

April 10, 2013

Ascension

Luke 24:45-53

Acts 1:1-11

**LESSON FOCUS**

***“And you will be my witnesses from one end of the earth to the other.”*** (Acts 1:8)

***“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. . . . And you will be my witnesses from one end of the earth to the other.”*** (Acts 1:8)

***“If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*** (John 14:3). This lesson is about Jesus’ ascension into heaven.

While Jesus’ death and resurrection form the core of all that binds us to the Father in heaven, Jesus’ ascension seems a paradox. He was leaving those for whom He had laid down His life in love! His friends had never known such separation from Him since He had called them to leave everything and follow Him. After years of daily intimacy, why would Jesus leave them now? Was His ascension a kind of abandonment? Now that He had completed His redemptive work, He had proven His sovereignty over even death! He had shown the world that He was exactly who He said He was.

In John 14, Jesus made it clear to those He loved that even though He was going away, He would not leave them orphaned. His ascension did not signal abandonment; rather, it was the door to a new kind of power.

As you prepare to teach this lesson, take time to read all of John 14. Absorb Jesus’ promises and comforts. He ascended to heaven not to orphan us, but to make us participants in the most phenomenal plan of all time! Rejoice with your students that Jesus’ help is always available – to you and to them, anywhere and anytime. His completed work on earth proves Him to be not only the ascended, reigning King, but also the loving shepherd who will prepare a place for us and is fully able to bring us to that place!

## WELCOME ACTIVITY

Place several small, inflated balloons on a table. Let children blow them back and forth across the table.

Say: **What make the balloons move?** (The moving air). **Can you see the air?** (No.) **How do you know it is there?** (You can see what it does.)

Have children blow on their hands to feel the air.

Say: **The air is there, even though you can't see it. The Bible tells us that Jesus is also here at all times, even though we can't see Him with our eyes.**

## OPENING

**How do you say good-bye to someone? Do you wave?**

**For a while Jesus lived on the earth so people could see Him. But when it was time for Him to say good-bye, Jesus did not wave. He said good-bye in an amazing way because He is true God!**

**Sing: Celebrate** (*To the tune of This Old Man*)

**Celebrate! Celebrate!  
Jesus is alive today!  
Jump up and down then turn around and say,  
Jesus is alive today!**

## BIBLE STORY

**Ascension**

**Luke 24:45-53**

**Acts 1:1-11**

Open your Bible so children can see you "reading" God's Word. Show them your Bible and the words to they know what you're saying is coming from God's Word. Use Tell the Story idea below.

**Jesus' Final Words**

**Jesus continued teaching the people many things. But the religious leaders found a way to get Jesus arrested. They had Him arrested and crucified by the Romans. But, three days after He died, Jesus rose back to life! Then He appeared to His followers. They were so surprised to see Him! That is where our lesson picks up today.**

**The disciples were all together in a room when Jesus suddenly appeared to them. He said, "Peace be with you." But the disciples were afraid; they thought they were seeing a ghost! They didn't understand that Jesus was really alive again. Jesus asked them why there were having trouble believing it was really Him. He told them to look at His hands and feet and touch Him. That way they**

would know He was real. Remember—Jesus had been crucified, so He had nail scars in His hands and feet. The disciples would be able to see them.

Jesus reminded the disciples what He had said to them while He was still with them. He said that everything that happened to Him had been written down in the Bible.

Then Jesus told them they were to wait for the Holy Spirit to come to them before they began preaching. They needed the Holy Spirit of God to have power to speak for Him.

After these instructions, Jesus led them to Bethany. Then He raised His hands and blessed them.

While He was blessing them, He began to rise up into the sky and into Heaven. The disciples worshipped Him and went back to Jerusalem. They were so happy and excited to know that Jesus was alive! They went to the Temple each day, praising God. And they continued to wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon them.

The disciples obeyed Jesus' command and waited for the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts continues where Luke leaves off—it was also written by Luke. He tells us many things about how the early Christians spread the Gospel around the world.

We have learned so much about Jesus. He came to earth to share the love of God with people and to die for our sins. It was all part of God's plan to save us.

## **GOD'S WORD IN MY HEART**

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20).*

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

**It's been a long time since Jesus ascended into heaven. But His promise to care for us is still true.**

The Holy Spirit is our power source for sharing Christ with others. Bring a flashlight. Try to use it without batteries. Then put the batteries in it and let a student turn it on. Talk about how our lives need the "Power Source" of the Holy Spirit to make a difference and reach people for Christ.

## ACTIVITY

- Inflate a balloon with helium. Assemble the group outside and let the balloon go into the sky. As the kids watch, let them talk about what Jesus' friends must have felt when Jesus did the same thing. You may want to have LOTS of helium balloons to give to children as they leave.
- Bring bubbles. Let the children blow bubbles into the sky and think about how Jesus is in Heaven now.

## VIDEO SEGMENT

The events should focus on the resurrection.

### **Preschool – DVD Bible 2**

*Watch chapters 12 & 13, approximately 6 minutes*

## **FINGER PLAY**

### **Jesus Is Alive Finger Play**

|  |  |
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| <b>Jesus died upon the cross</b>                     | <i>Rub eyes as if crying</i>             |
| <b>He was buried in a grave</b>                      | <i>bow head</i>                          |
| <b>For three sad days our Lord was dead</b>          | <i>count to 3</i>                        |
| <b>When the women came to see</b>                    | <i>hold hand over eyes as if looking</i> |
| <b>An earthquake shook the ground</b>                | <i>shake</i>                             |
| <b>Jesus' body was not there</b>                     | <i>hand head in sadness</i>              |
| <b>He'd risen from the dead!</b>                     | <i>jump up and cheer</i>                 |
| <b>He talked and walked with<br/>All his friends</b> | <i>shake hands</i>                       |
| <b>He said: Go tell!</b>                             | <i>cup hands around mouth</i>            |
| <b>Then Jesus went up, up, up<br/>Into heaven</b>    | <i>jump up, up, up</i>                   |

## **CLOSING ACTIVITY**

Gather children around you.

Blessing:

**May God, who is all around you,  
pour his love upon you.**

*Beginning at the bottom of the circle, slowly  
make a large circle with your hands. Finish by bringing your  
hands down and wiggling the fingers to resemble rain.)*

**And Jesus, his life a sacrifice,  
walk right there beside you.**

*Slowly make a large sign of the cross. Then  
move your hands out to the sides.*

**And may God's Holy Spirit,  
the one who lives inside you,  
keep you strong,  
comfort, lead and guide you!**

*Cross your hands over the heart.*

*Move to a "strong man" position. Then  
cross your arms with the hands on corresponding upper arms to  
communicate comfort. Bring one hand forward with "lead" and  
the other with "guide" to complete the blessing.)*

**Sing: Jesus Loves Me**

***Jesus loves me, this I know  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to Him belong,  
They are weak, but He is strong.***

***Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
The Bible tells me so.***