

**Background Scripture:** Acts 2:32-33, 37-47

**Print Passage:** Acts 2:32-33, 37-47

# Celebrate in Unity



## WAKE UP!

### MRS. PORTER IS A POPULAR ENGLISH TEACHER AT WESLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL.

She has worked at Wesley for thirty years. Mrs. Porter loves the community where she lives and works. Although she has received numerous invitations from her children to move to another part of the city, Mrs. Porter cannot imagine leaving her community or school that she has grown to love so much.

One night while cooking dinner, Mrs. Porter fell asleep. She awoke to the sound of crackling flames. Mrs. Porter's kitchen was on fire! She was able to escape quickly without injury and, fortunately, a neighbor saw the flames and called the fire department, and local firefighters were en route to her house. The firefighters were able to extinguish the blaze with ease; however, Mrs. Porter's kitchen and living room were severely damaged. Renovations to her home would have to be completed before she could live there again. Mrs. Porter was blessed to be able to live with one of her children, but her desire was to be able to be back in her own home as soon as possible.

When students at Mrs. Porter's school learned of the fire, they sprang into action to help her. Tiara asked her father, who is a contractor and builds houses, to see if his construction company could help in any way. Tiara's father was able to get three of his workers to volunteer time to repair Mrs. Porter's house. The students organized a fund-raiser for Mrs. Porter and with the community's help, they raised enough money to replace all of Mrs. Porter's kitchen appliances and living room furniture. After only three weeks, Mrs. Porter's house was fully restored. When Mrs. Porter saw her beautiful house, she could not hold back the tears. Mrs. Porter realized that God used people from her community and school to bless her, and she was grateful.



## WORD UP

### Acts 2:32-33, 37-47

**32** God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. **33** Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

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**37** When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" **38** Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

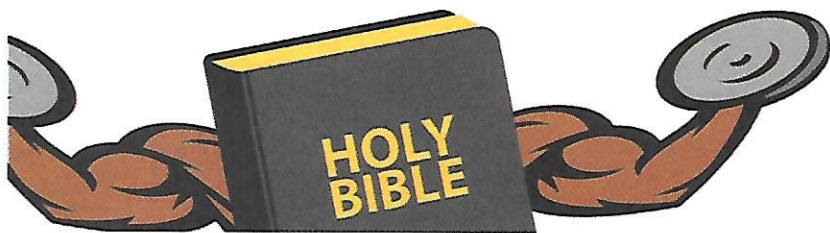
**40** With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." **41** Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. **42** They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



### KEY VERSE:

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





# WORK OUT

Today's lesson highlights the power that believers have when everyone comes together on one accord for a common goal. Peter emphasized that Jesus was seated on the right hand of God in heaven. Jesus finished His work of dying for the sins of humanity, and now He was counting on believers to do their part—live in a way that brings glory to God and win souls for the kingdom. Peter preached a sermon to the people, telling them that it was time for them to stop living according to their own selfish desires. The people needed to abandon their old ways of living—repenting of their sins and being baptized—and receive the Holy Spirit to align their lives to God's standard of holiness. In response to Peter's teachings, the people devoted themselves to fellowship and learning with other believers, and they grew in community and understanding of how they were to conduct themselves as believers in Jesus Christ.

An important early step for the people was to come together for the common good of fellow believers. They sold earthly possessions in a spirit of generosity and gave to other believers so that no one was in need. The believers came together often and shared everything they had with each other. The believers' unselfishness and willingness to love and support each other gained the favor and approval of all the people. As a result of their faithfulness and Gospel preaching, God added new believers to their group daily.

## INSIDE OUT



Peter and the apostles ensured that the people understood their responsibilities as believers. They were now a community—a family—and their newfound faith and changed hearts resulted in their caring for others through sacrificial living and giving. Learning how to live according to God's standards would be much easier if they did it together instead of trying to figure everything out on their own. The apostles' advice is good for believers today. Believers should look for opportunities to fellowship with and support each other daily. How do you show support to other believers in your community?

## THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Sometimes, believers do not realize the strength they can gain from other believers. God never intended for His people to walk the Christian journey alone. God knows that living a Christ-centered life is not easy. It takes devotion to God and determination to make daily choices that honor God and uphold His standards of living. What can you do to form positive relationships with other believers? Being able to connect with other believers who have the same goal of pleasing God is encouraging and gives people the confidence that they can live for Jesus successfully.



When Peter spoke to the people about their sins and Jesus' sacrifice, their hearts were convicted and they realized that they had to confess their wrongdoing. The people received Peter's message and showed evidence of their changed hearts through their love, support, and sharing their possessions with each other. Pray and ask God to show you things you can do to encourage youth to live for Jesus.





## STEPPING OUT!

This week, you are challenged to evaluate how you share your time, talents, and possessions with others. Write down things that you do specifically for others. Review your list and then list ten ways in which you will use your time, talents, and possessions to bless someone else. Invite a friend to make suggestions of things you can do to bring joy, hope, and encouragement to others.

## Media Mission



The poetic works of Maya Angelou are known throughout the world. One of her most adored poems is entitled "The Black Family Pledge." In this poem, Maya discusses the importance of having tight family bonds. Visit <https://genius.com/Maya-angelou-the-black-family-pledge-annotated> to view the poem. Use this poem as inspiration to create your own poem about Christian family togetherness.



Fill in the words to complete the Key Verse from today's Scripture passage. To increase the challenge of this activity, try to fill in the blanks without looking back at the Key Verse. After you fill in the blanks, take the challenge a step further and see if you can recite the Key Verse from memory.

They \_\_\_\_\_  
to the \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_, to the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
and to \_\_\_\_\_.