

CONCEPTS that will be covered in the lesson

- Read the story of Pentecost
- Focus on the difficulty of language (again) and how God helps us with this difficulty
- Highlight the similarities and differences between Pentecost and Tower of Babel stories

Materials needed:

1. Movie clip (available on rfour.org) from *Gridiron Gang*
2. Electronics that show the video clip
3. Words for Mad Gab activity (see list at end of lesson)

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

- One of the things we do every class is ask and answer the opening question at the beginning of class – because it helps us 1. Learn more about each other and 2. Helps “warm us up” for some of the ideas in the upcoming lesson. So we’re going to do that now.
- So here’s the opening question for today’s class. I [the teacher] will ask the question and then to give you some time to think of an answer, I will answer first.
- Once I answer the question, we’ll go around the circle and each of us will answer.
- When it’s your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- **Here’s this week’s question:** What is something you like to do with a group of people?

Transition to Activity

- Our last two classes have been about language and today’s class will be about that too
- In the first class, we read and discussed how God created using language
- In the second class, we read and discussed the story of Babel, a story where humans attempt create things without inviting God into their communication causing the building project to fall apart.
- In today’s story, we’re going to jump into the New Testament and read a story that’s probably pretty familiar to us: Pentecost.
- In so doing, we’ll also be talking a little bit more about ... talking.
- To help us get warmed up for the story, though, let’s do the following activity of MadGab

EXPLAIN Activity

- The way Madgab works is that a number of words are put together that, at first, do not make sense when said outloud.
- But, if said fast enough or slow enough, they will form a phrase that might sound like something else, something that makes sense.
- For example, consider the words of “Dear Scott.”
- The person reading the phrase will say it slow, will say it fast, will say it a lot.
- But, as the listener, you might eventually hear the phrase: “Dearest God.”
- We will split into two teams.
- The team that’s “up” will get 1 minute to guess the phrase.
- If you don’t guess it correctly within the minute, then the other team gets 15 seconds to correctly guess the phrase and then “steal” the point.
- Every correct answer is worth 1 point.
- Teams will take turns.
- One of the teachers will be the all-time reader.
- The first set of phrases and names are from the Bible and then depending on the time, we might do some different phrases as well.
- Any questions?

ASK / TRANSITION to Scripture passage

- Were you able to guess any phrases that you had not heard before?
- Were the phrases you had heard before easier to guess than the ones you hadn’t heard before?
- This game is the reverse of what usually happens in life, where we say something clearly, but someone hears it incorrectly.
- Or, take for example what autocorrect does on our phones – it thinks it knows what we’re saying and adds or changes words that we’ve said/typed and then gets it wrong in a funny way.
- In other words, communication can be difficult.
- But in today’s story, we see just the opposite happen.
- We see communication get easier (at least for some of the people for some of the time)
- Let’s see what happens in it

READ Acts 1:12-14, 2:1-13, 38-47 (recommendation: Have class read it aloud; one person per verse)

1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. 13When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14All these were constantly devoting themselves

to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

2:1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. 4All of them were

filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. 6And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

7Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?

9Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." 12All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" 13But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

38Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins

may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." 40And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. 44All who believed were together and had all things in common; 45they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, 47praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

ASK

- In verse 1:14, what are the disciples doing? (are together in a room, devoting themselves to prayer)
- In verse 2:1, are the disciples still together? (yes)
- In verse 2:4, what are the disciples filled with? (the Holy Spirit)
- And what does the Holy Spirit give the disciples the ability to do? (speak in other languages)
- Verse 2:6 – what gathers around the disciples after they've received the Holy Spirit? (quite the crowd)
- Verse 2:8 – why are the people in the crowd amazed and astonished? (because they can understand what is being said in their own native language)
- Verse 2:9-11 – Are there a lot of different languages represented in the crowd? (yes)
- Verse 41 – How many people listen to Peter and decide to sign-up and learn from him and the other disciples? (3000)
- Verse 42 – 47 – after the event of Pentecost, does it sound like the disciples and the new people who had signed up were still getting along, communicating, and staying together? (sounds like, yes)

TELL

- First thing to remember about this story is that it, Pentecost, is considered the birth of the church.
- It highlights the graduation of the disciples to apostles, focuses on the amazing transformation that takes place for Peter, and speaks to the continuation of Jesus' resurrection.
- In other words, there is a lot going on in the story!

- But for today, we're going to look at how language brings people together and how it is a story that is directly opposite of the Tower of Babel.
- At the start of the Tower of Babel story, we saw how the people could all speak the same language
- Their goal was to build a city and tower that would make a name for themselves and keep them from being scattered.
- The result, though, was that the tower wasn't finished and they all ended up speaking different languages and then went in different directions.
- When we talked about that story last week, one of the things we discussed was how the people hadn't invited God into their planning and how their communication didn't go well because they hadn't invited God into it.
- In today's story, we see the result of the Tower of Babel story being undone.
- We see the solution and reversal to the Tower of Babel story
- Pentecost starts a small group of people who gathered together to invite God into their lives.
- And then, we see that small group speak to a much larger group of people – all of whom are speaking different languages.
- But as the small group of people speak with God's help, the larger group understands them.
- And by the end of the story, at least some of the people in that larger group decide they want to stay gathered with the disciples.
- Pentecost story is the opposite of the Tower of Babel story, but it has the outcome (made a name for themselves and kept the people from being scattered) the people in the Tower of Babel wanted, but didn't get.

TRANSITION TO MOVIE CLIP

- In the first class of this session, we talked about how God created with words and then gave words to us, humans.
- In the second class, we read a story of how people were scattered when they tried to use words without inviting God into their words
- In today's class, we see how inviting God into their lives helped the disciples better communicate with each other and others.
- In our movie clip from The Gridiron Gang, we're going to see something similar happen.
- Two coaches who coach a team of high school students who have troubled pasts are trying to find other high schools to play against.
- It doesn't go so well, until...
- Let's see what happens

WATCH MOVIE CLIP

ASK

- What was the response of the first three football coaches that the main two coaches talked with? (No, no, and no)
- Was "no" the initial answer of the fourth coach as well? (yes)
- What changed the fourth coach's mind? (simple answer: Because Jesus said so! Complex answer: both coaches spoke a common language, the language of God as the ultimate authority)

TELL

- I like this clip because, once God is introduced, then the coaches are able to “speak each other’s language” so to speak.
- And that language, with God invited into it, changes the one coach’s mind.
- It is that possible outcome that I hope you can see when we put together all three of the stories from this session and look at them together
- We see that God gave us the same tool that God used to create with.
- We then see that using words without God makes things difficult. Words are hard.
- But, we also see that when we seek God first, when we pay attention to God, then we will be better at using language.
- We get better at naming things.
- We get better at speaking to others.
- And, because we are asking for God’s help, better understanding can happen between you and others.
- Language isn't easy to master, and in order to use it best, and avoid the pitfalls of using it incorrectly, consider asking God for help, even with our everyday conversations.

CLOSING PRAYER

See next page for Mad Gab words

Say Quickly

That Went Eighth Herds Some
Thief Amen
Age Are Of Fun Knee
Prints Up Ease
Hole Leap Lace
Falls Stock Trends
Chair Up Him
The Horn Sin Yours Hides
Thief Urge Gin Merry
Thick Old Dunk Halves
Mice Al Vase Shuns Clothes Sat Tanned
Sink Prays Says Stew Harking
Tee Antique Riced
Cohen Duel Ike Wise
My Kill Land Is Sane Jills
Yore In Hair It Hence
Thick Crews Of Fiction
Jay Cope End Die Sick
Cods Egret Twist Dumb
Fray Grunt Doff Ring
Key Pay Tie Train Honest Hung
Thief Filet Ming Push
Spear Achoo Help Less Sings
Fair Rocking Guff He Chipped
Sack Eye Yes Tacks Call Hector
Caw Dove Fish Rail
Thief Eighth Full Whole He Won
Deal Avarice Firm Eve Hill
Knot Can Thud Orville Bee Oh Pinned
Ace Tone Pill Oh

Should (Sort of) Sound Like

The Twenty Third Psalm
The Famine
A Jar of Honey
Prince of Peace
Holy Place
False Doctrines
Cherubim
Thorns in your sides
The Virgin mary
The Golden Calves
My salvation is close at hand
Sing praises to our King
The antichrist
Go and do likewise
Michael and his angels
Your inheritance
The crucifixion
Jacob and Isaac
God's secret Wisdom
Fragrant offering
keep a tight reign on his tongue
the flaming bush
Spiritual blessings
Pharaoh, King of Egypt
Zacchaeus Tax Collector
God of Israel
The faithful holy one
Deliver us from evil
Knock and the door will be opened
A stone pillow

Mad Gab list (random)

Essay Madder Rough Act
Prey Tee Womb Anne
Dutch Egg Cousin Theme Ale
Knee Go She Ate
Tube Row Tacked Ant Surf
Toe Tall Gun Few Shun
Peal Oaf Height
Eighty Part Mints Tore

as a matter of fact
pretty woman
the check is in the mail
negotiate
to protect and serve
total confusion
pillow fight
a department store