



TEACHER'S GUIDE

GRADES 1-2
YEAR 1 | SPRING

Sunday School



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*I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

John 8:12
(NIV 1984)



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Jesus Ascends Into Heaven

Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11



Aim

What did Jesus do for his disciples before he ascended into heaven?



Truth

Jesus taught his disciples and promised to send the Holy Spirit.

Application: Jesus left this earth only after teaching and guiding the disciples who would begin his church.

Response: We trust that our risen and ascended Savior will always teach and guide us through his Word.

Lesson Summary: During the 40 days after Easter, Jesus often met with his disciples and instructed them in God's Word. He promised to be with them and to send God the Holy Spirit to them. On the 40th day, Jesus met his disciples on a hill outside of Bethany. There he blessed them and ascended into heaven.



MEMORY TREASURE
Choices

*** Matthew 28:20b**
*** The Third Article**
of the Apostles' Creed



DIG
Deeper

See Franzmann, *Bible History Commentary: New Testament*, Volume 2, pages 1,067–1,087; The People's Bible: Wicke, *Mark*, pages 240 and 241; Prange, *Luke*, pages 265 and 266; Balge, *Acts*, pages 8–15.



the Teacher
Prays

Dear Father, how wondrous it would have been to witness Jesus' ascension into heaven! With joyful anticipation I await the day he returns. Bless my remaining time on earth with a strong faith so that I willingly share the good news of my Savior and remain faithful until the end. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Looking Back at Lesson 12

Jesus' Burial and Resurrection

Matthew 27:57–61; 28:1,5–8; Mark 15:42–16:8; Luke 23:50–24:10; John 19:31–42

Aim: How did Jesus show that he is God's Son?

Truth: Jesus showed that he is God's Son by rising from the dead.

Application: Jesus has power over death.

Response: We worship Jesus as God's Son and our risen Savior.

Lesson Summary: Late on Friday, the Jewish leaders requested that the legs of those crucified be broken to quicken their deaths. When the soldiers saw that Jesus was already dead, one of them pierced his side instead. Joseph and Nicodemus buried Jesus in a new grave. Women watched the burial, planning to return after the Sabbath with more spices. But when they returned early Sunday morning, they found an open grave and an angel who announced that Jesus had risen!

Memory Treasures: *The Second Article of the Apostles' Creed; Hymn 152:1

Alternate Lesson Plan



Sing: Ask what *invisible* means. [Responses.] Then have the children

name blessings from God that are invisible. [Air, forgiveness, love.] Explain that some blessings are visible, but we just can't see them right now. Examples are Jesus and heaven. But through faith we trust that these blessings are real. Sing "I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus" (hymn 446:1).

Pray: Dear Lord Jesus, we trust you to give us what we need here on earth and to someday take us to heaven. Please guide us as we live for you. Amen.



Tell the children to pretend their parents are talking to a sitter before they leave the house. What might parents tell a sitter so that he or she knows what to do to take care of you while they are gone? [How to contact them; what to feed you; when to put you to bed; house rules.]



Jesus spent not just a few minutes but 40 days showing his disciples what he expected of them after he ascended (went up) into heaven. **Listen to our lesson to find out what Jesus did for his disciples before he ascended into heaven.**



WORSHIP You need a **flashlight**. Take one **battery** out, wrap **tape** around it, and print "God's Word" on the tape.

Sing: Show the flashlight. Explain that you want to use this flashlight, but it doesn't work. Ask the children what might be the problem. [It's broken. It needs batteries.] Tell them that, in this case, the flashlight needs a battery. Show the battery labeled "God's Word," put it in the flashlight, and turn on the flashlight. Explain that just as a flashlight needs a battery to help guide a person's way, so we need God's Word to guide us to heaven. Sing the refrain to Psalm 78 (hymnal, page 95): "Your Word is a lamp . . ."

Pray: Dear heavenly Father, thank you for your Word that guides us to heaven and thank you for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of heaven earned by your Son. Amen.



Review the events following Jesus' resurrection by asking any or all of the following questions, depending on the lessons you have taught.

- How did the disciples know that Jesus had risen? [Jesus had appeared to them.]
- Name some of the times that Jesus appeared to his followers. [Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and other women on Easter Sunday morning, to the Emmaus disciples that afternoon, to 10 of the disciples that evening, to the 11 disciples one week later, and after that to the disciples who were fishing in Galilee.]
- What special work did Jesus give to his disciples and all Christians? [Jesus told the disciples, and all Christians, to tell other people about him.]



Jesus had completed the work that the Father had sent him into the world to do, and it was time for him to leave this world and return to his Father in heaven. But Jesus did some very special things during the 40 days he stayed on earth before ascending (going up) into heaven. **Listen carefully to find out what Jesus did for his disciples before he ascended into heaven.**



Cut out a picture of the ascending Jesus made from **Copy Master 1**. Cut out a **paper cloud** large enough to cover the picture. Attach the top of the cloud to the **board** or a **wall**. Hold the picture of Jesus below the cloud. As you tell how Jesus ascended, move the picture of Jesus up and eventually underneath the cloud so he cannot be seen.

After Jesus rose from the dead, he stayed on earth for **40 more days**. During those days he **met with his disciples** many times. He **ate** with them, **walked** with them, and **talked** with them. He wanted them to know for **sure that he had risen** from the dead.

Whenever Jesus was with his disciples, he **taught** them the **meaning of God's Word**. He told them, "God had a **plan for saving the world** from sin. That's why he **sent me**, his Son, to earth as a man. I came to **suffer and die** on a cross to **take away the sins** of the world."

One time Jesus told his disciples, "**After I am gone**, you must **go to Jerusalem**. Wait there for God the **Holy Spirit to come** to you. He will give you the **power** you need to **tell people how to be saved**. Then you will **go and tell** people everywhere **in the world** that I am their **Savior**."

At the **end of the 40 days**, Jesus **met** with his disciples for the **last time**. He led the disciples **to a hill near** the town of **Bethany**, not far from Jerusalem. When Jesus had **finished speaking** to his disciples, he **lifted up his hands** to bless them. As he blessed them, an **amazing thing** happened. Jesus **began to rise** into the sky! The disciples **watched** as their **Lord went up**, higher and higher. At last a **cloud hid Jesus** from their eyes.

Even though the disciples could **no longer see** Jesus, they **kept staring** up into the sky. Suddenly, **two angels** stood next to them and asked, "**Why are you standing here** and looking up into the sky? You have seen how **Jesus went up** to heaven. Someday **he will come back** to earth again in the **same way**." Then the **angels left** them.

The disciples went **back to Jerusalem** with great **joy** in their hearts. There they **waited for the Holy Spirit** to come to them as Jesus had promised. They spent **much** of their **time in the temple**, **praising God**.

Note: You'll need to use the story in the adjacent column.



Involve the children as you tell the story by having them stand and give a thumbs-up (to represent Jesus ascending) whenever they hear you say "Jesus."



Divide an 8½" x 11" piece of **paper** into nine equal boxes, three across and three up and down. Duplicate this page so each student has one. As you tell the story, pause periodically to have the children draw or write the following items, one in each box:

- numeral 40: Jesus stayed on earth 40 days after he rose.
- a cross: Jesus dying on the cross was part of God's plan of salvation.
- "Go and tell": The Holy Spirit would come and give the disciples power to do this work.
- a hill: Jesus took the disciples here at the end of the 40 days.
- arrow pointing up: Jesus ascended into the sky.
- cloud: A cloud hid Jesus from the disciples' view.
- two angels: Two angels asked why the disciples were looking into the sky.

- heart: The disciples' hearts were filled with joy.
- temple: The disciples praised God in Jerusalem as they waited for the Holy Spirit.



You need as many **3" x 5" cards** as you have students. Make

four equal (or as close as possible) sets from the cards. Write each of the following words on its own set: "Jesus," "disciples," "Holy Spirit," "me." *Suggestion: Make each set a different color.*

Do Scramble the cards, and give one to each child. Read the words for nonreaders. Explain that you will read something about today's lesson. Have the children holding the name of the person that the sentence is about raise their cards in the air. Some sentences will have two answers. Suggested sentences:

- I wanted the disciples to know for sure that I had risen from the dead. [*Jesus.*]
- I came to earth to suffer and die to take away the sins of all people. [*Jesus.*]
- We walked, talked, and ate with Jesus during the 40 days after his resurrection. [*Disciples.*]
- I promised to always be with my disciples and all other believers. [*Jesus.*]



discuss

Give each child a **white paper plate**. Instruct the children to draw a large happy face on one side of their plates. You will write on the **board**. Save the drawings for **Close**.

- Ask** What did Jesus come to earth to do?
[*He came to live perfectly, suffer, die, and rise to save people.*]
- Say** Jesus stayed on earth for 40 days after he rose from the dead. He ate with the disciples. He walked and talked with them. He wanted them to know for sure that he had risen.
- Do** Draw a simple school building on the board.
- Ask** While you're in school, who is always there to help you if you don't understand something? [*The teacher.*]
- Say** When you're an adult and all done with school, you'll be on your own. Jesus knew his disciples would soon be alone, because in a short time he would go back to heaven.
- Ask** What work did Jesus want the disciples to do after he left?
[*Tell others about Jesus.*]
- Say** Jesus often met with his disciples to strengthen them in his Word. He told them he would always be with them. Jesus is always with us too, and he teaches us with his [*Word*].
- Do** Draw a Bible on the board.
- Say** Jesus told his disciples to go wait in Jerusalem after he was gone.
- Ask** Why were the disciples to wait in Jerusalem?
[*They were to wait for Jesus to send the Holy Spirit.*]
- What were the disciples to do after the Holy Spirit had come to them? [*Go and tell everyone about the Savior.*]
- Say** On the 40th day after Jesus had come back to life, he met with his disciples one last time and encouraged them.
- Do** Draw a hill. Add stick figures to represent Jesus and the disciples.
- Ask** Then what amazing thing happened as Jesus blessed the disciples? [*He ascended (went up) into heaven.*]
- Why could the disciples no longer see him? [*A cloud hid him.*]
- Do** Erase one stick figure. Draw a cloud above the hill.
- Say** Although it may seem sad that we cannot walk and talk with Jesus as the disciples did, we know he still uses his Word to teach and strengthen us. Listen to some sentences I will read. Raise

your happy-face plate in the air if you think the sentence gives us a good reason to be happy.

- Jesus is still with us every day, watching over and protecting us at home, at school, and wherever we may be. *[Raise happy face.]*
- Jesus continues to give us the blessings of faith and forgiveness through his Word. *[Raise happy face.]*
- We have Jesus' promise that he will take us to be with him in his heavenly home. *[Raise happy face.]*

CLOSE You need the **drawings** from **Discuss**.

Say In the 40 days before Jesus ascended into heaven, he taught his disciples and promised to send the Holy Spirit to them. Jesus knew it was very important to teach and guide his disciples because these disciples would be telling other people about him. These men would begin Jesus' church!

Do Have a child come and circle the picture that shows what Jesus uses to teach us about him and to guide us.
[A child should circle the Bible.]

Say Learning from the Bible is like attending the Lord's school. Jesus teaches and guides us with his Word.

Do Lead the children in performing the suggested actions as you say the following words:

Jesus, you returned to heaven; *(point up)*

You rule from up above.

(put hand above eyes as if looking down to earth)

And though you're there, you care for me. *(point to self)*

Thank you for your love. Amen. *(give self a hug)*

- Jesus is always with us. *[Me, disciples.]*
- Jesus promised to send me to the disciples. *[Holy Spirit.]*
- I will give the disciples the power to tell others about their Savior. *[Holy Spirit.]*
- We waited in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come. *[Disciples.]*
- I work through God's Word to teach about the Savior and strengthen faith. *[Holy Spirit.]*
- We met on a hill 40 days after the resurrection. *[Jesus, disciples.]*
- I ascended into heaven. *[Jesus.]*
- We watched Jesus ascend until a cloud hid him. *[Disciples.]*
- Even though we cannot see Jesus, we know he is with us. *[Me, disciples.]*
- Jesus teaches us and gives us faith and forgiveness through his Word. *[Me, disciples.]*



Say In the 40 days before he ascended into heaven, Jesus taught his disciples and promised to send them *[the Holy Spirit]*.

Ask What important book does our risen and ascended Savior use to teach and guide us? *[The Bible.]*

Say We are glad to know that Jesus is always with us!

Do Pray: Dearest Jesus, thank you for teaching and guiding us through your Word. Help us tell others what we know about you. Then send your Holy Spirit into their hearts so that they can believe in you and be saved. Amen.



Student Idea: What is the opposite of *sad*? How about the opposite of *day*? Read the story “Jesus Ascends Into Heaven,” and think of some opposites that describe Jesus. Then do the second student lesson activity.



at Home

Parent Idea: Help make learning memory treasures a pleasant experience for both you and your child. Today your child worked on committing Matthew 28:20b to memory. Review it by putting the attached paper clouds in order and then reading the resulting passage together.

Note: Send home with the completed **Activity 2** under **Lesson Activities**.



* Matthew 28:20b

* The Third Article of the Apostles' Creed

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy Christian church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

In this article we confess our faith in the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sends to guide and strengthen the church today as he did with the early Christian church.

OPTIONAL

mid-week Lesson

- Begin by reviewing Jesus' earthly work by reading or reciting the words of the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed (“I believe . . . dead.”) Tell the children to listen for the phrase “ascended into heaven.”
- Use **Activity 1** under **Lesson Activities** to review the story.
- Duplicate (enlarge, if you wish) the game board on **Copy Master 2**. You will need a **Bible**, a **token** to move and attach to the game board, and a **coin**.

Review that Jesus left this earth only after teaching and guiding the disciples who would begin his church. We trust that our risen and ascended Savior also will use his Word to teach and guide us here on earth.

Attach the game board to the **board** or a **wall**. Explain that as the children play the game, the “child of God” will move along the path to heaven. Flip a coin to determine the number of spaces to move. If the coin is “heads,” move the token one space, and if it is “tails,” move two spaces. At each space where the child of God stops, there will be a Bible reference to read. Read the reference from the Bible to the



children (or have readers do this), and have the children tell how that passage guides them here on earth.

- Help the children perform the suggested actions as you say the following words:

Jesus, you returned to heaven; (*point up*)
 You rule from up above. (*put hand above eyes as if looking down to earth*)
 And though you're there, you care for me. (*point to self*)
 Thank you for your love. Amen. (*give self a hug*)

- Choose and use the **Lesson Activities** that best meet the needs of your students.

Lesson Activities

1. Review

Report the News

Purpose: To ask questions of the students while pretending to be a reporter.

Procedure: Pretend to be a television reporter. Wear a hat and coat, and carry a notebook or a real or fake microphone. Have your students pretend to be disciples. Interview them as they go to Jerusalem after witnessing Jesus' ascension. Use the following questions, and add more of your own.

- What did Jesus come to earth to do? [*He came to live perfectly, suffer, die, and rise to save us.*]
- Why are you disciples to wait in Jerusalem? [*Jesus will send the Holy Spirit.*]
- What are you supposed to do after the Holy Spirit comes? [*Go and tell people everywhere about the Savior.*]
- What amazing thing happened as Jesus blessed you? [*He rose into the sky.*]
- Where was Jesus going? [*To heaven.*]
- What finally hid Jesus so you could no longer see him? [*A cloud.*]

2. Application

Put Me in Order

Purpose: To aid in the understanding and memorization of the Matthew 28:20b memory treasure.

Procedure: Remind the children that they can trust their risen and ascended Savior to guide them with his Word. He promises to always be with them. Then use the activity on **Copy Master 3** to help the children learn the words of Matthew 28:20b on their own or with partners during class time. *Suggestion:* Provide envelopes so that the children can take the cloud pieces home to practice there too. Send the pieces home with the note suggested in **To Do at Home.**

3. Music

Songs to Sing

Purpose: To sing songs that praise Jesus or tell what he did to save sinners.

Procedure: Teach and sing one or more of the following songs:

- "Let Us Sing for Joy!" (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, Concordia Publishing House)

- “Jesus Loves the Little Children” (*Let All the People Praise You*, Northwestern Publishing House)
- “Do You Know Who Died for Me” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, Concordia Publishing House)

4. Art

Our Savior Ascended

Purpose: To make a project that is a reminder of Jesus’ ascension.

Procedure: Each child needs a white paper plate with a hole punched at the top, several white cotton balls, and a piece of yarn about 4 inches long. In the center of the plate, the children should draw and color a picture of Jesus ascending into heaven. Then they should glue the cotton balls at the feet of Jesus to make a cloud. Use the piece of yarn to make a loop with which to hang the picture. *Suggestion:* Instead of the drawings, provide duplicates of the picture of the ascending Jesus made from **Copy Master 1** for the children to color, cut out, and glue to the plate.

5. Review and Apply

Nonreader

Purpose: To review the lesson by completing fact and application sentences.

Procedure: Duplicate **Copy Master 4** for the children to complete. For activity one, first help the children “read” the words in the rectangles by identifying the pictures next to them. Have the children cut out the rectangles and set them on the correct boxes as you read the sentences. Check the answers, and then have the children glue the boxes to the paper. For activity two, write “God’s Word” on the board for the children to copy. Do the entire page together.

God’s Word in the Lesson: 1. Jesus; 2. God’s Word; 3. promised; 4. heaven; 5. praised

God’s Word in My Life: God’s Word

Reader

Purpose: To review the lesson by choosing the correct endings to fact and application sentences.

Procedure: Duplicate **Copy Master 5** for the children to complete.

God’s Word in the Lesson: 1. a, 2. a, 3. b, 4. a, 5. b, 6. a

God’s Word in My Life: 1. a, 2. b, 3. b

Challenge

Purpose: To fill clouds with missing words and write a thank-you prayer to Jesus.

Procedure: Duplicate **Copy Master 6** for the children to complete.

God’s Word in the Lesson: 1. always; 2. Jerusalem; 3. Holy Spirit; 4. Bethany; 5. ascended (went up); 6. angels, return (come back)

God’s Word in My Life: Possible prayers: Thank you, Jesus, for coming to earth to be my Savior. Thank you, Jesus, for dying to forgive my sins. Thank you, Jesus, for giving me your Word that teaches and guides.

6. Other Ideas

Piggyback Song Challenge

Purpose: To write a song about Jesus’ ascension.

Procedure: First print the following words on the board. Then point to them as you sing them to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?”

Jesus rose; Jesus rose
From the dead; from the dead.
He will give us heaven; he will give us heaven
As he said; as he said.

Help the children sense the rhythm of the words to the music:

Line one: four syllables in each phrase

Line two: three syllables in each phrase

Line three: six syllables in each phrase

Line four: three syllables in each phrase

Write 4, 3, 6, and 3 after the lines. Also point out that the last word in line two rhymes with the last word in line four. Circle the rhyming words.

Help the children compose a second stanza about Jesus' ascension or, if you are working with children able to read and write well, let pairs or groups work together to come up with their own stanzas.

Possible second stanzas:

He ascended; he ascended
Up on high; up on high.
He'll take me to heaven; he'll take me to heaven
When I die; when I die.

Back to heaven; back to heaven
Jesus went; Jesus went.
But the Holy Spirit; but the Holy Spirit
He has sent; he has sent.

Unit Activity: Good News Writing

Purpose: To have the children write about and illustrate the events that took place during the time of the first Easter.

Procedure: This writing challenge was first suggested in Activity 6 of Lesson 12. Tell the children to pretend that they interviewed the disciples as they were returning to Jerusalem. Then ask them to complete the front page of the *Good News* newspaper from Copy Master 7 of Lesson 12 by drawing a "photograph" of Jesus' ascension. Have them write about how Jesus guided the disciples by teaching them God's Word. They should also include a paragraph explaining that God still uses his Word to guide us today.

Review Game

Purpose: To review people, places, and things in the stories from Year 1, Spring.

Procedure: Write many or all of the following words or phrases, each on a separate note card: Nicodemus, farmer planting seeds, Peter, Jairus, Jairus' daughter, gentile woman, lost son, Judas, Pilate, thieves, Joseph, Mary Magdalene, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Calvary, Passover, synagogue, scroll, dogs, pigs, vineyard, Lord's Supper, crucifixion, spices, ascension.

Divide the class into two or more teams. Place the cards on a chalk tray or tape them to a wall. Say one sentence that describes a specific person, place, or thing. (Example: "He climbed a tree to see Jesus.") Call on one team to answer. If that team answers incorrectly, try the other team(s). Tally a point for the team that answers correctly. Turn over each card that has been used. Continue the game for a set amount of time or until all the cards have been used.