Jesus promises a Helper

Grades 1–5 • 60 minutes • John 14:15–27

What children are learning

Children will learn who Jesus promised to send to his disciples. The Holy Spirit is God. He helped the disciples remember Jesus' teaching, and we can ask him to help us follow it today.

Before class

For you. Find John 14:15–27 in your Bible before class. Keep a bookmark there for the reading. You'll also use John 14:26 for the memory verse.

Print before class. Print pages 5 and 7 for each child. Keep an extra copy of page 7 to demonstrate. Print one family page (page 6) per household.

For the table. A Bible, pencils and crayons. Give each child a strip of plain paper. Tear or cut the strips before class.

Words children may ask about. An advocate is someone who stands with you and helps you. Jesus uses this name for the Holy Spirit. Christians use the word Trinity for one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Teach with care. Simple language about one God in three persons can help explain the Spirit's full personhood. Feelings vary from day to day; God's faithfulness gives a steadier point of reference.

A note for the teacher. This outline is here to help you prepare and teach. As you teach, feel free to adjust the pace, change an activity, or spend more time on a child's question as the Holy Spirit leads you.

When the children arrive, begin on page 2. Teach pages 2–4 in order.

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0–5 min · Welcome the children

Begin. Ask, “Has a kind thing someone taught you come back to you right when you needed it? What might you remember when a new child walks in?”

5–10 min · Worship and opening prayer

Worship together. Sing a familiar song of praise. If you are leading without music, invite each child to finish “God, thank you for…” aloud or quietly.

Pray. God, thank you for bringing us together. Help us hear what you want to teach us today. Amen.

10–23 min · Open the Bible together

Lead into the reading. “Jesus knew his friends were troubled. Listen for the promise he made about who would come and what that Helper would do.” Read John 14:15–27.

Read aloud. Read John 14:15–27 aloud from your Bible. Pause briefly before you ask the first question.

Background for you. Jesus knew that he would soon leave his disciples. He told his friends he would ask the Father to give them another Helper, the Holy Spirit, who would stay with them.

Jesus said the Father would send the Spirit in his name. The Spirit would teach his friends and help them remember what Jesus had said. They would have help when they missed him and had work to do.

When a child remembers that Jesus taught us to love one another, they can ask the Spirit to help them welcome a new classmate. The bookmark will remind them of Jesus’ promise.

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23–31 min · Talk about what you heard

Ask. Who did Jesus say would help his disciples remember what he had taught them?

Listen for. The Holy Spirit, whom the Father would send in Jesus' name. The Spirit would teach them and remind them of Jesus' words.

Keep talking. Which of Jesus' teachings about loving people could you ask the Spirit to help you live out today?

Connect to Jesus. Jesus promised the Spirit to people who wondered what they would do when he was gone. His followers can still count on the Spirit's help.

31–47 min · Make a bookmark about Jesus' promise

Give out the materials. Give each child page 7. Read the boxes aloud together. Start with the one labeled "With us."

Try it together. Use the activity sheet's three headings as a guide to make a bookmark. Fold a paper strip in half to make a bookmark that slips over the top of a page. On the outside write "Jesus promised"; open it and write or dictate "The Holy Spirit helps us." Add a heart or an idea for welcoming someone. Tell a partner what the bookmark could remind you to pray.

For younger children. Show a child where it says "With us." Read it aloud and try that part together. They can point, say a few words, or ask you to write for them.

For older children. What is one of Jesus' teachings you would like help remembering during the school day?

Tidy up. Keep the pencils or crayons out for page 5. Ask children to set their finished work beside them.

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47–51 min · Give children a moment to respond

Offer the student page. Hand out page 5 and read the choices aloud. Each child can answer one. Take a spoken answer, or give them a quiet minute to draw or write.

51–55 min · Remember a verse

Read and echo. Read John 14:26 in your Bible. Invite everyone to echo one short phrase at a time. Ask which word or phrase they would like to remember.

55–60 min · Take it into the week

Ask. At lunch a newcomer sits down. What could you remember about Jesus, and what might you do next?

Pray together. Lead the children in a prayer about what they learned today.

Example prayer. Father, thank you for sending the Holy Spirit. Help us learn Jesus’ words and live in his love.

At the door. Send home each child’s work. Give one Family Connection page to each household.