



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Works Through the Holy Spirit

SCRIPTURE: Acts 16

WORD OF WONDER: Romans 8:14

We love to go hiking as a family. My kids are young and have logged more hiking miles than many adults! One thing that's important while hiking is following the signs. Signs saying go this way or that way. Signs saying how far you must go before reaching your destination. Signs saying you're here—you made it! It gives us comfort to have guidance when we're walking through the wilderness. Take a moment to read Acts 16:6–15 and remember that Paul and his companions are taking the gospel into unfamiliar territory. It'd be nice to have some guidance along the way.

What did you notice? Paul and his buddies had something better than hiking trail signs—they had the Holy Spirit. The Spirit guided them from place to place, saying, "Take the gospel here, not there," or "You made it. This is the place." We all want clear signs from the Holy Spirit to guide us, but those signs aren't always easy to recognize.

Like hiking, we must stay on the path to see the signs. What's important is that we continue to follow the path God has laid before us, trusting He is working through the Spirit to guide us when we need it. Sometimes that means we need a very clear sign from the Spirit, and other times it means we just stay on the path in obedience and trust that God knows what we need.

—Kramer Mize

Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Paul, also called Saul, was a Jewish man from Tarsus. He was a Pharisee who persecuted the early church but became a follower of Jesus after encountering Christ on the road to Damascus. Paul proclaimed Jesus to the Gentiles (non-Jews) and endured much persecution himself.

WHAT?

While traveling with his companions, Paul was prevented by the Holy Spirit from entering Asia Minor or Bithynia (by-thin-EE-uh). The Spirit instead led him to Macedonia, where Paul preached to a woman named Lydia. The Lord opened her heart to accept the good news of Jesus.

WHERE?

Paul and his companions set out from Troas, a coastal city in present-day Turkey. They crossed the Aegean Sea and landed in Neapolis before heading to Philippi. These cities were part of Macedonia, which was located north of Achaia (uh-KAY-uh) in present-day Greece.

WHEN?

Acts tells the story of the growth of the early church after Jesus ascended into heaven. This story recounts part of what is known as Paul's Second Missionary Journey, taking place around AD 50. This was several years after Paul's conversion and well into his ministry.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God promised Abraham that all peoples would be blessed through Abraham's family. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, makes the way for all people to be part of God's kingdom. In Acts, the Holy Spirit empowers Jesus' followers to spread this news to the nations.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Curiosity Activity: Sharing the News

SUPPLIES: globe or world map

Hold up the globe or map. **Does anyone know what this is?** Invite answers. **This globe (or map) shows us what the world looks like!** Invite a child up to point to a spot on the map. Point to the place that shows where you are. Then invite a child up to point to another place. Name the country.

Do you know anything about that country? Invite answers, but it's OK if the kids don't know. **People live there and some of them don't know about Jesus! How could we tell them about Jesus? Should we yell?** Have kids try yelling. **Hmm, I don't know. They're really far away. They probably can't hear us. Let's try another country.** Invite another child to point to a different place and ask kids if they know anything about it. If you know what language they speak or a food they like to eat, feel free to share.

There are people here, too, and some of them don't know about Jesus either! Should we make a paper airplane that says, "Jesus loves you" and fly it over? Any other ideas? Wow, these are great ideas. Someone could go there to tell them.

If there's interest, continue pointing out and discussing different countries.

Today we're going to learn about a man who told everyone he met about Jesus, whether they were in his hometown or far away across the world. God worked through the Holy Spirit to help him tell everyone about Jesus!

Leader Tip: This conversation could get really silly, really fast! That's OK, because kids learn best when they're having fun. If they're getting too excited and you're losing them, simply wrap up the conversation and move on. You can also ask someone in your church who is from another country to share about where he is from.



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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for sending Jesus to save us, and thank You for sending Your Spirit to help us. Thank You for helping us follow You and share the good news about Jesus. Help us learn how Your Spirit works in us as we follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible special? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

Tell the Bible Story

The Big Picture Bible, page 280

Paul's Second Journey

*just read the first couple of paragraphs that tell about Lydia

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who sent the Holy Spirit?** *(God)*
- **Who does the Holy Spirit help?** *(God's children—anyone who trusts in Jesus)*
- **What did Paul do after he became a follower of Jesus?** *(told everyone about Jesus)*
- **What did Paul see in a vision (a special picture from God)?** *(Paul saw a man from Macedonia begging him to come there and help them.)*
- **What are some ways the Holy Spirit helps you?**
- **How do you need the Holy Spirit to help you this week?** *(If the kids need help thinking of ways the Holy Spirit can help them, offer suggestions such as being kind to siblings, listening to parents, helping their friends, being brave when they do something new, telling others about Jesus.)*

God sent the Holy Spirit to help all His followers. He wants to help us tell others about Jesus, and He also wants to help us become more loving, like Jesus.

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

—Romans 8:14



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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Craft: Pack a Bag

SUPPLIES: suitcase die cut, variety of stickers and stamps, coloring utensils, flame

In our story today, we learned about Paul's travels and how the Holy Spirit helped him know where to go. The Holy Spirit also helped him tell people about Jesus. Let's pretend you're going with Paul on one of his missionary adventures to tell people about Jesus. We're going to make a little travel bag to bring along. The most important part is the Holy Spirit. How do we show the Holy Spirit? Allow the kids to answer. That's right—the flame. We're going to remember that followers of Jesus have the Holy Spirit with us, helping us wherever we go. You can also decorate your travel bag however you like.

Invite kids to decorate bags and to pack the flame cutout inside the bag. Remind them that for those who trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit goes with them and helps them.

You can take your bags home to help remind you of this story and that the Holy Spirit helps us!