

Read: Acts 2:1-21

From One Language to Many - Proclamation

Acts 2:21

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Holman family moved from America to a far away country called the Czech Republic. They loved it except for one thing—they didn't speak the Czech language. They worked hard to learn words like "Hello" (Dobrý den!), and "How are you?" (Jak se máš?), and name items in the grocery store or restaurant. But when they would ask how someone was, they didn't understand the answer. How frustrating when you want to tell people something or understand what they are saying!

Today's Bible reading is a special story about the Day of Pentecost. When Jesus went to heaven, he told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come to them. They did what Jesus asked. While there, a huge feast was taking place. The feast was called Pentecost or the Feast of Harvest. Jews from all over the world came to Jerusalem for this feast. Each person spoke the language of their country. God had a special plan for the feast that year. The disciples were all together, and some amazing things happened—there was a sound like a wind and small flames of fire came to rest on each of them. The Holy Spirit gave them the ability to suddenly speak in other languages. They didn't have to learn the language or practice it. They just knew it. People study for years to be able to speak another language. The disciples could do it immediately. That's amazing! It was part of God's plan!

What did they do? They did what Jesus had told them to do. They went out into the streets among the many people from all over the world and started speaking in people's languages, telling them about Jesus. In a previous devotion this week, God made the people speak a different language to confuse them and spread them out. In today's story, God gave the disciples the gift of speaking another language so they could tell others about him. Their message was that *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved*. The disciples wanted to be sure that as many people as possible heard that message.

You and I can be like the disciples. We can tell others the same message, and we don't need to learn a new language to do so! Who do you know that needs to hear this message—God loves you and wants you to be saved? In any language, this is the most important message to tell, and you get to share it!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- If you had a chance to play with someone who spoke a different language, what would be fun about that and what might be hard?
- Most, or maybe even all, of the people you know speak the same language as you, but maybe they know very little about Jesus. What would you want to share with them about Jesus?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- The disciples did what Jesus said by going to Jerusalem and staying together until the Holy Spirit would come. Describe what you think their reaction may have been when they heard the wind, saw the fire, and were suddenly able to speak another language!
- You don't have to learn a new language to tell others about your Savior, and yet, it can be hard sometimes. Why makes it hard for you? What would help for the next time?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Jerusalem was filled with visitors from all over the world when the disciples were able to speak different languages. Now imagine that was you. Describe your reaction and why you would walk into the streets and start talking to others.
- It can be hard to bring up your faith with others. Think of one possible consequence if you don't speak up. What encouragement does God give you to talk to someone else about your faith?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, we want everyone we know to know about you and have faith in you. We know that faith comes only from the Holy Spirit, but that you've told us that we should tell others about you. Help us to be excited to tell those we know about you. Amen.