



## Pentecost

### MEETING AIM

To explore the coming of the Holy Spirit.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Acts 2:1-41

### BACKGROUND

The coming of the Holy Spirit was revolutionary for Jesus' followers. They went from being locked in a room to preaching on the streets. For us, too, the Holy Spirit can be revolutionary – in evangelism, in following Jesus, in knowing God's comfort and care...in all areas of our life! This Pentecost, help your congregation see the impact of the Spirit in their lives.

### SIGNING IN

5 MINS

As people join your service, welcome them and ask them about their week.

### WELCOME

5 MINS

#### OPTION ONE: Flame praise

**You will need:** flames cut out of red, orange and yellow paper; pens; pin boards (or similar); pins or Blu Tack

Share out the flame shapes and pens. Encourage everyone to write down on their flame something that God has done for them. This could be something practical or more general (and eternal). Once done, they should stick the flame on a board. People can do more than one flame if they wish.

If you're online, encourage people to place their flames in camera shot.

Encourage the congregation to share what they have written with the others. Invite them to pray for the things written on the flames, thanking God for them.

#### OPTION TWO: Who's the Holy Spirit?

**You will need:** copies of John 14:15-17,25-26 and 16:8-15 printed on paper or card; highlighter pens

Give out copies of the Bible passages and some pens (or put the passages on-screen). Ask people to work in small groups (households if necessary) and highlight what Jesus said the Holy Spirit

would do and be for his friends. Link up those on their own with a messaging app. Encourage the groups to think about what the Holy Spirit does for them today. If you have lots of people who don't have a church background, make sure you include one or two longer-term members of your church in each group to help the conversation along.

Once everyone has finished, invite volunteers to the front to share what their group discovered.

### BIBLE STORY

10 MINS

**You will need:** blowing wind sound effect (and the means to play it); flames cut out of red, orange and yellow paper; volunteer to be Peter

Before the session, ask a volunteer to be Peter and to learn Peter's speech (see the script below). Make sure everyone in the congregation has a paper flame. Tell this story:

It was the day of Pentecost, an annual harvest festival that took place 50 days after Passover. All of Jesus' friends were gathered together in one room – there were about 120 of them. The friends of Jesus were still trying to come to terms with what was happening. Seven weeks before, Jesus had been put to death by the authorities, but come alive again three days later. He'd appeared to them again and again for 40 days and then, ten days before, he had been taken up to heaven. It was like a whirlwind!

And now, things were not going to slow down. Jesus' friends were sitting together when they heard a sound like a hurricane. *Play your wind sound effect.* They looked up and saw what looked like tongues of fire swirling around them. The fire then rested on each of their heads. Ask the congregation to put their paper flames on their heads.

Suddenly, they were able to speak in different languages. *Ask the congregation to shout out any words they know in different languages.* They all burst out into the street and a crowd gathered around. People from different countries could understand what they were saying. Everyone was amazed! But one or two people were suspicious. They thought Jesus' friends were drunk.

Peter spoke to the crowd. *'Peter' stands at the front (or with his screen highlighted) and delivers his speech.*

"Listen to me! The prophets told us this day would come, that God's Holy Spirit would be given to everyone. You had Jesus of Nazareth killed, but God raised him back to life again! Jesus could not be held by death! God has made him Lord! Repent and be baptised, 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."

When he finished speaking, the crowd couldn't stop themselves. *Encourage the congregation to stand and cheer.* By the end of day, 3,000 people had been baptised and joined the group of Jesus' friends. What a day!

### SMALL GROUPS

10 MINS

If your software allows, send everyone off into different breakout rooms made up of a few households. Put these questions into each group's chat box:

- What do you think Mary said to the disciples when she went back?
- What would you say to Jesus if you were Mary?
- What do you think is important about this story?
- What difference does this story make to you?

Give the groups time to chat about these questions, referring to the Bible passage if they need to.

If you can't put people into breakout rooms, ask individual households to discuss them, and link up those who live on their own using another messaging or video-calling app.

### REVIEW

5 MINS

Get some feedback from 'Small groups', encouraging everyone to take part who wants to.

**RESPONSE ACTIVITIES**

10 MINS

Invite people to do one of these activities in breakout rooms to respond:

**OPTION ONE: Clean hands**

**You will need:** bowls of warm water and paper towels or hand sanitiser (depending on the restrictions in your area)

Invite the congregation to visit one of the water stations and wash their hands as a sign that they want to stay committed to following Jesus. Alternatively, use hand sanitiser.

As they are cleaning their hands, encourage everyone to say sorry to God for the following their own way and thank God for his forgiveness and ask the Holy Spirit to be with them, guiding them and helping them to be more like Jesus.

**OPTION TWO: Art response**

**You will need:** art materials

Ask the group to use create a picture or collage about what God is saying to them. Encourage them to chat with God as they create.

**OPTION THREE: Discussion**

Ask a couple of people to lead a discussion about the story today and people's response to it. You could review the questions from 'Small groups' as well as any questions that the people in the group may have.

**CLOSING**

5 MINS

Bring everyone back together and ask if anyone would like to share anything from the response time. Thank everyone for taking part and say an appropriate blessing to close the service.

**ALEX TAYLOR**

is resources editor for *Premier Youth and Children's Work*.



Kofi had been in charge of St Guthlac's youth football team for two years. He'd been asked to take over by the vicar, who saw leadership potential in Kofi that would benefit from the investment the church could offer.

"I'm not sure I can," Kofi had said, when Jenny, the vicar, asked him.

"Don't worry, you've got the football skills, you've got the patience and you've got the loud voice," Jenny had replied. "And if you want to start taking any coaching qualifications, we can help you out with that."

Kofi had paused to think, and then said: "OK, you're on. Let's do it."

Two years later, Kofi had already taken his first coaching qualification and was shin-pad deep in studying for the FA's Level 2. There was an important local cup game coming up against Manchesterford Youth and that evening, Kofi was going to take the team through their final preparations before the big clash.

He was setting out the cones for the warm-up exercises when a group of players came up to him. They were looking a bit shifty.

"Alright, lads. Ready to go?" Kofi asked.

Some of them looked at their boots, there was some muttering and then one of the players, Alfie, was pushed forward by a couple of the others.

"Well..." started Alfie. "Er, it's just that some of the team were thinking..."

"Yep? What about?" Kofi said.

"Um, it's just...well...the other teams in the league..."

"Spit it out, Alfie," Kofi said, "we've got a lot to get through tonight."

"Well, the other teams in the league..."

Suddenly, one of the other players, Ethan, blurted out: "We

want a proper coach, like the other teams have. My dad says that we should have someone who knows what they're doing."

There was silence. Kofi didn't know what to say. The team shuffled about awkwardly – when they'd discussed what they were going to say, they'd agreed not to mention that many of their parents didn't like the fact that Kofi was so young. Ethan and his big mouth had ruined that idea.

Eventually, Kofi asked: "Do you all think this?"

There was some mumbling and a few nodding heads.

"Well," Kofi sighed. "I'd better talk to the vicar."

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chat about the story, what everyone liked and didn't like. You could use some of these questions in your discussion:

- What do you think of the actions of the team and their parents?
- Were they right to demand the same kind of coach as the other teams in the youth league? Why? Why not?
- Have you ever been rejected like Kofi? How did it feel?
- What should Rev Jenny do?

This story is based on 1 Samuel 8. If you'd like to add a more explicit faith element to your discussion, then read this passage together. Think about the similarities and differences between the Bible story and this one. Encourage your family or your group to think about this Bible story in a new way.

## ALEX TAYLOR

is resources editor for *Premier Youth and Children's Work*.

## The first kings of Israel

This month in Together, we're exploring some of the events around the first kings of Israel – Saul and David. Use these craft ideas as part of a Together session or craft event. You could pass them onto the parents and carers you work with for them to use at home. If resources are an issue for some families, consider creating packs and delivering them to families.

### TOGETHER SESSION ONE

#### Kingly crowns



**You will need:** card; paper; Post-it notes; feathers; pipe cleaners; sequins; lolly sticks; straws; foil; beads; string; ribbon; sticky tape; glue; scissors

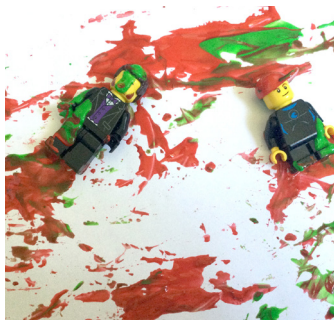
There is a real divide in this story between the king the people are asking for and what

Samuel thinks that they need. This craft is a way into opening up conversation about the role of a king and differing opinions about what a king would be like.

Talk about the request that the people bring to Samuel about a king. Why did they want one? What did they expect their king to do or be like? What did Samuel think the king would be like? Encourage children to use any of the materials they want to make a crown for the kind of king they would want to see. What kind of person would they be looking for? Why have they chosen the materials they have? What do they think of what Samuel says?.

### TOGETHER SESSION TWO

#### Friction figures painting



**You will need:** Lego or Playmobil figures; a deep sided tray or box; paper; paint

This craft tries to reflect the friction between David and Saul and the fact that their relationship is very unsettled and often violent. A chaotic picture is made by the movement of the figures in the paint.

Put a piece of paper into the tray. Choose a colour of paint to represent David and another colour to represent Saul. Put a few blobs of each paint onto the paper. Choose figures to represent the two men and put them on top of the paper. Start to shake and move the tray and watch as the movement causes the figures to spread the paint across the paper. Talk about the unsettled nature of their relationship and what kind of picture has been created by the shaking around of the figures.

### TOGETHER SESSION THREE

#### Friendship square



**You will need:** scissors; glue; paper; instruction video

(visit: <https://bit.ly/3dQBTRn>)

Jonathan sticks by his friend in a very dangerous situation and his father, Saul, can't stop his loyalty to David. This craft shows the strength of the friendship between David and Jonathan by turning two pieces into one piece.

### TOGETHER SESSION FOUR

#### David's sling shot



**You will need:** pompoms; a thick, long elastic band; a pencil or pen; card; scissors; strong sticky tape or packing tape; hole punch

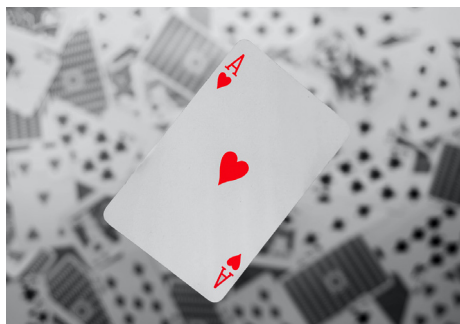
With a simple sling shot and some bravery, David manages to kill the giant who has made other men run away in fear. This craft uses simple household

resources to make something surprisingly powerful.

Cut a 15cm by 15cm piece of thick card and roll it up thinly. Secure with tape to make a strong 'handle'. About 2cm from the top of the roll, push a pen or pencil through so that you have made a 't' shape. Secure the pen with tape. Cut another piece of card 10cm by 5cm. Lay it in a landscape orientation and punch a hole at either end. Cut the elastic band into two equal pieces. Tie one end of each piece of elastic band to the pen and one to the smaller piece of card (see photo). This is your sling shot. Hold the long handle and lay a missile such as a pom-pom on the smaller piece of card. Pull the card back and let the missile fly!

#### MINA MUNNS

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## Family card games

While May and June bring the promise of more freedom and a return to getting together inside with people who are not in your household, including church groups, families might still be struggling to fill time. So here are some games you can pass on to the families in your church and community. And if you keep them to hand yourself, they're ideal for playing in children's or youth groups when we can be face-to-face and all touch the same playing cards!

You will, unsurprisingly, need a pack of cards for each of these games.

### 10S

A solo game, the idea of which is to spot when three cards make up a multiple of ten (ace is one, picture cards are ten). For example, a seven, a two and an ace make ten; a three, an eight and a nine make 20; three picture cards make 30.

Deal out seven cards face up in front of you. Deal out another card on top of each of these seven, leaving the values of the base cards visible at the top. Do this once more, so that you have seven columns of three cards.

Start by seeing if the three cards in any of the columns make up a multiple of ten. Remove those cards and put them at the base of your deck. Add another card to each column and check for more multiples of ten. These can now be made up of the three cards at the bottom of a column, the three cards at the top or a mixture (eg one from the top and two from the bottom, or vice versa). They have to be a run of three, you can't take cards from the middle of a column. Any multiples of ten are removed and placed at the bottom of the deck.

Keep adding new cards and removing multiples of ten. If you manage to clear a whole column, you leave it blank, and don't deal any more cards to that column. The aim is to clear all the columns. It's possible, but very rare. It is, however, very addictive and should keep children occupied for hours!

### 31

Shuffle the cards and deal three to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down on the table, and turn over the top card. The aim of this game is to get a total of 31 from the three cards in your hand (an ace is worth eleven, a picture card ten).

The player to the left of the dealer goes first. They can either take the face-up card, or the top card on the face-down pile. If they think this card will improve their total, then they keep this card, and discard another. And so play continues. When a player gets 31, or as close to it as they think will get, they knock on the table. All the other players have one more turn in which to improve their total. All the players place their cards on the table, and the lowest score loses. If two players tie for the lowest score, they both lose. Once a player has lost four times, they are out. The last player standing is the winner.

You don't have to get 31 to knock; a score in the mid-20s is likely to be enough to avoid losing, particularly early in the round.

### SURPRISE SKETCH

A game for two players, the aim of which is to win the whole deck. Each player has a stack of 26 cards face down in front of them. Both players turn the top card over at the same time. The player with the card of the higher value wins the two cards and puts them at the bottom of their deck.

If the cards are the same, they remain on the table, and both players take the next two cards from their deck, one face down, the other face up. The player with the higher of the new face-up cards takes all six cards on the table. If the two new face-up cards are the same, play again until one player wins all the cards in play.

Continue until one player has the whole deck or until you realise that war is futile.

### BARTLETT

This game is for four players, playing in two pairs sitting opposite each other. Before the game starts, the pairs must work out a secret signal (such as winking, coughing or nudging each other under the table).

Deal each player four cards, then throw four more cards onto the table. Each player then has to collect four of a kind by swapping cards in their hand with the ones on the table – you have to be the first to grab any you want, before the other players do! When no one wants the four cards left on the table, these are put to one side and replaced with another four from the deck.

When one player gets four of a kind, they have to signal to their partner, who then shouts: "Bartlett!" That pair gets a point. If both players in a pair get four of a kind, and signal at the same time, they both shout: "Double Bartlett!" They then get two points.

If a player spots their opponent's signal, they shout: "Anti-Bartlett!" and get a point if they are correct. If they're not, then they lose a point.

Set a number of points as a target – the first pair to the target is the winner.

### ALEX TAYLOR

is resources editor for *Premier Youth and Children's Work*.



## Over the Moon (PG)

Watch the whole film together or concentrate on the clip: 00:01:41 to 00:14:18

### SYNOPSIS

Having grown up hearing her mother's favourite legend about Chang'e, the moon goddess who lives alone on the silent celestial body pining for Hou Yi, her long-lost lover, the brilliant 13-year-old girl, Fei Fei, is in for an unpleasant surprise when her mother passes away. Then, as if that wasn't enough, her doting father catches her off-guard by making a life-altering announcement, and Fei Fei's whole world comes crashing down around her. Now, determined to prove him wrong, Fei Fei sets out to build a home-made rocket and blast off to the stars. Does true love last for ever?

*Over the Moon*, the Netflix Oscar-nominated animated film, is a bright, vivid story with touching moments (there's also some great songs along the way) that explores a girl's desire to hold on to her departed mother. There's also a trip to the moon and a great giant space dog – so it pretty much has something for everyone. Although I found myself enjoying the film, this session is predominantly aimed at a younger group.

### DISCUSS

Begin by showing the children the trailer – has anyone seen the whole film? Ask them to think about the following:

- Have you ever wanted to go to the moon? Are there any other places you would love to go?
- This story is based on a legend that Fei Fei's mother tells her – are there any stories that your parents or carers told you growing up that were really important?

Although this clip is scheduled to start at 00:01:41, it would be perfectly fine to begin the clip at the start of the film. We see Fei Fei spend time with her loving parents as she hears about her favourite tale of the moon goddess. We then see Fei Fei being

invited to make 'moon cakes' with her parents as part of their family business. Sadly, it becomes clear that Fei Fei's mother is unwell and after a battle with illness she dies. Four years later we see an older Fei Fei struggle to adjust to the idea that her father has invited a new female into their family home to meet her, and that this new female brings a small annoying boy with her.

After showing the clip, discuss these questions together. As this clip dealt with the death of a mother and the idea of a blended family, you may need to approach these questions sensitively.

- What did you like about the clip – did any parts of it make you happy or sad?
- Why are families important?
- How do you think Fei Fei feels about Mrs Zhong? Why do you think she feels that way?
- How does Fei Fei try to remember her mother?

For this session read out 1 John 4:20-21. It is a short passage but you may need to do some explanation of the passage depending on the age of your group.

- What does this Bible verse mean?
- What do you like about your family? (Adapt this question if working with children in care.)
- What do people in families argue about?
- How can we show the people in our family that we love them?

*Over the Moon* is available on Netflix.

### TOM WADE

is head of humanities at Haileybury School.



## Lead the way

Jhené Aiko (from *Raya and the Last Dragon*)

### INTRODUCTION

This song is taken from the new Disney movie, *Raya and the Last Dragon*, which tells the story of how a warrior, Raya, must find the last dragon in order to rid their land of the Druun, monsters who have returned after 500 years. The themes of this song resonate with the story of Ruth and her response to Naomi and this will be explored during this session.

As you begin this session, you could ask if anyone has seen the film yet and ask them what they thought of it. Explain that we are looking at one song from the film, but not the story line of the film itself, so they can still enjoy it later if they haven't seen it yet.

### LISTEN AND DISCUSS

Play the track, distributing copies of the lyrics if needed or, if you prefer, use the music video.

Invite the children to share what strikes them most about this song, what do these lyrics mean to them? Which lyrics most mean something to them? Where do they connect with this song? There are some phrases in the story that do not relate to the theme of this session, such as: "There's an energy in the water, there is magic deep in our heart." This may be a good opportunity to talk about the way song lyrics sometimes help us to unpack a theme without having to accept every idea in the song.

Explain to the children that there is a resonance between the ideas in this song and a speech in the Bible that a woman called Ruth gave to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Distribute Bibles and look together at Ruth 1:1-18. Ask the children what they notice from the way Ruth speaks to Naomi. Look at the text of the song alongside the text of the Bible story and ask the children where they can see similarities between the two messages.

Ask the children to think about times when they have choices to make, you may like to give some examples; perhaps deciding when to go along with what their friends say and do or larger scale decisions such as taking a stand over race issues or the environment.

Invite the children to be really quiet and think for themselves about who the people are that they can work together with; who will lead the way? Pray for the children, as you draw to a close that they would listen to his leading and follow him.

### BECKY MAY

is a freelance writer and experienced children's and youth leader. She can be found at [theresourcescupboard.co.uk](http://theresourcescupboard.co.uk).



## Three steps

With lockdown finally easing, it's a little bit like the smoke is clearing and our young people are just beginning to be able to make out the pathway ahead again. Some will be itching to get back on track and make headway with their goals. Others may still be disorientated; their goals may feel confused or unclear. Others may even feel totally unmotivated and overwhelmed and may have given up on many goals all together. What about your mentees? How can you help them?

This three-stage thought process is a great exercise (and one that also works really well in group settings where discussion can really aid thinking). As you do this, ask them to write things down or, if that's problematic for your mentee, take notes for them (but make sure it's all their words not yours).

### 1. WHAT 'IS'

What is the situation right now? Try to articulate honestly how you feel about the current situation; get a good grasp on the current reality. What are your strengths and weaknesses at this point? What opportunities, 'tools' and advantages do you have in your possession? What are you lacking – what is the 'problem' you are trying to answer, outgrow or nail? In what ways are you lying to yourself or holding yourself back?

- Name five adjectives to describe your situation now.
- List ten opportunities / strengths currently at your disposal that will be useful for moving towards this goal.

### 2. WHAT 'COULD BE'

Now dream big. Don't dream 'sensible' – what exactly would you like to happen? What would you ideally want to end up with or achieving? If you find yourself putting dampeners on it or being realistic or downgrading it according to what you think is

likely, acceptable or avoids obvious obstacles, STOP! Try again without those things hampering it. The aim is an unadulterated, untrimmed vision of what you would love. What would you love? What will make you happy – both to achieve but also to do on the journey there? Who will benefit? What could it unlock in the future? Is this goal too big? Is this vision too small?

- In one short sentence, what is your 'A' goal?
- Is this actually the very best goal – the real 'A' goal?
- What is the 'B' goal (that is a compromise of A)?
- List five reasons why you should aim for the 'A' goal and not compromise for the B goal?!

### 3. WHAT 'WILL BE'

Go on to identify hurdles and potential problems to achieving this vision or goal. Break it down into manageable chunks and work on a strategy to tackle each part of what you need to do so your end up with a road map for getting from here...to there. When will you realistically succeed? What do you need to get you there? What help do you need to enlist? What mental restrictions do you need to overcome to allow or enable yourself to realise your dream? What risks are there? What could go wrong? What incremental 'wins' are there on the way to the big goal? How will you reward yourself at each stage? How will you know you have completed what you set out to do? How will you keep motivated and active? Do you need to organise accountability about any part or all of this?

- List five threats to your success.
- Give at least one or two possible solutions to each threat.
- Out of ten how committed are you to achieving this goal?
- What do you need to raise that number by one or two?

## JOEL TOOMBS

has an MA in Christian mentoring and wrote the *Mentoring and Young People Grove* booklet. He is a volunteer youth worker.



# Fruit of the Spirit

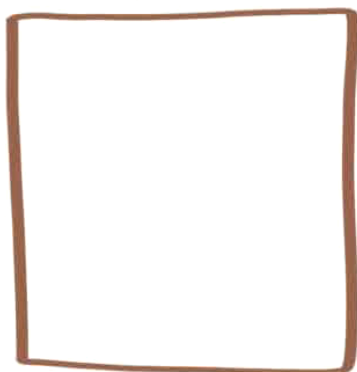
But the fruit of the Spirit is *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control*. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

Spiritual fruit takes time to grow, just like edible fruit.

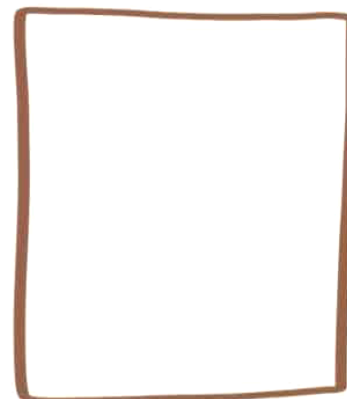
Most fruit starts out life as a seed, is planted, watered and eventually shoots up from the ground, and slowly over time becomes a tree that bears fruit.

Seed



In the box have a go at drawing a few different seeds – apple pips, cherry stones, sunflower seeds. As you draw, consider which parts of the fruit of the Spirit listed above are still in 'seed form' in your life; perhaps things you would like to grow in.

shoot

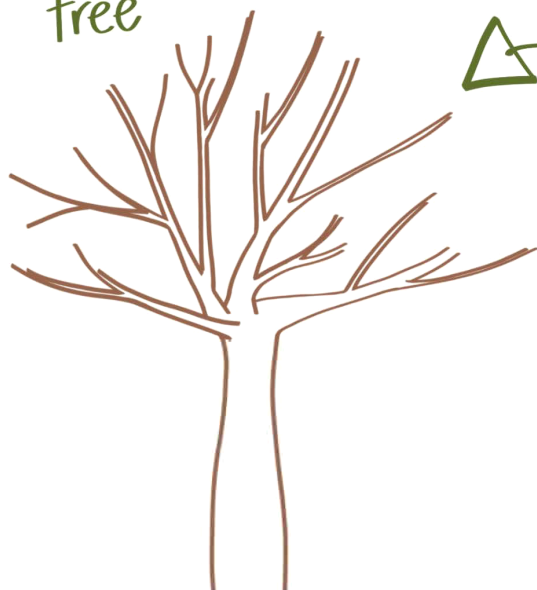


Take a moment to imagine a new shoot springing up from the ground – draw what this might look like in the box.

Which parts of the fruit of the Spirit are new shoots in your life?

Which areas you are you currently growing in?

tree



Now consider which parts of the fruit of the Spirit are in full bloom in your life?

Draw some leaves and fruit on this tree and as you fill it in, thank God for this fruit in your life.