



# God's Love Compels

**Bible Passage:** Acts 2:40–47; 4:32–37; 6:1–7

(The First Church Shares)

## REMEMBER VERSE

He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever—holy and awesome is his name.

Psalm 111:9

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## Traditions and Remember Verse

He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever—holy and awesome is his name. Psalm 111:9

## Connect

When was a time you wanted to do something for someone you care about?

## The Big God Story

**Bible Passage:** Acts 2:40–47; 4:32–37; 6:1–7

**Ponder Point:** God's Love Compels

## SUPPLIES

- Bibles

## RELATE

The Day of Pentecost was the beginning of an amazing time for Jesus' followers. That day, the Holy Spirit baptized one hundred and twenty of Jesus' friends who were in the Upper Room. After Peter preached, there were three thousand people who became Jesus' friends.

All of the people who became Jesus' friends on the day of Pentecost were part of the very first church ever. As members of that first church, they let God's love compel them to do great things. That's our Ponder Point for today, "God's love compels". *Compels* is a word that means you have a strong desire or really want to do something. For example, our hunger compels us to eat. Our thirst compels us to drink.

So, what did God's love compel the people in the first church to do? We're going to listen to our story to learn what God's love compelled those people to do. We want to



remember those things, because we want God's love to compel us to do those same things.

**First, God's love compels us to reach out, to be welcoming. On the day of Pentecost, Peter invited all the people in the crowd to join him in loving and following Jesus. Read or let a volunteer read Acts 2:41. Three thousand people joined the church that day. That's twenty-five new people for every one of Jesus' friends in the Upper Room. That's a lot of new people! But they didn't stop reaching out that day. Read aloud Acts 2:47b. Every day God's love compelled them to reach out to new people who also became a part of the first church.**

**God's love compels us to reach out. God's love also compels us to reach up to Him. Read aloud Acts 2:42: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." The people in the first church spent a lot of time learning about Jesus from the apostles. Together they prayed and worshipped God.**

**So, God's love compels us to reach out to others. God's love compels us to reach up to Him. And God's love compels us to reach across to each other. love helps us get along well with each other. God's love in the first church was so strong that the Bible describes their love as making them "one in heart and mind" (Acts 4:32).**

**There are two more things God's love compelled the first church to do. One of them is that God's love compelled them to give of what they had. Some of the people in the first church even sold their houses and lands so they could give the money to help other believers who needed help. Read aloud Acts 4:34–35. Only God's love can compel someone to sell their own stuff to help other people. But that is what God's love compelled a man named Barnabas to do. Read aloud Acts 4:36–37.**

**The last thing we're going to talk about is God's love compels us to reach agreement. Even though the people in the first church were filled with God's love and tried to love each other as God wanted them to, they were not perfect. They made mistakes. And this mistake caused one group of people to feel left out.**

**The church was trying to take care of poor widows by feeding them. But some of the widows were not getting the food they needed. Let's see how the people in the first church solved the problem. Read aloud with the kids Acts 6:2–5a.**

**What did they do? Allow responses. They chose seven men to make sure that *all* the widows were fed. God's love compelled the people in the first church to solve their problem and reach an agreement that worked for everyone. God's love compels many good things.**

**God's love compels us to reach out.**

**God's love compels us to reach up to Him.**

**God's love compels us to reach across to each other.**

**God's love compels us to give to others in need.**

**God's love compels us to reach agreement.**

**Jesus' friends in the first church were obeying Jesus when they let God's love compel them. Before Jesus died, He gave His friends a new command. Jesus said, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34). Then Jesus explained what would happen when His friends showed God's love to others. (John 13:35) "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."**

**We can be like Jesus' friends in the first church. We can let God's love compel us to love others by reaching out, reaching up, reaching across, reaching in, and reaching agreement. If we ask God to fill us with His love, God can help us live a life compelled by His love as we show that love to others.**

## Prayer Place: Salvation Invitation

Today might be the day your child feels compelled by God's love to accept salvation. Be prepared to talk to your child who shows an interest in trusting Jesus as their Savior and pray with them!

## Reflect: God's Love Compels

Encourage kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

### Questions for Older Kids

- **What does *compel* mean?** *(A strong wish or desire to do something.)*
- **How did God's love compel the people in the first church to act?** Acts 2:42–47 *(All the believers/ friends of Jesus)*
- **Who felt compelled by God to sell land and give the money to help God's people?** Acts 4:36 *(Joseph the Apostle; also nicknamed Barnabus)*
- **What problem in the first church needed solving?** Acts 6:1 *(People were getting upset that the Hebrew speaking widows were not getting their daily allotments of food)*
- **How did God's people solve the problem?** Acts 6:2–6 *(They selected 7 men to solve these issues so that the Apostles could devote themselves to teaching God's Word.)*
- **What happened because God's people were compelled to solve the problem of the poor widows?** Acts 6:7 *(God's message continued to spread and more people became believers, even some Jewish priests were converted!)*
- **What will happen if we let God's love compel us?** John 13:35 *(It will show the world that we are followers of Jesus!)*

Review the story with your children. Use the image on the following page to review the story in creative and unique ways that you know your child will enjoy. Use a Bible to read this story straight from God's Word as you review it. Encourage your reading-age children to practice using their own Bibles!



## WHEN I READ THE BIBLE, I CAN...



## BLESS// 5 min.

### RELATE

Open a Bible and read the following from John 13:34–35:

**[Jesus said], “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”**

Offer the following blessing: **May you feel God’s love for you and may the Holy Spirit strengthen you to show His love to others this week.**