



cell outlines
FEBRUARY 2019

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UNPACKING THE STORY OF PENTECOST (ACTS 2:1-41)

WELCOME

Welcome the group into the session.

Discussion: If you could have a special power, what would you choose to have?

During the conversation put in some suggestions such as: the power to speak in different languages, the power to heal people etc...

WORD

The passage below is a large piece of Scripture. Depending on the size of your group, you may want to split the group into two smaller groups and each group look at one half of the Scripture each.

 Read: Acts 2:1-14 (NIV)

“ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.

⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: ‘Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?’ ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!’ ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, ‘What does this mean?’

¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, ‘They have had too much wine.’

Discussion

 On a piece of paper or Post-it Note, write down a word or a phrase that stood out to you after reading the passage of Scripture.

 Why did that word/phrase stand out to you?

 The disciples ‘were all together in one place’. What does this teach us about the Church, the body of God’s people?

 Was there a time when you clearly felt the presence of the Holy Spirit? What happened? How did you feel?

 Does your experience of the Holy Spirit differ from that of the disciples?

 Picture the scene in your church service: people have ‘tongues of fire’ above their heads and ‘violent winds’ are blowing around the room. How would you react? How would other people react?

 Do you think the Church needs another Pentecost? Why?

 Read: Acts 2:14-41

“ ¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning!’ ¹⁶ No, this is what

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was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.”[c]

²² ‘Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. ²⁵ David said about him:

“I saw the Lord always before me.
Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.

²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest in hope,

²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
you will not let your holy one see decay.

²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence.’[e]

²⁹ ‘Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:
‘Sit at my right hand

³⁵ until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet.’”[f]

³⁶ ‘Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.’

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’

³⁸ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptised, 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. ³⁹ The promise is for you

and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.’

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Discussion

- 🗨️ On a piece of paper or Post-it Note, write down a word or a phrase that stood out to you after reading the passage of Scripture.
- 🗨️ Why did that word/phrase stand out to you?
- 🗨️ Verse 17 says; ‘In the last days, God says I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.’ When you read this, who do you think he means? How does it make you feel knowing that Peter is talking about followers of Jesus in the present day?
- 🗨️ Have you ever experienced dreams or visions that have come from God?
- 🗨️ Having visions or prophecies is a gift the Holy Spirit gives us. What other gifts does the Holy Spirit give us?
- 🗨️ Peter, in the power of Holy Spirit, preached a sermon in front of thousands of people without fear. If you were able to share a message to thousands of people knowing you would be listened to, what would your message be?
- 🗨️ In verse 29 Peter says: ‘I can tell you confidently...’ Peter was certain about his message. What are you a hundred per cent confident about?
- 🗨️ Show the young people the picture of the man preaching on the street (Appendix One). When you see people preaching on the street, do you stop and listen?
- 🗨️ What do you think made people stop and listen to Peter at Pentecost?
- 🗨️ 3,000 people were saved that day. Imagine what an extra 30 people would look like in your church, let alone 3,000! What can we do to help people ‘accept the message’ and come to Jesus?

WORSHIP

Listen: Play the song, ‘Holy Spirit, rain down’ to set an atmosphere of worship and reflection:

📺 www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-SI_HRWooA

Ask the young people to look at the piece of paper or Post-it Note containing the word or phrase that stood out to them from Acts 2:1-41.

Ask the young people to reflect on their word or phrase using ‘S.O.A.P.’ (explained below):

- * **Scripture** – Read the Scripture/word/phrase three times.
- * **Observe** – What is God saying through this word/phrase?
- * **Application** – How can I use this word/phrase in my everyday life?
- * **Prayer** – Thank God for his word. Ask God to help you understand and live by the passage of Scripture/phrase/word.

ACTION

Challenge: Re-read Acts chapter 2 again this week. Use ‘S.O.A.P.’ again to understand and unpack the passage of Scripture;

- * **Scripture** – Read the Scripture/word/phrase three times.

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- * **O**bserve – What is God saying through this word/phrase?
- * **A**pplication – How can I use this word/phrase in my everyday life?
- * **P**ray – Thank God for his word. Ask God to help you understand and live by the passage of Scripture/phrase/word.

Write down your thoughts on a piece of paper or in a journal. Bring your thoughts to the next session to share with the group.

WHAT DOES PENTECOST MEAN FOR US TODAY? HOW THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS US, NOT FOR OURSELVES BUT FOR THE WORLD.

WELCOME

Welcome the group into the session. Spend some time catching up about each other's week, sharing in the highlights and the difficult moments of the past week.

Give time for the group to share any of their thoughts from their S.O.A.P. of Acts 2 (see Action from previous week).

Game:

Signs

Start by sitting everyone in a circle facing inwards. Each person should choose their own unique 'sign' which is a movement or motion such as touching their nose, brushing their hair, giving a 'thumbs up' etc. Go around the circle and give people the chance to demonstrate their sign to the rest of the group. The idea is to secretly 'pass' the sign to another player without being caught by the 'guesser'. To pass, you must make your sign followed by the sign of the player you are passing to.

Choose someone to be the 'guesser'. Get them to close their eyes or leave the room while you choose someone in the circle to start the game. The guesser can then return or open their eyes. The game continues until someone is caught, and then they become the guesser.

For younger groups, you can make the 'pass' simpler by making people just do their sign and look at the person they are passing to.

WORD

Ask the group if they can remember the passage of Scripture from the week before (Acts 2:1-41).

Say: At Pentecost, the disciples were given the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were empowered to do great things. What things were the disciples able to do after Pentecost?

- * Speak different languages.
- * Heal people.
- * Preach to and teach people.
- * Bring people to faith.
- * Have visions/prophecies/dreams.

Discuss: What other spiritual gifts do you think the Holy Spirit empowers us with?

 Read: 1 Corinthians 12:8-12

“⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

Discuss

- 🗨️ How many spiritual gifts can you see listed here?
- 🗨️ Do you think we should be proud to have certain gifts that the Spirit gives us?
- 🗨️ Why do you think the Spirit empowers us to do amazing things?

Challenge: (Appendix Two)

There is a difference between gifts the Spirit gives us and the talents and things we are good at. Our talents come from training or a result of our genetic make-up, whereas spiritual gifts come purely from God (though often our natural talents are utilised in them). Furthermore, even though our talents can be used to glorify God, spiritual gifts are purely given to us to impact the world and glorify God.

Print off the table and cut out each separate word. Alternatively, write out the list of words on separate pieces of paper. Ask the group to sort the words into two lists of what is a spiritual gift and what isn't.

Discuss

- 🗨️ Do any of the spiritual gifts listed take your interest?
- 🗨️ Look at some of those spiritual gifts. How can those gifts be used to help a broken world?
- 🗨️ What spiritual gifts do you think God has given you?
- 🗨️ How can you use those gifts to change the lives of people you come into contact with?

For groups that want to explore further their spiritual gifts, there are a number of resources that allow individuals to discover what their spiritual gifts are. There is more information online about these resources; or alternatively speak to your corps officer or divisional youth specialist.

WORSHIP

You will need: A tray, five or six cans of shaving foam, paint of different colours (alternatively you can use food colouring).

In preparation: Just before the start, spray all the shaving foam into the tray.

Play some reflective music.

Say: We all have spiritual gifts and we are able to use them to bless the world. We can make a difference in this world.

Ask the group to imagine the shaving foam as 'the world'. We are 'the paint'.

Squeeze some paint into the shaving foam and swirl the paint around. See how the paint completely changes the foam. As you swirl the paint around, ask God to give you everything you need to use your gifts for the world.

Finish this time with a prayer.

ACTION

Challenge: Ask a person in your church about their spiritual gifts. This could be anyone. However, if you do not attend church (other than meeting with your youth group) then maybe speak to your youth leaders about their spiritual gifts. Ask them what they think their spiritual gifts are and how they use them in their life.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: SIMPLICITY

WELCOME

Welcome the group into the session. Spend a few minutes catching up and asking how their week has been.

Give opportunity for the group to share any conversations they had with people in their church about spiritual gifts (see Action from previous week).

Activity

Ask the group to imagine that there has been an emergency and they have to leave their house quickly. They have enough time to pick up three items. What items would they be?

Challenge the group to think about what they own and the things they believe are vital to them for daily living.

Say: Today we're exploring a discipline that changes the way we view material things; instead of wanting more, we choose to live simply.

WORD

Discuss

- 🗨️ What things can you not live without?
- 🗨️ What would happen if you did not have that thing?

Say: The idea of simplicity is a discipline that some Christians choose to live by. They choose to remove the things of their lives that they don't need, and instead live a life simply depending on God. This sometimes means people giving up all their possessions to people who need it; or it may mean people choosing to spend time away from material things such as technology or social media.

📖 Read: Matthew 6:19-21

“¹⁹ **‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’**

- 🗨️ What do you think it means when it says ‘treasures of earth’? What counts as a treasure of earth? Make a list of what you come up with.
- 🗨️ What do you think it means when it says, ‘treasures of heaven’? What counts as a treasure of heaven? Just as in the previous question, make a list of what you come up with.
- 🗨️ God wants us to rely on those ‘treasures of heaven’ – but is it as easy as that? What challenges might we face disciplining ourselves to live simply?

WORSHIP

Play some reflective music.

Print off or write out the verse from Matthew 6:

‘For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’

Ask the group to draw a heart on a piece of paper.

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Say: When thinking about what we have and what we need, it requires us to be honest with ourselves.

What is truly in our heart?

Is it full of material things that won't last?

Is it full of things that money can't buy?

Ask the group to write down or draw the things that they think is their treasure in the heart they have just drawn.

Encourage the group to maybe go off into separate areas of the room and reflect on what is in their heart. It may be important to say that the group doesn't need to share what they have written or drawn in their heart. It is a personal thing between them and God.

End the time of reflection and worship with this prayer:

Provider God, you give us all the things we need. Your love and grace is sufficient. Help us to remove from our lives the needless baggage we carry. Help us not to try and look for happiness in material objects or wealth, but may we find happiness in knowing you as our loving Father.

Amen

ACTION

Say: The one thing many people would struggle to live without is their phone. We rely on our phones for so much; but what if for one day we chose to turn our phone off?

This week choose a day where you are not going to look at your phone and instead choose to do something else. There are some ideas below:

- * Spend time and have conversations with family. Thank God for them.
- * Bake or cook something you can give to someone as a gift.
- * Do something for yourself – exercise, read, listen to music (on another device other than your phone!).
- * Spend time with God. Start a prayer journal or start a Bible reading plan.

ACTS INTO ACTION: PENTECOST

'Acts into action' is the session where your group are able to practically outwork what they have been exploring in the previous three sessions.

We encourage you to mirror Pentecost where the Holy Spirit empowered the disciples to become the Church – a body of people following Jesus, sharing with each other and bringing people from the surrounding community closer to Christ.

A way to do this is to take your young people away from where they usually meet and allow the session to take place in the community. This could mean your group goes to a coffee shop to meet, or you meet in a local park, or your session takes place whilst walking around the local area. You will find below the sessional activities and discussion; however, it is not important what takes place during this session but rather that it takes place in the community where people can witness disciples talking and living and sharing their faith with one another.

Please note: if you are taking young people outside of the building you may need parental consent. Please speak to your divisional youth specialist or corps officer if you need support in this.

WELCOME

If you have decided that the session will take place away from the usual venue, then use this time to welcome the young people to the session and explain that the time together will take place at the venue you have chosen.

A suggestion is to choose somewhere in walking distance for the group, and use this time of walking to the venue to catch up with the young people about their week. Ask the group whether any of them gave up their phone for a day and whether they made room for something else (see Action from previous week).

WORD

When you have arrived and settled in your chosen venue for the session, ask the group to recap on the previous three sessions. Use the questions below:

- 🗣️ Has there been a topic that we have discussed that people have found helpful?
- 🗣️ Has there been a topic that we have discussed that people have found challenging?
- 🗣️ We looked at Acts chapter 2 about the birth of the Church at Pentecost. Can anyone re-tell this story of Pentecost?
- 🗣️ What do you think people would think of us if we started preaching and doing miraculous signs right here?
- 🗣️ Can anyone remember any of the words or phrases that stood out to them when we read Acts chapter 2?
- 🗣️ The disciples started to do these fantastic things in Acts chapter 2 and we looked at what our spiritual gifts might be; what spiritual gifts can you see in each other?
- 🗣️ In the last session we explored what it means to live simply. Choosing to live differently is hard; what else do we find hard being Christians?
- 🗣️ Do you think the people who see us now know we are different?
- 🗣️ What do you think would be the best way to tell someone about Jesus right at this moment of time? Have you got the courage to do it?

Say: Sometimes they call Pentecost the birthday of the Church... and this is what the Church looks like! We can be the Church on a Sunday morning, but we can also be the Church by coming together and sharing with each other at any time and at any place.

The event at Pentecost was about the Holy Spirit giving power to the disciples to be in the world and change the world.

WORSHIP

Ask the group to look around them and share what they can see.

Ask the group three questions:

- * Where is God?
- * What is he doing?
- * What can I do to join in with what he is doing?

Encourage the group to spend some time reflecting on these questions.

Allow time and space for the young people to share these thoughts. Don't worry if there is silence; let the young people seek God in their own time and in their own way.

WITNESS

The witness for this session will be closing in prayer, especially if you are in a public place. Ask the young people whether any one of them will feel comfortable praying themselves. If not, just pray, but encourage the group to join in the prayer in whatever way they feel comfortable.

Challenge: For the coming week challenge the young people to think about the three questions that were used during the worship time:

- * Where is God?
- * What is he doing?
- * What can I do to join in with what he is doing?

They can reflect on these questions whilst at school, at the shops, when out with their mates. Literally anywhere and at anytime.

Appendix One:



Appendix Two:

| SPIRITUAL GIFTS | NOT SPIRITUAL GIFTS |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Tongues | Musical |
| Miracles | Art |
| Healing | Communication |
| Encouragement | Persistence |
| Hospitality | Humour |
| Apostle | Imaginative |
| Prophecy | Problem-solving |
| Evangelist | Sport |
| Shepherd | Positivity |
| Teacher | Volunteering |