

Heart Transformation:

Connected to God through His Spirit

Lesson # 9 of 27

Scripture/Memory Verse

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38 (NIV)

Lesson Goal & Objectives

Goal

- The students will learn that it is through the Holy Spirit that God dwells in their hearts by building on what they learned in Lesson #8 about the Holy Spirit. The participants will come to this understanding by spending time in the Bible learning about the ways throughout history in which God has said he would send His Spirit to live in the hearts of His people.

Objectives

(Each participant have a Bible or printed portion of the Scripture story they can read, actually understand and take with them.)

- The students will be introduced to “The Promise of the Father” and to be shown how the Holy Spirit fulfills this Promise.
- Each participant will read about the Holy Spirit coming on Pentecost and will recognize this event as the fulfillment of the Promise of the Father.

Introduction and Background for the Teacher

The Holy Spirit has been present and active since before time began; the Holy Spirit was present at the Creation. In the last lesson the participants were introduced to the teaching that before Pentecost the Holy Spirit acted: “in Particular People, at a Particular Time, for a Particular Purpose.” In this lesson the participants will learn that in the Old Testament the rabbis taught that a specific part of the Scriptures were called, “the Promise of the Father,” and that at some time in the future the Father would fulfill this promise.

In walking through the Scriptures the participants will see the Promise of the Father being fulfilled on Pentecost when everyone was given new hearts. The point of this lesson is to have the participants understand that after Pentecost all who proclaim, “Jesus is Lord” also receive the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3), and that the Holy Spirit is the One who will equip and empower them to live new

lives.

This session again moves through the Scriptures quickly. Have a list of the Scriptures prepared ahead of time (and the participants can also take them home with them). Take a few minutes to assign different participants different Scriptures and get these Scriptures marked in their Bibles. You may have the Scriptures preprinted on a piece of paper, but it is preferable to have the participants open up the Bible, itself.

Materials Needed for Lesson

- Paper, pens, markers
- Book of Common Prayer
- Bibles (or, if necessary, printed excerpts from the Scriptures)

Opening Prayer (5 min.)

Select a student to begin with extemporaneous prayer or this prayer adapted from the Book of Common Prayer, page 227:

“Almighty God you opened the way of eternal life to every race and nation and promised the gift of the Father: Shed abroad this gift throughout the world by the preaching of the gospel, that it may reach to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.” (*The students may also be invited to offer prayers as well*)

Review of the Previous Lesson (5min.)

Briefly discuss:

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- What does the Holy Spirit do?
- Did you have any experiences with the Holy Spirit this week?

Introductory Activity (5-10 Min.)

*(These ideas are intended to ensure a lively and exciting atmosphere for the beginning of this lesson. It is fine for each parish to approach this differently if you wish to make use of your own games or other materials. It is best **not** to eliminate doing any activity at all.)*

Choose ONE of the following activities:

- The students will write down a promise that they have each made.
If the group dynamics have established a safe environment, have them share about it or how they were able to keep it! **OR**

- the students will draw something which conveys the idea of a promise they have made, or a promise that they hope will be fulfilled.

OR

- The students will draw a picture of what they think their heart looks like – not out of a biology book, but what feelings, emotions, attitudes, etc. are in their “heart”.

Lesson (20-25 min.)

This session will require moving through SIX sections of Scripture with some speed. Going through these SIX sections allows the participants to trace the “Promise of the Father.”

The Scriptures are as follows:

- 1) Jeremiah 31:31-34 This is the text referred to as, “The Promise of the Father”

Briefly discuss the following questions:

- ✂ What is God going to make new?
- ✂ What is God going to write?
- ✂ Where is he going to write it?

- Ask the participants if they have a subject in school they don’t like – then ask them what it is like to try to do homework in this subject.

- Next ask if they have a subject in school they like – then ask them what doing homework is like in that subject.

(For the subject they like, they will most likely say that they enjoy the homework, and that it isn’t really homework – that is what it is like when God writes his law on our hearts. However, it can be hard to “write on a heart” sometimes.)

- 2) Ezekiel 36:26-27 – again we read about the Promise of the Father

Briefly discuss the following questions:

What does this Scripture say God is going to give us? New hearts.

Where in the last Scripture was God going to write His law? On our hearts.

What kind of heart is he replacing? A heart of stone with a heart of flesh, a heart that can be written on.

How do we get these new hearts? By the Holy Spirit.

- 3) Joel 2:28-29 – Again the Promise of the Father

What will be poured out? The Spirit

Upon whom? Men, women, slaves, free.

Anyone left out? NO!

- 4) Luke 24:49 – Jesus speaks of sending the Holy Spirit.
What does Jesus tell the disciples he is going to send?
What his Father Promised.
- 5) The Holy Spirit, does indeed, come to Jesus’ disciples from the Father,
as Jesus had promised:
Acts 1:4 – Luke connects the last chapter in Acts with his first
book.
Acts 1:5-8 – What is going to happen? The Holy Spirit is
coming.
Acts 2:2-4 – What is one of the words for the Spirit? Wind
Acts 2:16 – The prophet Joel
Acts 2:33 – Again the Father of the Promise
- 6) We all can receive the Holy Spirit and have new hearts – how?
Acts 2:36-39

Reflection (10-15 min.)

The students will re-read one of the Scriptures above and reflect on what it means to have God keep His promise to us.

Briefly discuss:

- Has God done something in your life that he promised?
- Has God done something in the world that he promised?

Take-home Activity (5 min.)

*(It is recommended that you make use of this take-home activity to re-enforce the learning experience. You **may** eliminate this exercise if **necessary**. You may also substitute another activity if you find that to be more helpful. You should briefly review this lesson and review the take-home activity at the beginning of the next learning session).*

- Have the students draw a *New* heart, ask God what they want Him to put in it and then draw the new things that they want to find there.

Closing Prayer (5 min.)

Have the students pray aloud or silently for something or someone that is on their mind. They may want to pray about the issue of being given a new heart.

Scripture References

– See above in the Lesson Section

Resources

– Youth Alpha Course Manual
– Bible
– www.biblegateway.com for printable versions of different Bible texts