Session 9

Peter Tells the Sanhedrin About Jesus



Acts 4:5-14

Worship Theme:



God's Spirit strengthens us.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Children will praise God for strength through the Holy Spirit.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplie	es
Let's Praise God! (about 25 minutes)	• "King Jesus Is All" (track 13) • "I Believe" (John 1:12) (track 5) • "Go and Make Disciples" (Matthew 28:19) (track 15) • "Faith" (Hebrews 11:1) (track 17) • "His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a) (track 6)	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Songs From FaithWeaver Classroom Supplies: CD player	

Preschool

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
	Different Kinds of Strength Do some exercises, and talk about what it would take to love someone who's difficult to love.	Classroom Supplies: Doll
Let's Learn the Point! (about 25 minutes)	Strengthened by God's Spirit Interact with the Bible story to learn that Peter and John spoke boldly with the power of the Holy Spirit.	Classroom Supplies: Bible
	* Giving You Strength Act out different ways God's Spirit can give them strength.	

Élementary

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
	Testing Strength Test the strength of craft sticks to see that God's Spirit makes us stronger.	Classroom Supplies: 10 craft sticks per child
Let's Learn the Point!	* Strengthened by God's Spirit Learn that Peter and John spoke boldly with the power of the Holy Spirit.	Classroom Supplies: Paper, pencils
	* Finding Strength Answer "true" or "false" if God's Spirit will give them strength to accomplish certain tasks.	Classroom Supplies: Tape, poster board, marker

	Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
3	Let's Pray! (about 10 minutes)	The Offering Offer their gifts to God.	Classroom Supplies: Offering bowls
		A Cord of Three Strands Thank the Holy Spirit while braiding three cords.	Classroom Supplies: 3 feet of yarn per child, scissors
		Race Car Power Call out things the Holy Spirit strengthens them to do while racing the Balloon Car Racer.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: Balloon Car Racer

^{*} Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together.

Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Section 2.

Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

Peter Tells the Sanhedrin About Jesus

Acts 4:5-14

In this passage, Peter and John are called before the elders and teachers of the Law to explain the healing of the disabled man described in Acts 3:1-10. This group of Jewish leaders (the Sanhedrin) was the ruling body of the Jews. It had authority in all religious matters and in certain legal matters granted to it by the Romans. One of the Sanhedrin's duties was to pronounce judgment in cases of blasphemy. Members of the Sanhedrin probably viewed Peter and John's actions as bordering on blasphemy. Peter and John claimed that they were able to heal a man—something only God could do—through the power of Jesus, who the Jews contended was dead. So they called Peter and John before them to hear the explanation firsthand.

When asked the source of his power to heal, Peter replied that the power came from Jesus and accused the Jewish leaders of crucifying Jesus, whom God then raised from the dead. The Jewish leaders were intent on getting rid of Jesus, but God nullified their actions by raising him from the dead. The Sanhedrin had tried to cover up the Resurrection (Matthew 28:11-15), but Peter contended that the healed man standing before them proved that Jesus is alive.

Notice that the disabled man was healed through Jesus' power and that Peter's forceful speech before this powerful group of religious leaders was made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:8). God was with Peter in a special way, as Jesus had promised he would be when people were going about his work (Matthew 28:20).

In verse 12, Peter indirectly heaps on more accusation. By saying that salvation is only through Jesus, Peter meant that all of the Jewish leaders' beliefs and actions were insufficient. He was saying that if they continued along this course, they were not only destroying themselves, but also leading their nation toward destruction.

What was the Sanhedrin's response? Astonishment! How could these simple men, with no training in the Jewish rabbinical schools, mount such a clear and convincing biblical and theological argument? The Jews' only answer was that "these men had been with Jesus"! They may have remembered the similar things they had thought about Jesus (John 7:15). Jesus had supported his claims through the miracles he performed, and now the disciples had done the same.

At least two things gave Peter courage in this intimidating situation. First, he was relying on the Holy Spirit, and second, he knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jesus is alive. This knowledge gave Peter full and ultimate trust in Jesus. We have the apostles' (and God's!) record in the Bible, and we have the same Holy Spirit that empowered Peter. What more do we need to be courageous in the situations we face today?

Devotion for Leaders

As you spend time with Jesus, you'll grow to be more like him. People will look at you and conclude that you've "been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13)!

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: When troubles come, where do you turn for courage and strength? Refuse to follow popular culture's little-engine-that-could philosophy of trusting in yourself. Instead, remind yourself daily, "I know God can; I know God can; I know God can; I know God can!" Trust in the God who gave courage to Abraham, Ruth, Moses, Rahab, David, Esther, Daniel, Mary, and Peter...and will give it to you!

Why We Worship for Leaders

The Bible says God is the vine and we are the branches. As long as we stay connected to God, we'll grow and be fruitful. But when we're cut off from the vine, we can do nothing. God, in his infinite wisdom, has purposefully designed us with a need to be connected with him. We draw our very life from being connected to God. The Holy Spirit is that connection. When we put our faith in God, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us, giving us power, strength, courage, and guidance. Think about it: The Spirit of God dwells within each Christian. With the Holy Spirit inside us, there's nothing we can't accomplish for our God. This is reason to joyfully praise and worship our loving and wise God.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Finding Strength—Write "true" in large letters on one piece of poster board and "false" in large letters on another piece. Tape the signs to walls at opposite ends of the worship room.

A Cord of Three Strands—For each child, cut three 1-foot sections of yarn or cord. Knot the three strands together so that children will be able to braid the strands together.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.



Let's Praise God!

Play Songs From FaithWeaver, Spring 2012 as children arrive. Also ask a few of the children to stand at the door and welcome everyone who comes into the room. Ask them to smile, shake hands, and say, "Welcome! God's Spirit strengthens us!"

When everyone has arrived, begin the session.



Sav Welcome to children's church. Let's begin our worship time by praising Jesus, our Lord and King.

Sing "King Jesus Is All."

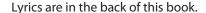
Lyrics are in the back of this book.



Track 13

Say We're here to praise Jesus, our God, our Lord, and our King. Today we're praising Jesus for a very specific reason. After Jesus rose from the dead, he promised that he would send a helper to be with the people who believed in Jesus. Jesus kept his promise and sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our helper and gives us courage and strength. Today we're praising God for sending the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us. Our God is so good that he deserves our shouts of praise. Let's praise God by standing and singing "I Believe."

Sing "I Believe" (John 1:12).









Check out the **FaithWeaver** Worship DVD included with your KidsOwn Worship

Kit! Use these segments to help you lead worship with your children each week.

After the song, have everyone sit down.

Say This song says to shout to the Lord in praise.

• What are some things we could shout out to praise God?

(You're awesome; thank you, God; we love you, God.)

Have kids call out their answers. After each suggestion, have kids shout the praise as a large group. For example, if someone says, "Thank you, God," as praise, have kids shout, "Thank you, God!" together. Other shouts might include "God is great!" or "God is powerful!"

Say Our God is worthy of our praise. We've had fun praising God with our shouts. We can also tell other people why God is worthy of praise. The Holy Spirit strengthens us to tell others about him. That's exactly what happened to two people in the Bible story we'll be looking at today. God's Spirit strengthened them to spread the good news about Jesus everywhere they went. Let's praise God by celebrating the opportunity we have to tell others about Jesus.

Sing "Go and Make Disciples" (Matthew 28:19).



Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Say When we tell others about God, we're hoping they'll decide to believe in him and put their faith in him. It's a wonderful thing to believe in God. When we believe in God, he sends his Holy Spirit to live in us and strengthen us.

> We all need God in our lives. There are so many things that are hard about living in this world. Tough times are easier to face with the Holy Spirit's strength. But there are many people who don't believe in God. They have to face tough situations all by themselves. This is one reason it's so important to tell others about Jesus; we want everyone to believe in God and to have the Holy Spirit in their lives.

> Let's sing "Faith" together. Sing this song with an attitude of worship and thankfulness in your heart. Remember that we're worshipping God for sending his Holy Spirit to those who believe in him.

Sing "Faith" (Hebrews 11:1).

Track 17

Lyrics are in the back of this book.



- What are some things you believe about God? (God loves me; God created everything; God sent Jesus to save us.)
 - What are some things you believe about God's Holy Spirit? (The Holy Spirit helps us; God sent the Holy Spirit to give us strength; we can do great things with the help of the Holy Spirit.)
 - How does God's Spirit help us? (The Holy Spirit helps us serve God; we can do things with the Holy Spirit that we can't do by ourselves.)

Say When we believe in Jesus and put our faith in God, we become Christians. When we have faith in God, he forgives us and saves us from our sins. Then we walk in God's ways—the way of kindness, the way of light, and the way of love. And the Holy Spirit helps us to do that. He gives us the strength to be kind and loving and to live in the light. Let's praise God for salvation and thank the Holy Spirit for helping us to do right. Let's sing "His Mercy."

Sing "His Mercy" (Titus 3:5a).



Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Say Next we're going to learn more about how God's Holy Spirit strengthens us. First let's talk to God and pray that his Spirit will help us understand what we learn today.

Pray Thank you, God, for sending your Holy Spirit to help us, to give us courage, and to give us strength. We pray that your Spirit will strengthen us right now and help us understand all that you want us to learn today. In Jesus' name, amen.



Let's Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 115-116

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let's Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities

Testing Strength

Say Let's do a test to discover how strong craft sticks are. Give everyone a craft stick.

> Now try to break the craft stick. It's OK if you don't break the craft stick. We are not testing your strength; we're testing how strong the craft stick is.

Allow children a few seconds to break the craft sticks. Then give everyone two more craft sticks.

Say Now place these two craft sticks together, and try to break them at the same time. Allow kids a few seconds to try to break the two craft sticks.

Now give kids three craft sticks each. Some may only need one additional craft stick if they did not break the two sticks in the previous test.

Say Now place your three craft sticks together and try to break all three at one time. Allow a few seconds for kids to try to break the sticks.

Distribute more craft sticks as necessary so that everyone has four craft sticks.

Say This is our final test of the craft sticks. Place all four of your craft sticks together and try to break them. Allow children a few seconds to try to break the four sticks. Kids should not be able to break the four sticks together.

- Ask How did the craft sticks do on their strength test? (They were weak by themselves; they were harder to break when we added more.)
 - What was more difficult to break: one stick or three or four? **Why?** (It started to get hard when we tried to break two, because we added sticks; it kept getting harder and harder, because they got stronger when they were together with other sticks.)
 - Who is stronger: one person working alone or three or four people working together? Why? (Three or four working together, because they can help each other; more people working together are stronger, because they can support each other.)

Say We could look at these craft sticks as us, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. When we try to do something alone, we're not always strong enough to accomplish the task. However, when we depend on God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, we become stronger.

> Today we're going to hear about some of Jesus' followers who depended on God's Spirit. They learned that God's Spirit would give them strength. And we can depend on God's Spirit to strengthen us, too.

* Strengthened by God's Spirit

Distribute paper and pencils.

Say Listen carefully to this story from the Bible. After the story, I'll give you a chance to write ways that the two men in this story were strengthened by the Holy Spirit. This story is from the book of Acts.

> One day Peter and John were going to the Temple. A man who was crippled from birth was being carried to a Temple gate. Peter healed the man in the name of Jesus and told him to walk. When the priests and Sadducees heard that Peter and John were preaching that Jesus had risen from the dead and were

Peter Tells the Sanhedrin About Jesus

Session 9

Acts 4:5-14

Worship Theme:



God's Spirit strengthens us.

Easy Prep for Leaders

None is necessary.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

- Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
- Have Theo participate in the game in the "Different Kinds of Strength" activity.
- See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today's worship session.



Different Kinds of Strength

You'll need a doll for this activity.

Gather the children in a circle.

Say We're going to play a game today to learn about different kinds of strengths. Everyone needs to stand in a line facing me.

Lead the children through the following activities; after each activity, explain the different kind of strength used.

- Say First I want everyone to walk forward. Now walk backward. Walk forward. And backward.
- Ask What part of your body needs strength to walk forward and backward?
- That's right! Our legs and feet need strength to walk. Now I want everyone to reach up really high. Stretch your arms up and try to touch the ceiling. Great! Now reach down and touch your toes. Let's do it again. Reach up. Reach down and touch your toes. Good job!
- Ask What parts of your body need strength to reach up and down?

Say To reach up and down, our bodies need to be strong. This is the kind of strength we usually think of when we talk about strength. But there's

Hold a doll on your lap.

another kind of strength.

Let's pretend that we have a hard job to do.
Let's pretend that this doll's name is Alex.
Alex has been mean. She teased some kids
until they cried, she grabbed the best markers
from some other kids, and she hogged the
best swing on the playground for the entire
playtime. Even though Alex has been mean,
you know that God wants you to be loving
toward Alex.

Ask • What would you do to be loving toward Alex?

It takes a special kind of strength to do the right thing, the thing God wants us to do. It's a special kind of strength we have inside us. And it comes from the Holy Spirit. God sent the Holy Spirit as a special helper to help us do the right thing even when it's hard. Today we are going to learn about two of Jesus' followers who needed a special kind of strength to tell others about Jesus.

Preschool Activities

Strengthened by God's Spirit

You'll need a Bible.

As you tell the following story, have the children make muscles every time they hear the words *strength*, *strong*, or *strengthen*.

Open your Bible to Acts 4:5-14.

Say One day Peter and John were going to church. They met a man who couldn't walk.

• If we couldn't walk, how would we get to the door?

Have the children try to get to the door without walking.

Say Now I'm going to pretend that I'm the one in the story who couldn't walk.

Ask • Can you make me better?

Have the children try to make your legs better.

Say Peter and John wanted to help the man. They needed God's Spirit. God's Spirit gave Peter strength (pause), and Peter healed the man in the name of Jesus and told him to walk.

God's Spirit also strengthened (pause) Peter and John to tell everybody about Jesus. This upset some of the people who didn't believe in Jesus. They put Peter and John in prison.

• Why do you think they put Peter and John in prison?

The next day, the people who put Peter and John in prison began asking questions. They asked, "Who gave you the power to do this miracle?"

Ask • What do you think Peter and John said?

Say Peter wasn't afraid to answer. God's Spirit strengthened (pause) Peter and gave him the courage to say, "The man was healed in the name of Jesus."

Ask • Have you ever needed courage? When?

After Peter spoke, the rulers were amazed. Peter and John were just ordinary men. Why would they say and do these great things? The rulers realized that Peter and John had been with Jesus and had great courage and strength (pause).

Peter and John knew that they had God's Spirit to strengthen (pause) them no matter what happened. We may not ever be put into prison as Peter and John were for helping someone. But there are other situations for which God's Spirit can give us the strength (pause) we need to make it through tough times. Let's discover some situations for which God's Spirit strengthens (pause) us.

* Giving You Strength

Say Let's play a game. Let's pretend that someone is sick and needs our help. We can pray to God and ask God to give us strength to help the person.

Ask • What are some ways God's Spirit would strengthen us to help this sick person? Act out what you could do to help the sick person.

Help the children act out their answers. Children might suggest taking the person's temperature or giving the sick person medicine.

Now let's pretend that someone new just came to our church. He doesn't know anyone. We can ask God's Spirit to give us strength so we will know how to be a friend to this boy.

• What are some things you could do to be a friend to someone new? Act out what you would do.

Help the children act out their answers. Children might suggest saying "hello" or inviting the new person to play a game.

Say Let's pretend that someone in your family has done something and you are really mad. You can pray and ask God's Spirit to help you control your temper.

Ask • What can you do instead of yelling or hitting the person you're mad at? Act out what you could do with the help of God's Spirit.

Help the children act out their answers. Children might suggest saying, "I'm sorry" or giving a hug instead of a hit.

God's Spirit gives us strength to do things we might not be able to do on our own. The Holy Spirit might help us to be kind when we want to be angry. The Holy Spirit might help us to obey when we want to disobey. One of the things God's Spirit strengthens us to do is tell others about Jesus. Let's pretend that we've met someone who doesn't know Jesus. Let's act out some of the things we could say to this person.

Help the children act out their responses. Children might suggest saying, "Jesus loves you," or they might want to tell the person about Jesus' resurrection.

Say The Holy Spirit is a good friend to us. God's Holy Spirit lives inside us and gives us strength to do good things that please God. Let's say "thank you" to the Holy Spirit for giving us courage and strength.

Lead the children in saying, "Thank you."

healing people, they were very upset. They didn't know what to do, so they put Peter and John in prison.

The next day, Peter and John were brought before the chief priests and rulers. They began questioning Peter and John by asking, "By what power or what name did you do this miracle?"

Peter wasn't afraid to answer. Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit strengthened Peter and gave him the courage to talk to these people who had put him in prison. Peter told them, "It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed."

The rulers were amazed. Peter and John were ordinary men. They were fishermen. They did not have a lot of education or power. How could they say and do these great things? The rulers realized that Peter and John had been with Jesus and had great courage and strength in the things they said.

The rulers did not know what to do. However, Peter and John knew that they had God's Spirit to strengthen them no matter what happened.

Now take a few moments to write or draw a picture of how Peter and John were strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Give kids one or two minutes to write. Then have them share what they wrote with the entire group.



- Ask Why do you think the Holy Spirit strengthened Peter and John? (So they could stand up for God; because they needed courage to tell others about Jesus.)
 - Have you ever known someone who showed great courage and strength in a tough situation? What happened? (My friend showed courage when some kids were making fun of him at school for being a Christian; my parents showed courage when my family was having money problems.)
- Say Turn to a neighbor and discuss these questions:
 - Ask Has the Holy Spirit ever strengthened you? What happened? (I felt the Holy Spirit's strength when I told my friend about Jesus; I had strength to stand up for myself when someone told me that I can't read the Bible at school.)
 - Why do you think the Holy Spirit gives us strength? (So we can stand up for God; so we can worship God, even in hard times.)
- Say We may not find ourselves in a situation like that of Peter and John. But there are other situations for which God's Spirit can give us the strength we need to make it through tough times. Let's discover some situations for which God's Spirit strengthens us.

* Finding Strength

Say Let's play a game and talk about the different situations for which God's Spirit might give us strength. Everyone needs to stand in the middle of the room. If what I say is true, walk to the sign that says "true." If what I say is false, walk to the sign that says "false." Ready? Listen closely.

Read the following statements, and allow time between each one for kids to walk to the wall of their choice. After children are standing underneath the "true" sign or the "false" sign, ask volunteers to share why they chose their answer. After a few responses, ask everyone to return to the center; then read another statement.

Say God's Spirit will strengthen you to get even with a friend who did something to hurt you. Allow kids to walk to their answers. Ask volunteers to share why they chose their answer. Then have everyone return to the center of the room. Repeat the process for each of the following statements:

- God's Spirit will strengthen you to tell someone about Jesus.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you to pick up an elephant.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you to help someone who is very sick.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you to have patience when you're frustrated with a brother or sister instead of yelling in anger.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you so you can be honest and tell someone how bad his or her hair looks.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you so you will be able to pray for someone to know Jesus even if you have to pray for that person every day for a year.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you to do all the things you want to do.
- God's Spirit will strengthen you to do all the things God wants you to do.

God's Spirit strengthens us. But God's Spirit only gives us strength to do certain kinds of things.

Ask • In what kinds of situations can we count on God's Spirit to give us strength? (In situations that serve God; when we need God's spirit to strengthen us to serve God.)

Say Peter and John were given enough power to heal a crippled man. They were strengthened with enough courage to tell the rulers about Jesus. We can count on God's Spirit to strengthen us, too. But God does not necessarily give us superhuman strength. God's Spirit does strengthen us to do the things God wants us to do. God's Spirit strengthens us to do things that honor and glorify him.



The Offering

Say The offering time is a time to offer our gifts and ourselves to God. Today we want to make ourselves available to God. Peter and John were strengthened by the Holy Spirit because they were willing for God to use them to heal the crippled man. Today while you're waiting for the offering bowl to come to you, give God the gift of yourself. Tell God that you want the Holy Spirit to strengthen you. Tell God that you're available to do whatever he wants you to do.

Take the offering. Then give children a chance to share what they prayed about.

A Cord of Three Strands

Give each child yarn or cord you prepared before the worship session.

Say Ecclesiastes 4:12 says, "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." When some of you tested the craft sticks earlier, you learned that this is true. God's Spirit strengthens us; he lives right inside us and gives us strength every day.

> I've given each of you three pieces of cord. I want you to find a place in the room to sit all by yourself. Braid the cords together. As you braid the cords, think about how God gives you strength every day. Each time you wrap one of the cords, thank the Holy Spirit for one way he's helped you.

Give the children time to braid and pray. If some children in your group have never braided, quickly give them instructions. Pair preschoolers with older children, and have them pray together.

When the children are finished, have them hold up their braids while you pray.

Pray God, your Holy Spirit lives within us, giving us strength and courage every day. God, we want to please you in all we do. Help us to recognize your Spirit's presence in our lives, and help us to do things that please you through the strength of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Say Now let's offer God one last prayer, thanking him for the awesome power and the strength of the Holy Spirit.



Worship Leader Tip

Practice inflating and racing the Balloon Car Racer before the session. Stretching the balloon beforehand will make it easier to inflate during your session. Don't forget to use the stickers that came with the car to decorate it.

Warning

Children under 8 yrs. can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Adult supervision required. Keep uninflated balloons from children. Discard broken balloons at once. Balloons may contain latex.

Race Car Power

Find a large, flat area of the floor to use as a racetrack, and gather kids around it. You'll need the Balloon Car Racer from the KidsOwn Worship Kit. Make sure the balloon is attached and ready to inflate, but don't inflate it yet.

Say We all need God's Spirit to strengthen us. The Holy Spirit has amazing strength and power. Let's celebrate that power by racing our Balloon Car Racer.

The Balloon Car Racer is kind of like us. On its own, it really doesn't work to its fullest potential. But when you fill it with air, amazing things happen.

Pray Holy Spirit, thank you for your strength and power. You give us the strength to...

Then as you inflate the balloon, have the children call out tasks the Holy Spirit strengthens them to do.

Set the car on the racetrack, and release it. Have kids cheer for the Holy Spirit as the car races.

If you want, you can do this several times.

Pray God, we thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. We know that we can have the same courage, strength, and boldness that Peter and John had. Thank you for the presence of the Spirit in our lives. We praise you for this special gift. Thank you for taking care of us by giving us such a good and powerful helper.

End your worship time with this benediction from Ephesians 3:16.

Pray I pray that out of [God's] glorious riches, he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being. Amen.

