

Read: Acts 2:1-21

The Holy Spirit Comes and Changes Lives

Acts 2:5-8, 11b

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

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

On March 10, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell said to his co-worker Thomas Watson, "Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you." That may not sound like a big deal, but it was. Those were the first words ever spoken on the telephone Mr. Bell had just invented.

The telephone has changed our lives! How many people in your family carry around a cell phone today? You can use your phone to make calls, send text messages, have video chats, and play games. We can talk to our friends or family whenever we want and no matter where they live. Can you imagine what your life would be like without one?

When Jesus was on earth, he promised to send someone to change people's lives. That promise came true. On the day of Pentecost, God the Holy Spirit arrived in a dramatic way. There was the sound of a blowing wind, tongues of fire appeared on people's heads, and Jesus' apostles spoke in different languages! The Holy Spirit came to change hearts and lives. He would work through the words the apostles spoke to bring repentance and saving faith into people's hearts. Now they could have Jesus' forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Talk about life-changing!

Ever since that day, the Holy Spirit has been changing lives. That includes your life too! There was a time when you and I did not believe in God. We were helpless to please God. God had no reason to love us. To go through life without God's love is the scariest thing in the world.

That all changed when the Holy Spirit changed your life. When you were baptized, the Holy Spirit filled your heart and gave you a special gift: he made it possible for you to believe in Jesus. Now your sins are forgiven! You *are* God's child! Someday, you will be with him in heaven. Until then, the Holy Spirit helps us do what pleases God. He inspires kindness, goodness, gentleness, patience, love, and self-control. He makes us eager to love others and serve God.

Can you imagine what life would be like without the Holy Spirit? Praise be to God, the Holy Spirit has changed your life forever!

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 Younger Children

- What did the people see or hear on the day of Pentecost that told them the Holy Spirit had arrived?
- What did God want the apostles to do when the Holy Spirit came to them? What does he want you to do?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- How has the Holy Spirit changed your life? Name as many ways as you can.
- Why did we need the Holy Spirit to change our lives?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Discuss with your parents how the Holy Spirit changed someone's life that you know. Explain, if you can, what they were like before they came to faith in God and what they were like after.
- The Holy Spirit changed my life by forgiving all my sins and giving me saving faith in Jesus. I am now God's child! This means that I want to... _____.
(Fill in the blank as many ways as you can.)

Closing Prayer:

God the Holy Spirit, thank you for changing my life. You brought me to faith and connected me to my Savior. Preserve that faith in my heart until the day I am able to see my Savior face-to-face in heaven. Amen.

Hymn: CW 184: 3 – O Holy Spirit, Enter In

O mighty Rock, O Source of life,
Let your dear Word, in doubt and strife,
In us be strongly burning
That we be faithful unto death
And live in love and holy faith,
From you true wisdom learning.
Your grace and peace
On us shower; by your power Christ confessing,
Let us see our Savior's blessing.