

# Unit 17 at a Glance

## The Early Church

### Unit Overview

In this unit the students will begin one of the most exciting Bible adventures of all as they see the birth of the church at Pentecost, its early growth into Samaria, and its eventual persecution and scattering. In these lessons, Jesus comes alive through the life—and death—of his followers. From the power of Pentecost to the sorrow of Stephen's death, the students will imagine the amazing events that filled the life of a first century disciple as well as of disciples today.

### Unit Goals

- The students will learn that the church is made up of people for whom Jesus died.
- The students will understand that the church must imitate Jesus.
- The students will believe that God wants them to be a part of his church.

### Unit Contents

#### Lesson 1 The Church Begins

*Scripture Memory Verse* Acts 2:42  
*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

Sounds of wind and tongues of fire were just a few of the amazing spectacles that surrounded the birth of the church at Pentecost. The students will consider closely the outstanding devotion of the early disciples as they think of ways they can be devoted to God.

#### Lesson 2 The Church Grows

*Scripture Memory Verse* Acts 2:47  
*And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

Daily, rapid growth is how the students will describe the increase of early disciples. Not only will the students hear how the church grew, but they will see how God used the disciples to help it grow and reach more and more people, just as he does today.

#### Lesson 3 The Church Scatters

*Scripture Memory Verse* Acts 8:4  
*Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.*

Opposition to the church grew intense and Stephen became the first disciple to die for his faith. The students will consider how God comforted and encouraged his people, and see how he used Stephen's death to launch a whole new wave of victories as the Word was spread throughout Samaria and Judea.

#### Lesson 4 Samaria Receives the Word

*Scripture Memory Verse* Acts 8:35  
*Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.*

The spread of the gospel into Samaria is an exciting chapter in the kingdom's growth. Philip gives the students a stellar example of a disciple who is led by God to go anywhere and do anything. Not only will the students see all the ways that God used Philip, but they will also consider ways that God can use them to spread his word today.

#### Lesson 5 Gentiles Enter the Kingdom

*Scripture Memory Verse* Acts 10:34-35  
*Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right."*

God loves the Gentiles, too! As the students consider Cornelius' remarkable love for God, they will think of ways that they can befriend someone who is different from them.

#### Lesson 6 Persecution and Prayer

*Scripture Memory Verse* Acts 11:26  
*The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*  
Intense persecution and intense prayer quickly became hallmarks of the first century church. Along with persecution came the new label, "Christian"—which means "little Christ"—and with prayer came miracles. The students will see that disciples were then and are now to be just like Jesus.



**3rd and 4th Grades**



### **3rd and 4th Grades**

Dear Parent,

In this unit the students will begin one of the most exciting Bible adventures of all as they see the birth of the church at Pentecost, its early growth into Samaria, and its eventual persecution and scattering. In these lessons, Jesus comes alive through the life—and death—of his followers. From the power of Pentecost to the sorrow of Stephen’s death, the students will imagine the amazing events that filled the life of a first century disciple as well as of disciples today.

On the reverse side of this page, you will find an outline and a description of the lessons that comprise this unit. Included with each lesson is a Scripture Memory Verse for you to review with your child at home.

Your active involvement outside the classroom is essential and will truly make the Kingdom Kids Curriculum a great success for your child. Here are some suggested ways you can reinforce these lessons at home:

- As a family, develop an early church timeline. Choose one or two highlights from each chapter of the book of Acts and design a way to chart them out as one continuous line of events. Use different color pens or markers to highlight different aspects of its growth.
- Draw pictures of key scenes from this unit’s Bible Stories and/or write in key scriptures that capture the events. If possible, laminate your timeline and display it in your child’s room.
- Come up with a trivia game based on the events of the book of Acts. With your child, come up with a set of questions from the chapters covered in this unit.
- Have an early church get together in which you play games based on the book of Acts. Invite guests to dress in character, such as: the apostles, Cornelius, the Ethiopian Eunuch, Philip, Stephen, etc. Have “Acts Snacks” such as: Samaritan Sandwiches made with two different kinds of bread; Animal Crackers wrapped in napkins for Peter’s dream. Scatter sunflower seeds to represent the scattering of disciples.
- Pray as a family for disciples in your ministry and around the kingdom. Model your prayers after those in Acts 4:23-31, 12:5, 20:36. Teach your children how to pray for the same needs in the church today.

We look forward to being partners with you to help your child grow to know and love God more.

Thank you,

Your child’s teachers

# GENERATION NEXT