

WEEK 3

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL



T
H
E

H
O
L
L
Y

S
P
I
R
I
T

M
A
K
E
S

U
S

B
R
A
V
E

ONE SMALL STEP



ONE SMALL STEP



TAKE A BIG STEP — THE HOLY SPIRIT MAKES US BRAVE.

ACTS 6, 7:54–59; ACTS 2:1–21

Ground control to space explorers! Rocket boosters are the powerful parts our spaceships need to blast off into outer space. This week we will talk about what it means for us to take a big step and allow the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us and make us brave. Initiating launch sequence. 3 . . . 2 . . . 1! . . . lift off!

This is another story about the early days of when the church was growing (Acts 6 and 7:54–59). Remember, Jesus had left a big job for his friends — to tell everyone on the planet about him! So they did that. As the number of people who decided to follow Jesus kept growing, the apostles, who were the main leaders of this new church, decided they needed more help. So they selected seven people, who were known to be filled with the Spirit and wisdom, to take care of the day-to-day responsibilities of taking care of members of the church. This is where Stephen came in — and Stephen did his job really well.

I guess that didn't sit right with some of the people — people who did not follow Jesus — as Stephen's popularity rose. But they couldn't argue with his teaching, which came from God. So what did they do? They manufactured some lies about Stephen and made him out to be a troublemaker. So he was brought in before the Sanhedrin, which was kind of like a court made up of religious leaders.

And Stephen gave his defense. He told them all about the history of God's people. He talked about how God had been there for them through it all but they in turn rejected the Messiah — Jesus, the Savior — when he was here on Earth. He called them out on all the ways they were disobeying God, even right then. That was a risky move on Stephen's part because his life was on the line. The Sanhedrin had the power to release him or execute him, but he chose to speak the truth no matter the consequences. Sadly, the truth did not register with his listeners.

Because he was filled with the Holy Spirit, he wasn't afraid of public opinion or even death. Even up until the moment he died, he remained brave, and the last thing he did before he died was to pray for the people who were throwing stones at him. What Stephen did was more than one small step. He took a giant leap and risked it all for God. And he was only able to do that because the Holy Spirit was with him.

Acts 2:1–21 tells us the story of when the Holy Spirit first came to be with the disciples. Jesus had told his friends to wait for the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit would give them the power to do God's work. So this day of Pentecost was when the Holy Spirit came into the lives of the followers of Jesus.

When the people gathered were able to speak all these different languages, it was a display of the kind of amazing things they could do with the help of the Holy Spirit. Not just that, the Holy Spirit gave them the boldness to go into the world, like Jesus had told them to do. The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to continue to share the good news, start churches, care for their communities, and raise up new leaders who loved God — like Stephen.

Here we are, more than two thousand years later, still being empowered by the same Holy Spirit! You can take a big step — the Holy Spirit makes us brave.



SCRIPTURE/APPLICATION

- What qualities did the chosen seven, including Stephen, have?
- Why was Stephen brought before the Sanhedrin?
- What did Stephen pray while the people were throwing stones at him?
- Read Acts 2:2–4
 - What happened when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit?
- What does being brave look and feel like to you?
- What can you ask the Holy Spirit to help you be brave with?
- How can you help someone take their big step in allowing the Holy Spirit to make them brave for Jesus?



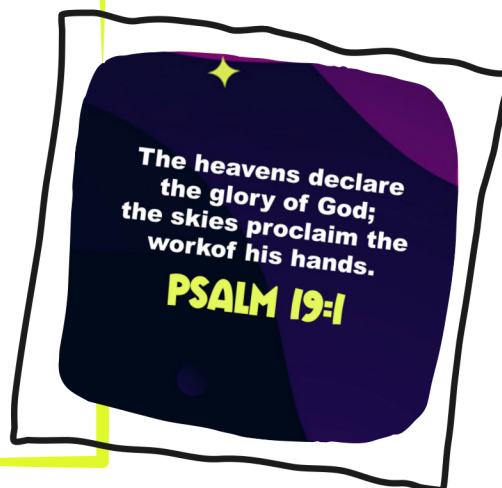
WORSHIP

“World Outside Your Window”

Hillsong Young and Free

“The Heavens Declare”

Lifeway Kids Worship



ELEMENTARY

Use the provided printable: On the astronaut, draw your own face. On each of the space images, write or draw one way you can be brave, or how you can spread out the words of the Big Idea. Cut these pieces out, punch a hole at the top, and thread some string through it. Attach all the strings to a wire hanger (secure it on the hanger with tape) and hang them at different lengths.

We have been taking a lot of steps toward growing in our relationship with God by following Jesus. Every time you see this hanging in your room somewhere, remind yourself to now take a big step — the Holy Spirit makes us brave!

Star stickers could be used to attach to their strings (two stickers back-to-back) as a finishing touch to their space mobile.



PRESCHOOL

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit appeared to the disciple like wind and fire. Use the flame printable to place under a clear 6" plastic plate (make sure it's soft plastic). Using permanent markers to trace the flame image onto their plates.

Afterward, provide assorted tissue paper squares for them to glue onto their plate, suggesting they use red, yellow, and orange for the flame part and different colors for everywhere else. Punch a hole at the top of the plate and loop some yarn through it to create a suncatcher. Scan QR code for a worked example.



