate their spiritual birthdays and celebrate being part of God’s worldwide Church.

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit enables Christians to perform miracles that show God’s power.**

**Acts 3** [outline form]

Intro: *Peter and John healed a lame beggar in the name of Jesus.*

Ask: *How did Peter use this miracle to bring more people to Christ?*

1. Peter healed a crippled man, showing the Holy Spirit’s power.
  - *Peter and John went to the Temple to pray.* . . . . . Acts 3:1
  - *A man, crippled from birth, asked them for money.* . . . . . 3:2-3
  - *Peter healed the man in the name of Jesus (picture 4A.9)* . . . . . 3:4-7
  - *The man jumped to his feet and began to walk (picture 4A.10)* . . . . . 3:8
2. The people were amazed when they saw what had happened.
  - *The man followed Peter and John into the Temple courts* . . . . . 3:8
  - *The people saw him walking and praising God* . . . . . 3:9
  - *They recognized him as lame from birth, and were filled with wonder.* . . . 3:10



3. Peter explained to the crowd that Jesus was the “who” behind the miracle.
  - *Peter said the man was healed not by their power or godliness.* . . . . . 3:12
  - *He explained it was faith in the name of Jesus and His power.* . . . . . 3:16
  - *Peter urged the people to repent and turn to God.* . . . . . 3:19
  - *He told how God had sent Jesus and that He is the Messiah* . . . . . 3:20-26

Conclusion: *Peter performed a great miracle, but he was sure to give all credit to Jesus and to God’s power. Use your opportunities to tell others the Good News about Jesus!*



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit enables Christians to perform miracles that show God’s power.**

**Acts 3** [narrative form]

Intro: *Peter and John healed a lame beggar in the name of Jesus.*

Ask: *How did Peter use this miracle to bring more people to Christ?*

“Beggar” enters. He is leaping, doing jumping jacks, push-ups, and somersaults. Look at me! I can’t believe it. My life is changed, it only took a couple of minutes, but my life is changed! You see, I was crippled or lame, that means I couldn’t walk. From the time I was born, my legs didn’t work. I never could run and jump—at least, not until the miracle happened.

Every day someone had to carry me to the Temple gate called Beautiful where I would sit and do the only thing I was able to do—beg. One day, two men stopped on their way to pray as I called out, “Shalom (that means peace), will you have pity on me and share some coins with a poor beggar?”

These men looked at me with eyes full of love and compassion. I wasn’t used to



people looking at me like that, so I was sure they would give me some money. But no, they said they didn’t have money but they’d give me what they had. Then the big man added, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” What? Didn’t this man realize that I was crippled and couldn’t walk? The next thing I knew, the man reached down, grabbed me with his right hand, and pulled me to my feet (picture 4A.9). Instead of collapsing, which is what would usually happen, my leg muscles held. Wow! Those muscles had never held my body’s weight, and now I was standing on my own two legs! This was amazing! This was a miracle (picture 4A.10)!

I couldn’t contain my excitement. I started to jump up and down. As I looked around, a huge crowd gathered. People had seen me beg at the gate for years and now they were shocked to see me jump and praise God. The crowd began to call out, “How did this happen?” One of the men who healed me, his name was Peter, stood up and spoke. He asked them why they were surprised. Peter told the people this wonderful miracle hadn’t happened because of his and his friend’s own power, but because of their faith in the name of Jesus. Peter told the crowd all about Jesus and the power that came from believing in Him. He reminded them that God offered forgiveness to them. Can you believe it? All we have to do is repent and turn to God and our sins will be forgiven. Wow! What a day!



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit empowers Christians to speak boldly about Jesus.**

**Acts 4:1-31** [outline form]

Intro: *Peter and John refused to stop speaking about Jesus, even when threatened.*

Ask: *How were Peter and John able to stand up to the Jewish leaders?*

1. Peter and John were unfairly imprisoned by religious leaders—the very people who should have been happy about the miracle.

- *Peter and John’s preaching disturbed the Jewish leaders . . . . . Acts 4:2*
- *They arrested Peter and John and imprisoned them overnight . . . . . 4:3*
- *Many had heard the message and believed. . . . . 4:4*

2. Peter and John acted courageously, and Peter spoke boldly about Jesus and salvation before the Jewish leaders (picture 4A.11).

- *Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit when he spoke . . . . . 4:8*
- *He explained that salvation is found in no one but Jesus. . . . . 4:12*
- *The leaders were astonished that these were “ordinary” men . . . . . 4:13*
- *They commanded Peter and John not to speak in Jesus’ name . . . . . 4:18*
- *Peter and John said they must obey God rather than men . . . . . 4:19*

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3. When Peter and John told the believers all that had happened, they responded in a way that pleased God.

- *All the believers prayed together (picture 4A.12) . . . . . 4:24*
- *They prayed for great boldness to speak God’s words . . . . . 4:29*
- *God answered their prayer with an earthquake and the Holy Spirit . . . . 4:31*

Conclusion: *Peter and John were bold in sharing about their faith in Jesus despite being threatened and put in jail. Pray for increased boldness and believe in God’s promise that you have the power of the Holy Spirit.*

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit empowers Christians to speak boldly about Jesus.**

**Acts 4:1-31** [narrative form]

Intro: *Peter and John refused to stop speaking about Jesus, even when threatened.*

Ask: *How were Peter and John able to stand up to the Jewish leaders?*

Remind the class what happened in the previous lesson. What a wonderful miracle! Today we are going to find out what happened next.

Read Acts 4:1-4. As Peter and John spoke to the crowd, the Temple guards and the Sadducees came and they were not happy. The Sanhedrin was a collection of Jewish religious officials who made laws for the Jews. Some Sadducees were part of the Sanhedrin and hated Jesus because He claimed to be the Messiah. Since it was evening, Peter and John were jailed overnight. They were taken to the Sanhedrin the next day. *How many believers had joined the Church now?*

Read Acts 4:5-12. *How would you feel if you were taken before a large group of men who made laws and could punish you? Encourage responses.* Instead of feeling scared or intimidated, Peter spoke boldly to them (picture 4A.11). *Why was Peter able to speak so boldly? How did Peter explain salvation?*

1



Read Acts 4:13-22. Immediately the religious leaders noticed several things about Peter and John: they were bold, unschooled, ordinary men and they had been with Jesus. The men didn’t know what to do. They could see the healed man and couldn’t deny that it was a miracle. So they met together to discuss what to do. They were worried that people would hear about the healing and believe in Jesus. *What was the Sanhedrin’s plan to stop Peter and John? How did Peter and John respond?*

Read Acts 4:23-31. *Where did Peter and John go immediately after they were released from jail? Peter and John had just been jailed because they had healed someone—that was unfair! Sometimes when people are treated unfairly, they complain about it. Not Peter and John (picture 4A.12)! Instead of complaining, they prayed. What things did they specifically pray for? What amazing thing happened immediately after their prayer?*

Peter and John were bold in sharing about their faith in Jesus despite being threatened and put in jail. Boldness is a gift from God through the power of the Holy Spirit. If you find yourself fearing rejection or feeling weak about sharing God’s Word, take these steps: 1) Read your Bible for understanding and knowledge of God’s Word. 2) Pray for increased boldness to speak about Jesus’ gift of salvation. 3) Believe in God’s promise that you have the power of the Holy Spirit. 4) Praise the Lord for guiding your words as you share the Gospel with your friends.

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit encourages Christians to remain loyal to God.**

**Acts 4:32—5:42** [outline form]

Intro: *The early Church acted with one heart and mind by sharing all they had.*

Ask: *How can you put God before everything else in your life?*

1. God blessed the Church as believers were united. He also gave a dire warning to those who would deceive the Church and the Spirit.
  - *The believers shared all they had, and God gave them grace and power.* . . . Acts 4:32-33
  - *Barnabas gave generously to the believers* (picture 4A.13) . . . . . 4:36-37
  - *Ananias and Sapphira tried to deceive the apostles* . . . . . 5:2
  - *Peter discerned their lie, and God punished them with death* . . . . . 5:5, 10
  - *The believers took God’s warning to heart* . . . . . 5:11
2. The apostles continued to preach and minister to the people.
  - *The apostles met and preached in public* . . . . . 5:12
  - *All who came to them were healed.* . . . . . 5:16



3. The Jewish leaders became more and more concerned with the growth of the believers and began to take measures against them.
  - *The Sadducees arrested the apostles* (picture 4A.14) . . . . . 5:18
  - *An angel freed the apostles and told them to preach in public* . . . . . 5:19
  - *They were brought before the Sanhedrin, and again chose to obey God* . . . 5:27-29
4. The Sanhedrin could not stop them from preaching about God.
  - *The Sanhedrin wanted to kill the apostles* . . . . . 5:33
  - *Gamaliel convinced the council not to risk fighting God* . . . . . 5:35-39
  - *The believers rejoiced at their suffering and continued to preach* . . . . . 5:41-42

Conclusion: *The apostles made God the focus of their hearts. They knew there would be times when they would not be able to obey both God and man. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you remain loyal to God.*



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit encourages Christians to remain loyal to God.**

**Acts 4:32—5:42** [narrative form]

Intro: *The early Church acted with one heart and mind by sharing all they had.*

Ask: *How can you put God before everything else in your life?*

The Bible says that someday God will judge and reward each person according to his or her deeds. When we are faithful to God no matter what, we please God.

Read Acts 4:32-37 (picture 4A.13). *How did the believers prove they were of “one heart and mind?”* Barnabas sold his property and gave all of the money to the apostles. *What did this show about Barnabas’ heart?* Encourage responses.

Read Acts 5:1-11. Picture the apostles with more money being placed at their feet. This time something was different. God knows a person’s heart and He sees the things we do in secret. The Holy Spirit guided Peter to discern that Ananias had lied. *Why do you think Ananias and Sapphira lied about the price of their property?* Pride sometimes leads people to make poor choices. Our choices reveal what is really in our hearts; even though we try to hide the bad parts from everyone—God knows. It is sad to realize that Ananias and Sapphira didn’t have to sell their land or give away



any of the money. They pretended to be loyal followers of Jesus and tried to deceive God and the Church. *Why did God punish Ananias and Sapphira so severely?*

Read Acts 5:12-16 You might think life in Bible times could be boring—not for the apostles! *How did the apostles spend their time? How did people react to these miracles?*

Read Acts 5:17-26. The apostles were following God’s command to witness and they were arrested (picture 4A.14). *When the men of the Sanhedrin wanted to talk with the apostles, where did they find them? Why did the apostles teach in public, instead of hiding from the Sadducees?*

Read Acts 5:27-42. The Sanhedrin had already told the apostles they were not to teach in the name of Jesus. *What was Peter’s response to not obeying the Sanhedrin? What did Gamaliel say to the council? Why were the apostles able to rejoice after being beaten?*

The apostles were loyal to God because they made God the focus of their hearts. They knew there would be times when they would not be able to obey both God and man. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you stay loyal to God by keeping Him first in your heart.





Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit guides Christians to selflessly serve others.**

**Acts 6:1-7** [outline form]

Intro: *The apostles chose seven men to care for people in need in the Church.*

Ask: *Why is serving others important to God?*

1. A problem arose among the new believers of the Church.
  - *Greek Jews complained about unfairness to their widows . . . . . Acts 6:1*
  - *The Hebraic Jews were overlooking them when distributing food. . . . . 6:1*
  - *The apostles gathered the disciples to discuss the matter. . . . . 6:2*
  - *The apostles knew they needed to preach rather than oversee . . . . . 6:2*
2. The apostles and disciples devised a solution to the Church’s problem.
  - *The would choose seven men full of the Spirit and wisdom to be responsible. . . 6:3*
  - *Everyone was pleased with this decision . . . . . 6:5*
  - *They chose seven, and the apostles prayed over them (picture 4A.15). . . 6:5-6*

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3. The seven deacons did their jobs and the Church grew (picture 4A.16).
  - *The number of disciples increased rapidly . . . . . 6:7*
  - *Even a large number of Jewish priests became believers . . . . . 6:7*

Conclusion: *Serving others is part of what Jesus has called His Church to do. Pray for God to find ways to use you to serve others in your church, your community, and the world.*

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit guides Christians to selflessly serve others.**

**Acts 6:1-7** [narrative form]

Intro: *The apostles chose seven men to care for people in need in the Church.*

Ask: *Why is serving others important to God?*

This passage of Scripture shows us that the early Church wasn’t perfect, just like churches today aren’t perfect and sometimes have problems.

Read Acts 6:1. Explain to the kids that the Greek Jews (or Hellenistic Jews) could have come from Greece or many other places outside Judea. “Hebraic Jews” refers to the Jews that came from Jerusalem or the area of Judea.

The early Church had many difficulties because the new believers came from different places and spoke different languages. The Greek Jews didn’t think their widows were being treated fairly by the Hebraic Jews. The Church provided food for the widows, but the Greek widows weren’t getting their fair share of food. *What did the Greek Jews do about the problem?*

Read Acts 6:2. People in leadership roles should spend time leading and not be

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responsible for every single detail in the running of the church. *How do you think our pastor spends time? How would our church be affected if the pastor or other leaders didn’t fulfill their responsibilities?*

Read Acts 6:3-4. *Why would the men need to have the Holy Spirit? Why would the men need wisdom? What did the apostles want to spend their time doing?*

Read Acts 6:5-7. *How do you think the apostles knew which men were full of the Spirit and wisdom? The seven men were presented to the apostles. What did the apostles do (picture 4A.15)? What result came from the Church working together and taking care of the needs of others (picture 4A.16)?*

As the early Church increased in size, so did its needs. They recognized the situation and determined their God-given abilities and priorities. Then they found others qualified for the remaining tasks. Each person within the church family has a gift or talent he or she can offer in service toward growing God’s Church. *Do you know what your God-given abilities are? Let the children share. What are some things you would like to learn to serve God within the Church?* Allow the children to tell about things they are interested in learning. When we all do our part serving in the Church, we are also a part of reaching unbelievers.

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit gives Christians courage to stand firm during trials.**

**Acts 6:8—7:60** [outline form]

Intro: *God's Spirit gave Stephen great courage to stand firm against his persecutors.*

Ask: *How can you use Stephen's example to display courage in your life?*

1. Stephen, a deacon, was full of God's grace and power, but opposition arose against him.

- *Stephen performed great wonders and signs among the people . . . . . Acts 6:8*
- *Men from the Synagogue could not even argue against him . . . . . 6:10*
- *They arranged for men to tell lies about Stephen . . . . . 6:11*
- *They brought him before the Sanhedrin. . . . . 6:12*

2. Stephen was falsely accused, yet he defended himself bravely by reminding them that God's messengers are often rejected.

- *Joseph was rejected by his brothers . . . . . 7:9*
- *The people of Israel rejected Moses and the Law . . . . . 7:25-40*
- *The Jewish people rejected the Holy Spirit and the prophets. . . . . 7:51-52*
- *The Jewish people had now rejected Jesus, their Messiah. . . . . 7:52*

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3. The Jewish leaders were furious at Stephen and punished him.

- *Stephen saw a vision of heaven, Jesus, and God (picture 4A.17) . . . . . 7:55-56*
- *The angry men dragged Stephen outside the city and stoned him (picture 4A.18) . . . . . 7:58*
- *Stephen asked God to forgive his killers . . . . . 7:60*

Conclusion: *Stephen received extreme courage from the Holy Spirit to stand firm for Jesus, even though many were against him. Thank God for making this same courage available to you whenever you face trials.*

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit gives Christians courage to stand firm during trials.**

**Acts 6:8—7:60** [narrative form]

Intro: *God's Spirit gave Stephen great courage to stand firm against his persecutors.*

Ask: *How can you use Stephen's example to display courage in your life?*

Bring in a black robe and a gavel. Put on the robe, bang the gavel, and act very official. Order in the court! Today we are going to hear the evidence in a court case and decide the verdict. We will hear the charges brought against Stephen, a deacon of the early Church. This court is now in session.

Break from your "official" voice or take off the robe to show that you are out of your judge role. Last time we learned that Stephen was one of the seven helpers chosen to care for the believers. Read Acts 6:8-15. *What new information do we learn about Stephen? A man like that would be very popular among people who needed help. But Stephen was very unpopular among a certain group of people—the members of the Synagogue. What plan did these men make against Stephen?*

Put on the black robe and resume your role as judge. I am the high priest and I will hear the case of Stephen. Read the charges brought against this man. Ask a

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volunteer to read Acts 6:13-14. I understand that two charges are brought against the defendant. It is blasphemy against God to speak against this holy Temple and against the Law of Moses.

Bang the gavel. We will now hear Stephen's defense. I understand you plan to present historical facts that serve as examples of how we Jews have rejected God's messengers. Proceed. Ask a strong reader to read Acts 7:2-53.

So Stephen, you have presented the Jews' rejection of Joseph, Moses, the Holy Spirit, the prophets, and Jesus Christ as examples of our guilt. Look at the chaos that is breaking out in this courtroom. Ask a child to read Acts 7:54-56 (picture 4A.17). How is it that you stand there looking up to heaven and speak of seeing the Son of Man? I have no other choice but to find you guilty. Take off your judge's robe. Ask a child to read Acts 7:57-58 (picture 4A.18).

Stephen displayed extreme courage to speak the truth before men who were angry and violent. Read Acts 7: 59-60. He received this courage from the Holy Spirit to stand firm for Jesus, even though many were against him. Stephen's courageous defense resulted in his death by stoning. He became the first Christian martyr (someone killed for being a witness for Jesus). *How can you use Stephen's example to face persecution and trials in your own life?*

2

Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit scatters Christians to spread the Good News into new regions.**

**Acts 8:1-25** [outline form]

Intro: *After Stephen’s death, the Christians scattered because of persecution.*

Ask: *Why was it significant that the Holy Spirit came to Samaritans?*

1. Stephen’s death signaled the beginning of a great wave of persecution against the church in Jerusalem (picture 4A.19).

- *Saul was one of the main persecutors* . . . . . Acts 8:1, 3
- *All the believers were scattered into Judea and Samaria* . . . . . 8:1

2. Instead of destroying the Church, the persecution only made it grow.

- *The believers spread the Good News wherever they went* (picture 4A.20) . . . . . 8:4
- *Philip went into Samaria and proclaimed Christ there* . . . . . 8:5
- *His miraculous signs and healings made people pay attention to what he said* . . . . . 8:6



3. A man named Simon tried to become a believer in Christ.

- *Simon had practiced sorcery and had enjoyed much attention* . . . . . 8:9
- *Philip preached the Good News, and Simon was baptized* . . . . . 8:13
- *Peter and John came to pray for the new believers to receive the Holy Spirit* . . . . . 8:15
- *Simon offered to buy Peter and John’s “ability”* . . . . . 8:18-19
- *Peter rebuked Simon* . . . . . 8:20-23
- *Simon asked Peter to pray for him* . . . . . 8:24

Conclusion: *Like Stephen and Philip, as believers in Christ, we are responsible to share about Jesus where ever we go. God will be with us in all circumstances and will bless our willingness to live lives devoted to Him.*



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit scatters Christians to spread the Good News into new regions.**

**Acts 8:1-25** [narrative form]

Intro: *After Stephen’s death, the Christians scattered because of persecution.*

Ask: *Why was it significant that the Holy Spirit came to Samaritans?*

People living in countries without religious freedom face persecution every day of their lives. If the Christians are caught, they might lose their jobs, their friends and family, or even be put to death. Persecuting Christians is not new—in fact, it started on the very day that Stephen was stoned to death.

Stephen became the first Christian martyr. Read Acts 8:1-3. This is the first mention of Saul. We will learn more about him later in our study of Acts. *Based on this verse, what kind of a person do you think Saul was? Why do you think they began persecuting Christians?* The Bible tells us that the believers scattered throughout Judea and Samaria (picture 4A.19). It was time for the Gospel message to move out of Jerusalem.



Read Acts 8:4-8 (picture 4A.20). *Where did Philip go? What activities did Philip do there? How did the Samaritans respond?*

Read Acts 8:9-17. Simon had been known as the “Great Power” because of his tricks and magic. *What happened when the Samaritans saw Philip’s miracles? Who came to help the new believers? How did they help?*

Read Acts 8:18-25. *When Simon saw people receive the Holy Spirit, what did he want to do? How did Peter respond? Do you think Simon was repentant? Why?* (It is not clear, but he did ask Peter to pray for him.) Explain to your children that it is okay to have conflicted opinions about Simon. Peter and John preached in many Samaritan villages. The Gospel message might not have spread so quickly without persecution. I’m sure the religious leaders thought they were wiping out Christianity. Only God can take something terrible like the persecution of Christians and turn it into something wonderful—people through Judea and Samaria heard the Good News about Jesus!

Like Stephen and Philip, as believers in Christ, we are responsible to share about Jesus wherever we go. It should comfort us to know that God will be with us in all circumstances and will bless our willingness to live lives devoted to Him.



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit directs Christians to tell others about Jesus' love and forgiveness.**

**Acts 8:26-40** [outline form]

Intro: *An angel and the Holy Spirit directed Philip to an Ethiopian official who wanted to understand the Scriptures.*

Ask: *Why do you think the Holy Spirit took Philip away at the end of his encounter?*

1. An angel told Philip to go on a specific road leading out of Jerusalem.
  - *Philip obeyed the angel.* . . . . . Acts 8:27
  - *He met an Ethiopian official reading the book of Isaiah.* . . . . . 8:27-28
  - *The Holy Spirit told Philip to stay with the Ethiopian.* . . . . . 8:29
  
2. Philip obeyed the Holy Spirit and spoke with the Ethiopian man (picture 4A.21).
  - *Philip used the book of Isaiah to open a conversation.* . . . . . 8:30
  - *The Ethiopian admitted he did not understand what he was reading.* . . . 8:31
  - *Philip used the Scriptures to tell the Good News about Jesus.* . . . . . 8:35



3. Philip's obedience to the Holy Spirit resulted in a changed life and the spread of the Gospel into Africa.

- *The Ethiopian man responded and asked to be baptized.* . . . . . 8:36
- *Philip baptized him* (picture 4A.22) . . . . . 8:37
- *The Holy Spirit took Philip away.* . . . . . 8:39
- *The Ethiopian traveled back to Africa, rejoicing.* . . . . . 8:39

Conclusion: *Philip obeyed God's directions and helped take the Gospel to far off lands. Be prepared to share Jesus' gift of love and forgiveness when God gives you the opportunity.*



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit directs Christians to tell others about Jesus' love and forgiveness.**

**Acts 8:26-40** [narrative form]

Intro: *An angel and the Holy Spirit directed Philip to an Ethiopian official who wanted to understand the Scriptures.*

Ask: *Why do you think the Holy Spirit took Philip away at the end of his encounter?*

In our look at Acts today, Philip shows us the power of obedience, of following God's direction. We also see how God uses one-on-one encounters to lead people to Him.

Philip was in Samaria witnessing to people when an angel spoke to him. Have a child read 8:26. Immediately Philip left Samaria and started off on the desert road. Along the way, the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip. Read Acts 8:29.

Inside the chariot was an Ethiopian official who was in charge of all the money for Candace, the queen of Ethiopia. He was returning to Ethiopia on the continent of Africa from his visit to the Temple in Jerusalem. *Why do you think he traveled such a distance to Jerusalem to worship?* As Philip ran alongside the chariot, he noticed



the Ethiopian was reading a scroll of the book of Isaiah.

Let's see how Philip started a conversation with the Ethiopian. Read Acts 8:30. Listen to the Ethiopian's response. Read Acts 8:31 (picture 4A.22). Now let's find out which part of Isaiah the Ethiopian was reading. Read Acts 8:32-34. Then let kids look up Isaiah 53:7-8. *If you were Philip, how would you respond?*

Read Acts 8:35. *What's the Good News about Jesus that Philip spoke about?* As they came to some water, the Ethiopian asked Philip a question. Read Acts 8:36 (picture 4A.22). The Ethiopian ordered the chariot to stop so that Philip could baptize him.

When they came up from the water, a very unusual thing happened—the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away! *If you were the Ethiopian, what might you have been thinking right then?* The Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing. Philip appeared in a town 30 miles to the west called Azotus and traveled about witnessing.

Philip obeyed God's directions. Suppose he had stayed in Samaria and ignored the angel. He would have missed out on being used to take the Gospel message to a far off country. It is important to have a willing heart and listen to the Holy Spirit's prompting. Be prepared to share Jesus' gift of love and forgiveness when God gives you the opportunity.



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit transforms people into Christians who follow and serve God.**

**Acts 9:1-31** [outline form]

Intro: *Saul's encounter with Jesus completely transformed him.*

Ask: *Why was Paul's transformation important to the Church?*

1. Saul was a ruthless persecutor of Christians. He wanted them all dead. But God had plans for Saul.

- *Saul went to Damascus to arrest believers* . . . . . Acts 9:2
- *On the road, a light surrounded Saul, and he fell to the ground* . . . . . 9:3
- *Jesus spoke to Saul and blinded him (picture 4A.23)* . . . . . 9:4-8

2. God used a believer named Ananias to bring healing to Saul.

- *God instructed Ananias in a vision* . . . . . 9:10-11
- *Ananias was afraid of Paul* . . . . . 9:13-14
- *God announced His plans for Paul* . . . . . 9:15-16
- *Ananias obeyed God, called Paul "brother," and healed him* . . . . . 9:17-18



3. God transformed Saul, and he became an outspoken proclaimer of Jesus.

- *After being healed, Saul was baptized and regained his strength* . . . . . 9:18-19
- *Saul immediately began preaching in the Synagogues (picture 4A.24)* . . . 9:20
- *People were amazed at his complete change* . . . . . 9:21
- *Saul's persuasive power grew as he proclaimed the Good News* . . . . . 9:22

4. Saul faced persecution and skepticism, but persevered for Christ.

- *Jews in Damascus plotted to kill Saul, but he escaped* . . . . . 9:23-25
- *In Jerusalem, the disciples were afraid of him* . . . . . 9:26
- *Barnabas believed Saul's conversion and introduced him to the disciples* . . . 9:27
- *Saul preached in Jerusalem, and again had to escape murderous men* . . . . 9:28-30

Conclusion: *God was the one who turned Saul's life around and caused such a dramatic change. Believe that Jesus died to forgive your sins and that He can make you a new person. If you believe this, then you can ask God to transform your life.*



Big Idea: **The Holy Spirit transforms people into Christians who follow and serve God.**

**Acts 9:1-31** [narrative form]

Intro: *Saul's encounter with Jesus completely transformed him.*

Ask: *Why was Paul's transformation important to the Church?*

Saul loved God and the Law, but he did not believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah. So he persecuted Christians. In fact, Saul gave murderous threats against the disciples.

Acts 9:2-6 Saul received permission from the High Priest to go to Damascus and arrest the Christians that had scattered there. While he walked, a bright light shone from heaven, and Saul fell to the ground (picture 4A.23). A voice from heaven said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Saul responded, "Who are you, Lord?" The voice answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what to do."

Acts 9:7-19 Saul's companions helped lead the blind Saul to Damascus. Meanwhile,



the Lord spoke to Ananias in a vision and told him to go to where Saul was and heal him. Ananias was afraid because Saul was famous for persecuting Christians. But the Lord told Ananias that Saul was specially chosen to take Jesus' name before the Gentiles and kings. So Ananias obeyed and placed his hands on Saul. Immediately Saul's eyesight returned, he got up, and he was baptized.

Acts 9:20-31 Saul began preaching (picture 4A.24). The Christians were confused and afraid because they knew Saul was a persecutor. Some Jews decided to kill Saul. One night, Saul's companions lowered him over the wall in a basket, and he escaped from Damascus. *Why do you think the Jews wanted to kill Saul?*

In Jerusalem Saul encountered the same kind of reaction—the disciples were confused. Barnabas believed Saul and brought him to the disciples and explained Saul's conversion story. The disciples finally trusted Saul, and Saul preached. The Greek Jews tried to kill Saul, but he went away to Tarsus. The Church was at peace again and continued to grow.

God was the one who turned Saul's life around and caused such a dramatic change. God can turn your life around, too. Like Saul, you must begin by believing that Jesus died to forgive your sins and that He can make you a new person. If you believe this, then you can ask God to transform your life.

