

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
TEACHER'S PACKET

1st Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 33

The Ascension

The Ascension

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will show the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer using the story of Jesus ascending into heaven in Acts 1.

Key Verses

Acts 1:1-11—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:50-53 (Parallel Passage)

John 14:15-20, 25-26; 15:26-27; 16:5-15

Luke 11:9-13

Memory Verse - John 14:16-17a

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth,"

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Ask for a volunteer. Blindfold that student and have them try to walk to a particular point in the room while your hands are on their shoulders guiding them. Then ask them to try it again without help. Ask them which one was harder.

Jesus had been a guide to His followers while He was on earth, but in today's story we will see the end of His earthly ministry, when He would no longer be around to lead them. However, He was going to leave a guide for His disciples who would lead and empower them once He left.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all conclude their Gospels with a record of Christ's ascension into heaven. Matthew and Mark in particular include "the Great Commission," Jesus' command for His disciples to go to all the nations preaching the good news of Jesus. The book of Acts, which is Luke's sequel to his Gospel, picks up where those Gospels left off and provides us with more details of the event.

The ascension took place forty days after the resurrection (vs. 3). During that time, Jesus did and taught many things. Last week we studied the only story to take place in the time recorded in the Bible (John 21). At the end of this period, the disciples were gathered with Jesus in Bethany outside of Jerusalem. Jesus commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until they received the promised power of the Holy Spirit. The disciples then asked if Jesus was planning on restoring the kingdom of Israel, but Jesus told them that the Father's timing for such things was not for them to know. Instead, they were to wait for the Holy Spirit to give them power to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth. After He said that, Jesus was taken up on a cloud into heaven. As the disciples watched this happen, two angels asked them why they were gazing up into heaven and told the disciples that Jesus was going to return to earth the same way they saw Him leave. The rest of Acts 1 tells us that the disciples did return to Jerusalem and wait.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK

So far this year, we have studied through the four Gospels looking at the life of Jesus on earth. These four books take us from the beginning of Christ's life through His ministry, death, and resurrection, and end with His ascension. The book of Acts, which we will study for the remainder of the year, covers what happens next. Acts tells the story of how the Church went from a small group of ordinary people from Galilee into the Body of Christ that stretched across most of the known world at that time.

It might seem strange that Jesus would leave His disciples. They may have been sad, confused, discouraged, or afraid. Yet Jesus promised in John 14:15-20 that He would not leave them as orphans, but that He would send them a Helper. That Helper would be the Holy Spirit. Jesus told them a lot about the Holy Spirit in John 14-16 (see "Key Verses"). In fact, Jesus said that it was better for us that He leave so that He could send them the Holy Spirit (John 16:7). Through the Holy Spirit, God's presence would be with all believers all over the world, empowering them to live for Jesus and be His witnesses.

LOOK (Continued)

In today's story, Jesus said that the disciples (also known as the apostles) would be His witnesses in Jerusalem (the city they were in), Judea (the region they were in), Samaria (the region to the north), and to the end of the earth. The rest of the book of Acts will show us that they did exactly that. However, it was not the wisdom or power of the apostles that enabled this all to happen. It was the power of the Holy Spirit that took these ordinary men and made them effective witnesses to Christ. Notice also that Jesus said that the power would enable them to be witnesses. They were not conquerors but messengers who shared the love of Christ with the rest of the world.

What's amazing is that the same Power, the same Holy Spirit that enabled the apostles to change the world is available to all of us who believe. The promise of the Holy Spirit was not just a promise to Jesus' disciples back in the days of the book of Acts. He can be in us as well! The Holy Spirit is the power we need to please God, live the Christian life, and spread the Gospel. He teaches us the Word of God, helps us to overcome temptation, and emboldens us to be witnesses of the amazing things Jesus has done for us. All a believer has to do is ask, and God will fill you with the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus promised in Luke 11:9-13. As we study Acts, we will see the apostles do some amazing things, but all of it was only made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit in them.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize John 14:16-17a.

Go through the passages in John 14-16 listed in the "Key Verses" section. Make a list of all the ways the Holy Spirit helps us in our walk with the Lord.

Pray: Thank Jesus for leaving us the Holy Spirit to empower our lives as believers. Ask God to fill each of you with the Holy Spirit.

Parent Question: Read John 14:25-28 and 16:12-15. How does the Holy Spirit empower us to live the Christian life?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Acts 1:1-11 by David Guzik

Jesus Ascends to Heaven, A New Apostle Chosen

A. Prologue.

1. ([Act 1:1](#)) Reference to former writings.

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach.

a. The **former account** is the Gospel of Luke. At one time the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts were joined together as one book with two "volumes."

i. Imagine what it would be like if the Book of Acts were missing. You would pick up your Bible and see the ministry of Jesus ending in the Gospel of John; next you would read about a guy named Paul writing to followers of Jesus in Rome. Who was Paul? How did the gospel get from Jerusalem to Rome? The Book of Acts answers these questions. "A great New Testament scholar has said that the title of *Acts* might be, 'How they brought the Good News from Jerusalem to Rome.'" (Barclay)

ii. Acts is written in the literary style of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint. "Since Luke can write in a different style ([Lk. 1:1-4](#)), this is something deliberate. Probably he regarded himself as recording *sacred history*." (Marshall)

iii. We really don't know all that much about Luke from the New Testament. We know that he was a doctor, we know that he was a Gentile, and we know that he was a companion of Paul.

iv. There was a time when many scholars thought that Acts was sort of a romance novel of the early church, written at least 100 years after the events supposedly happened. But William Ramsay, a noted archaeologist and Bible scholar, proved that the historical record of Acts is remarkably accurate regarding the specific practices, laws and customs of the period it claims to record. It is definitely the work of contemporary eyewitnesses.

v. In the mid-1960's, A.N. Sherwin-White, an expert in Graeco-Roman history from Oxford, wrote about Acts: "The historical framework is exact. In terms of time and place the details are precise and correct ... As documents these narratives belong to the same historical series as the record of provincial and imperial trials in epigraphical and literary sources of the first and early second centuries A.D. ... For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming ... Any attempt to reject its basic historicity even in matters of detail must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted."

vi. John Calvin wrote that the Book of Acts was "a kind of vast treasure." D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones called Acts "that most lyrical of books ... Live in that book, I exhort you: It is a tonic, the greatest tonic I know of in the realm of the Spirit." (Cited in Stott)

b. **Theophilus** might have been a Christian wanting instruction. He might have been a Roman official being briefed by Luke about the history of the Christian movement; or the name could be symbolic, because the name **Theophilus** means "God-lover."

i. In the introduction to the first volume ([Luke 1:3](#)), Luke addresses Theophilus with title *most excellent*, which was a way to address people who held high office.

ii. Since Acts ends with Paul awaiting trial before Caesar, some have wondered if Luke-Acts are not "defense briefs" on Paul's behalf to give a Roman official background on Paul's case. Luke arrived in Jerusalem with Paul in [Acts 21:17](#); he left with him again on the journey to Rome in [Acts 27:1](#). In those two years, Luke had plenty of time to research and write his gospel and the Book of Acts.

iii. Luke wanted to show Rome that Christianity was *harmless* (some Romans officials had embraced it themselves), *innocent* (Roman judges could find no basis for prosecution) and *lawful* (as the true fulfillment of Judaism, an approved religion in the Roman Empire).

c. Notice that **the former account concerned all that Jesus began both to do and teach**. Luke's Gospel describes only the beginning of Jesus' work; Acts describes its continuation; and the work of Jesus continues to our present day.

i. We must remember that Acts does not give us a full history of the church during this period. For example, the churches in Galilee and Samaria are barely mentioned ([Acts 9:31](#)), and the establishing of a strong church in Egypt during this time isn't mentioned at all.

ii. Acts takes us up to about 60 or 61 A.D., with Paul in Rome waiting to appear before Caesar Nero. This same Nero began his infamous persecutions of Christians in 64 A.D.

2. ([Act 1:2-3](#)) The last work of Jesus before His ascension to heaven.

Until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

a. Jesus, **through the Holy Spirit**, instructed the apostles regarding what to do in His absence.

b. Jesus also established the fact of His resurrection with **many infallible proofs** during the **forty days** after his resurrection but before His ascension.

i. In [1 Corinthians 15:6](#), Paul describes one of these **many infallible proofs**: *He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present*. There were more than five hundred people who had seen the resurrected Jesus, and most of them were alive some twenty-five years later in the days of Paul!

c. The teaching Jesus gave during that period is not recorded, but we are told that He used that time to speak **of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God**.

i. Many Gnostic and New Age teachers would like to think that after His resurrection, Jesus used the forty days to teach His followers strange and obscure doctrines that must be "rediscovered" with new revelations today. But Luke reminds us that Jesus simply taught them much the same material that He had taught them in His earthly ministry: **The things pertaining to the kingdom of God**.

B. The ascension of Jesus.

1. ([Act 1:4-5](#)) Jesus' final instructions to the disciples.

And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for

the Promise of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

a. **He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem:** Jesus has nothing else for the disciples to do other than to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. He knows that they really can do nothing effective for the Kingdom of God until the Spirit comes.

b. These verses provide another of the many "Trinity in Miniature" examples. **Jesus** tells of the **Promise of the Father**, which is the coming of the **Holy Spirit**.

c. **You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit:** The idea of being **baptized** is to be immersed or covered over in something; even as John baptized people in water, so these disciples would be "immersed" in the Holy Spirit.

i. Perhaps it is more useful to describe the baptism of the Holy Spirit more like a *condition* than an *experience*. We should perhaps ask, "*are you* baptized in the Holy Spirit?" instead of asking, "*have you been* baptized in the Holy Spirit?"

2. ([Act 1:6](#)) The disciples ask Jesus a final question before His ascension.

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

a. **Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?** This was a question asked many times before. They must have believed that Jesus would certainly establish an earthly political kingdom before ascending to the Father. Of course, when Jesus ascended into heaven, He would leave them in charge of the kingdom!

i. "The verb *restore* shows that they were expecting a political and territorial kingdom; the noun *Israel* that they were expecting a national kingdom; and the adverbial clause *at this time* that they were expecting its immediate establishment." (Stott)

ii. "Marvelous is their rudeness, that when as they had been diligently instructed by the space of three whole years, they betray no less ignorance than if they had heard never a word. There are as many errors in this question as words." (Calvin)

b. The disciples certainly knew the many Old Testament prophecies describing the spiritual *and* political rebirth of Israel. The disciples probably thought that the spiritual rebirth seemed certain, so the political would come, also.

3. ([Act 1:7-8](#)) Jesus' final teaching and final promise before His ascension.

And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

a. **It is not for you to know:** Jesus warned the disciples against inquiring into aspects of the timing of God's kingdom, because those things belong to God the Father alone (**which the Father has put in His own authority**).

i. It was wise for Jesus not to outline His plan over the next 2,000 years. How do you think the disciples would have felt if they had known that the kingdom they wanted to see right then would not be coming for almost

2,000 years?

ii. At the same time, Jesus did not say that there was to be *no* restoration of the kingdom to Israel; He simply said that speculation into the times and dates of it was not proper for the disciples.

b. **But you shall receive power:** If the political kingdom they wanted would be delayed, **power** would not. They would shortly receive power with the coming of the **Holy Spirit**.

i. The disciples were still seeing **power**, too much in terms of Caesar, and not enough in terms of Christ. Jesus offers them real power, spiritual power, but how attractive did that seem? They were thinking of political power!

c. The natural result of receiving that power would be that they would become **witnesses** of Jesus, all over the earth.

i. Notice that this really isn't a command; it is a simple statement of fact: **When the Holy Spirit has come upon you ... you shall be witnesses of Me**. The words **shall be** are in the indicative, not the imperative. Jesus wasn't recommending that they become **witnesses**, He was saying they would be **witnesses**.

ii. If we want to be **witnesses**, we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit! Far more important than the best course in evangelism is the filling of the Holy Spirit!

iii. [Isaiah 43:10](#) has the Lord proclaiming to His people *You are My witnesses*. A cultic group today claims that this is their mandate for being "Jehovah's Witnesses." Unfortunately, they fail to see [Isaiah 43:10](#) in the context of [Acts 1:8](#); we are truly *Yahweh's Witnesses* when we are *Jesus' Witnesses*.

d. The progress of the spread of the Gospel from **Jerusalem**, to **Judea and Samaria**, and then **to the end of the earth** becomes the outline of Acts. Acts [chapters 1](#) through [7](#) describe the gospel in **Jerusalem**, [chapters 8](#) through [12](#) speak of the gospel in **Judea and Samaria**, and [chapters 13](#) through [28](#) tell of the gospel going **to the end of the earth**.

i. We might imagine the objections to the places of ministry Jesus described. **Jerusalem** was where Jesus was executed at the word of an angry mob; **Judea** rejected His ministry; **Samaria** was regarded as a wasteland of impure half-breeds; and in the **uttermost parts of the earth**, the Gentiles were seen as nothing better than fuel for the fires of Hell. Yet God wanted a witness sent to all of these places.

4. ([Act 1:9-11](#)) Jesus ascends into heaven.

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

a. Jesus was taken up from them, as He was blessing them ([Luke 24:50](#)). As He slowly disappeared into the sky, surrounded by a **cloud** (of Shekinah glory?), they continued to gaze upward.

b. Why did Jesus ascend this way? He certainly could have simply "vanished" to the Father's presence in a secret sort of way. But with the ascension, Jesus wanted His followers to know that He was gone for good, as opposed to the way He appeared and reappeared during the forty days after the resurrection.

i. Remember Jesus' words to His disciples in [John 16:7](#): *It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you*. Now the disciples could know that

that promise would be fulfilled.

c. **Why do you stand gazing up into heaven?** The **two men** (apparently angels) told the disciples to put their attention in the right place (obedience to Jesus' command to return to Jerusalem), not in wondering where and how Jesus went. Jesus told them to go to the ends of the *earth*, and they stood **gazing up into heaven**.

i. Morgan speculates that the "men" were possibly Moses and Elijah. It seems best to say they were angels.

d. **Will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven:** Jesus will return just as He left: *physically, visibly*, and to the *Mount of Olives*.