



Lesson 1: Birthday of the Church

Background Information

Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-13, 41

Before Jesus returned to heaven He told the Disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the *gift that was promised*. He told them that they *would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them*. (Acts 1:8)

Like many of the teachings of Jesus, the Disciples did not fully understand the new mystery that was beginning to unfold, but they waited. For ten more days, they remained in Jerusalem, not knowing exactly what would be happening—but trusting in the Master.

Every year the Day of Pentecost, also called the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Harvests, or the day of first fruits was celebrated 50 days after the Sabbath of Passover week. At such a time Jerusalem was filled with devout Jews, many from distant parts of the world but the Day of Pentecost that followed the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth was like no other before it; for on that day God chose to institute the vehicle that would carry the message of salvation to the world. *On that Pentecost the Church began*.

The Disciples did not know what to expect; they did not know how they would recognize the Holy Spirit that had been promised. Nonetheless, when He came there was no doubt! In a vivid display of power and authority the Holy Spirit came suddenly with an instantaneous sound like a violent wind. At the same time flames of fire rested above each of the Disciples. If one could doubt such a phenomenon, the doubts faded when the Disciples began to speak.

When the Disciples spoke the crowd of people each understood what was said because they each heard the words in their own native tongue. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter was able to tell everyone about Jesus and what He did for them. As a result of the clear message and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, three thousand people accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior.

And thus began the Church.



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Bible Challenge

Conduct a simple Bible Drill.

Have students hold their Bibles above their heads. Clearly call out the reference of the verse that is to be found. Repeat the verse reference a second time and then tell the students to begin searching. Students then bring their Bibles down and begin to look for the verse. The first person to find the verse reads it for the class to hear.

Bible Drill Verses: Acts 1:8, Acts 4:32, Acts 12:24, Acts 1:8, Acts 10:15, Acts 2:30, Acts 1:8

Initial Distribution of Trading Cards

1. Give each student a Verse Card for the current lesson. Then add any remaining copies of the Verse Card to the "Current Cards" container.

*For lesson 1—also give every student a copy of the other "extra" card—the LIST Card so they can know what cards are available.
2. Allow each student to randomly select one card from "Current Cards" container because they are present for the lesson.
3. Allow any student who remembered to bring his or her own Bible to class to randomly select another card from the "Current Cards" container.
4. Allow any student who can say the prior week's memory verse to select an additional card.
5. Allow any student who brought a new friend to class to select another card.
6. Move all remaining "Current Cards" to the "Master Trading Card" container.
7. Allow each of the winners of the Bible Drill to select one card for each verse they found, randomly selecting the cards from the "Master Trading Card" container.
8. Ask a few review questions regarding prior lessons. Allow the first student to answer each question correctly to select a card from the Master Trading Card" container.
9. Allow a few minutes for the students to look at their new cards, and then have them put the cards away so the new lesson can begin.




Introduction of New Cards

(Activities to Illustrate, Explain, Enhance)

Activity A: Nifty Fifty

Card #60:

<p><u>Supply List</u></p> <p>Markers, crayons, or colored pencils</p> <p>Nifty Fifty picture for each student</p> <p><u>Preparation</u></p> <p>Copy Nifty Fifty pictures from this book or print them directly from the CD.</p>	
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Key Focus: The Day of Pentecost

Title: The Church began on the Day of Pentecost.

Details: On the Day of Pentecost all the Disciples were gathered in one place. Just as Jesus had promised, the Father sent the Holy Spirit to fill them with great power. On that day the Church was born.

Other points to share: Pentecost was the 50th day after Passover. "Pentecost" was not new. The Jews of Jesus' day celebrated Pentecost, but the day took on a whole new meaning on that day.

Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: Page 11 in the book or "1-Nifty Fifty" on the CD]

*Before the lesson, make enough copies of the **Nifty Fifty picture** for each student to have one.*

Distribute markers, crayons, or colored pencils and let the students color the **Nifty Fifty picture**. Additional vines, flowers, etc can be added if the student wants to enhance the image.

As they color, remind the students that Jesus had shared one last Passover with His Disciples. Then He told His Disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Comforter to come to them. On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the Disciples and the Church was begun.


Collect the **Nifty Fifty pictures** and let an unbiased panel judge them to determine 1-3 winners. Return the pictures the following week and let each of the winners draw an additional Trading Card from the "Master Trading Card" container.



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Activity B: Wind and Fire

Card #64:

<p><u>Supply List</u></p> <p>Wind and Fire cards on cardstock</p> <p><u>Preparation</u></p> <p>Copy Wind and Fire cards from this book or print them from the CD.</p>	
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Key Focus: Wind and Tongues of Fire

Title: A mighty wind and tongues of fire were signs of the Holy Spirit.

Details: Everyone in the room heard the sound of a mighty wind and saw what appeared to be tongues of fire come to rest upon the Disciples.

Other points to share: The Holy Spirit is the Comforter that Jesus promised. He is the third part of what we call the Trinity—which means that the Holy Spirit is God, in the same way that Jesus is God. Once Christ had returned to heaven, the Holy Spirit came to live in the hearts of the believers.

Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: Page 12 in the book or “1-Wind and Fire” on the CD]

Wind and Fire is a very simple card game that is designed to highlight the fact that “wind” and “fire” are both used as symbols to represent the coming of the Holy Spirit. The game has 10 different cards (5 with types of fire and 5 with types of wind).

*Before the lesson, make one set of the **Wind and Fire cards** for each student. Cut out the cards and shuffle them all together.*

Give each student 5 cards. All the remaining cards become the Draw Pile.

Select one student to go first, and then proceed clockwise.


To play, a student draws one card from the main pile and compares it to the cards in his or her hands. The player then discards one card—either the one that was drawn or one from his or her hand. (Place discarded cards on the bottom of the Draw Pile.)

Players take turns drawing and discarding cards until someone collects 5 cards that are all “Wind” or all “Fire.” Allow the winner of the game to choose a card from the “Master Trading Card” container.



Activity C: Personal CODE

Card #36:

<p><u>Supply List</u></p> <p>Pencils or pens</p> <p>Personal Code Sheet, prepared by instructor</p> <p><u>Preparation</u></p> <p>Prepare a Code Sheet as directed.</p> <p>Make multiple copies of the Code Sheet.</p>	
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Key Focus: Language of the Spirit

Title: Language used by Peter was understood by all.

Details: On Pentecost, when Peter spoke, everyone present heard his words, but each heard the words in his own native language.

Other points to share: Many people who had come to Jerusalem for Passover may have remained till the time of Pentecost. Therefore there were lots of people who were not natives of the area and would speak different languages. When Peter spoke in his own language, all these people understood him as though he were speaking in their own native tongues.

Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: None]

*Before the lesson, create a **Code Sheet** by writing the letters of the alphabet on a piece of paper, leaving space above each letter. Make a copy of the **Code Sheet** for each student.*

To begin this activity, ask the students to create a code of their own by choosing a simple symbol for each letter, like a star, a square, the number sign, or a circle with a dot inside it. Then, ask students to use their own code to write "The Church began on the Day of Pentecost."

Allow the first two or three students to finish the coded sentence to randomly select another Trading Card from the "Master Trading Card" container.


Point to all the coded sentences and remind the students that they all contain the same sentence. If you look at the pages, it looks like many different statements, but they all say the same thing. Explain that the same was true of the Day of Pentecost. Peter preached one sermon, but because of the presence of the Holy Spirit, everyone who heard Peter's words, heard the message in his own native tongue.



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Activity D: Three Thousand Pennies

Card #61:

<p>Supply List</p> <p>At least 3000 pennies</p> <p>Preparation</p> <p>Collect all the pennies needed to conduct this activity.</p>	
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Key Focus: Three Thousand Saved

Title: Three thousand were saved on the first day.

Details: When Peter preached his first sermon, three thousand people repented. This was the beginning of the Church.

Other points to share: The Church is not a building—it is people. In particular, the Church is made up over ALL people who have accepted that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: None]


The purpose of this activity is to give the students an idea of just how many people came to believe in Jesus that day.

Place a pile of pennies in the center of the floor (at least \$30 worth of pennies!) Let each student collect 10 pennies from the center and deposit them into a large container. Once everyone has put in 10 pennies, repeat—and continue doing so until they have collected 3000 pennies and placed them into the large container.



Activity E: LIST Card

Card #66:



Supply List

Trading Card #66

Preparation

Make copies of Trading Card #66 from the Card Section at the end of this book, or print them from the CD.

Key Focus: LIST

Title: LIST

Details: List of all 66 available cards

Other points to share: This is a complete list of all the Trading Cards. Students can use this card to keep track of which cards they still need to complete their sets.

Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: "TC-66" on the CD]

Give each student a copy of this card so they can plan their strategies to obtain the full set.

Allow time for the students to study the card. Remind them that a prize will be given to every student who collects at least one complete set of 66 cards. Also, remind them that every card they collect will count as one point and that points can be used to "purchase" prizes at the end of the course.


Note: It would be helpful if you provide a large envelope or some other container for each student to hold his or her cards.



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Activity F: Memory Verse Fill-In

Card #2:



Supply List

Whiteboard and marker or chalkboard and chalk

Missing Words

Preparation

Copy Missing Words cards from this book or print them directly from the CD.

Cut the Missing Words pages into separate cards.

Key Focus: Bible Verse

Title: Acts 1:8

Details: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Other points to share: None

Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: Page 13 in the book or "1-Missing Words" on the CD]

*Before the lesson, prepare 2 sets of the **Missing Words from Acts 1:8** and mix them all together in a basket. Two sets of the words are used so there will always be several words from which the students can select the correct one.*

Write the text of Acts 1:8 on the chalkboard or white board, leaving blanks instead of the words "power", "comes", "witnesses", "Jerusalem", "Judea", "Samaria", and "earth."

Let students, one at a time, randomly select a word from the basket and try to tell where it belongs. If the student's answer is correct, allow him or her to take an additional Trading Card from the "Master Trading Card" container. If the student incorrectly places the Missing Word, explain where the word should go so he or she will know the correct answer, but the student does not earn an extra Trading Card.

If a student chooses a word that has already been placed in the verse, the paper should be returned to the container and that student's turn is over.



Activity G: Review Time

Supply List

Review Time Questions

Preparation

Make copies of Review Time Question cards from this book or print them directly from the CD.

Cut out Review Time Question cards.



Instructions:

[Supplemental pages: Pages 14-15 in the book or "1-Review Time" on the CD]

Review the lesson using the questions below or questions you create. Questions may be asked orally or the **Review Time Question cards** can be printed and students be allowed to draw cards to obtain their questions. Questions can be asked to the group in general, allowing anyone to answer, or students may be asked questions in rotation, giving each a chance to answer one question.

Whichever way that is chosen to review the lesson, give one Trading Card to each student who can answer a question correctly.

Sample questions and their answers are listed below. The same questions are provided on **Review Time Question cards** at the end of this lesson. Blank **Review Time Question cards** can be discarded or used to create additional questions.

*The **Review Time Question cards** should be printed on cardstock so they will be likely to stay in good condition to be used during later lessons as well. To insure even greater durability, the **Review Time Question cards** can be laminated.*

Sample Questions for Lesson 1 (answers provided):

1. On what day did the Church begin? *The Day of Pentecost*
2. Wind and Fire were signs of whose coming? *The Holy Spirit*
3. In what language did the people hear Peter preach? *Their own*
4. How many people accepted Jesus that first day? *3000*
5. What happened on the Day of Pentecost? *The Church began.*
6. What symbols represent the Holy Spirit? *Wind and Fire*
7. Who preached the sermon on the Day of Pentecost? *Peter*
8. What happened to 3000 people on the Day of Pentecost? *They accepted Jesus.*



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If Additional Time is Available

Below are some ideas if additional time remains at the end of the lesson:

1. Repeat Bible Drills.
2. Allow additional time for students to study and trade their cards.
3. Ask additional review questions
4. As noted on page v in the Introduction, *Birth of the Church Activity Book* may help to fill time remaining time at the end of a lesson. If this activity book is being used, the following pages may be appropriate to support this lesson: Pages 2, 3, or 9.

Nifty Fifty



Hurricane

Torch

Tornado

Fire

Wind

Flame

Breeze

Blaze

Zephyr

Campfire

Missing Words for Acts 1:8

power

comes

witnesses

Jerusalem

Judea

Samaria

earth

Review Time Questions



Review Time Questions

On what day did the Church begin?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions

Wind and Fire were signs of whose coming?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions

In what language did the people hear Peter preach?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions

How many people accepted Jesus that first day?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions

What happened on the Day of Pentecost?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions

What symbols represent the Holy Spirit?

(Lesson 1)

Review Time Questions



Review Time Questions

Who preached the sermon on the Day of Pentecost?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions

What happened to 3000 people on the Day of Pentecost?

(Lesson 1)



Review Time Questions



Review Time Questions



Review Time Questions



Review Time Questions