



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

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: variety of toy vehicles, blocks or magnetic tiles, coloring utensils, cardstock (optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Paul's Missionary Journeys Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Travel Time

Set-up: Set out the toy vehicles and blocks or magnetic tiles.

Play: Invite kids to create buildings out of blocks or tiles and drive the toy vehicles around a pretend city or town.

Play Station: Paul's Missionary Journeys Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Paul's Missionary Journeys Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw their favorite place to visit.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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 the story of 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



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

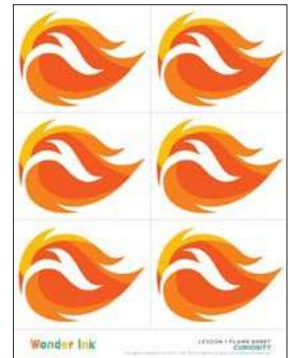
Game: Share the News!

SUPPLIES: dolls or stuffed animals, scrap pieces of paper (3–4 per kid), markers, scissors (prep only)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Flame Sheet (1 for every 6 kids)

Ahead of time, print and cut enough copies of the Flame Sheet so each child can have one flame, and cut out the flame pictures (if you haven't already). Then set out the dolls or animals around the room. Use a marker to draw a cross on each scrap piece of paper.

We're going to take the good news of Jesus to all our pretend friends in the room. When I call out the location of one of the dolls, you're going to run over there and give a cross paper to them! Ready, set, go! Call out the name or location of one of your dolls or animals. Do this a few times and encourage the kids to run over and give the dolls or animals a cross paper.



Hmmm, do you think our pretend friends understood the message? Do we need some help? That reminds me—we forgot our helper! Let's try it again with a flame picture to remind us that the Holy Spirit goes with us and gives us strength, courage, and words as we share God's messages. Give the kids a flame picture and tell them to say, "Jesus loves you" when they drop off their cross papers. Then play again, as time permits.