



TEACHER'S GUIDE

GRADES 3-4
YEAR 1 | SPRING

Sunday School



Northwestern
Publishing House
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*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)



Project Coordinators: Owen Dorn, Raymond Schumacher
Editorial Team: Lynn Groth, Jane Mose, Heidi Schoof, Deborah Schuh
Art Director: Karen Knutson
Design Team: Paula Brouwer, Diane Cook, Pamela Dunn, Scott Meyer, Sarah Oberhofer,
Lynda Williams

We extend our thanks to the many employees of Northwestern Publishing House who have contributed to this project.

Catechism materials are taken from *Luther's Catechism: Revised*. © 1998 by Northwestern Publishing House.

Hymn and hymnal references, unless otherwise indicated, are to *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*. © 1993 by Northwestern Publishing House.

Christ-Light and the Christ-Light logo are registered property of Northwestern Publishing House.

Northwestern Publishing House
1250 N. 113th St., Milwaukee, WI 53226-3284
www.nph.net

© 2012 by Northwestern Publishing House
Published 2012

Printed in the United States of America
ISBN 978-0-8100-2135-8

All rights reserved. The Teacher's Guides on this CD may be reproduced for use in a single classroom. Sunday schools with more than one classroom per grade level should purchase one Teacher's Guide CD for each classroom.

Jesus Ascends Into Heaven

Mk 16:19; Lk 24:50-53; Ac 1:1-14; 1 Co 15:3-7



How did Jesus guide his disciples at his ascension?



Jesus told his disciples to continue his work and promised them power from the Holy Spirit.

Application: Our ascended Lord still guides us and gives us power to continue his work.

Response: We look to God's Word for guidance and strength to witness for Jesus.

Lesson Summary: After his resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples many times. He taught them about God's plan of salvation and promised them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Finally, Jesus blessed his disciples and ascended into heaven.



- ★ **Matthew 28:19,20**
- ★ **1 John 2:1b**
- ★ **The Third Article of the Apostles' Creed** (with explanation)
- ★ **Hymn 173:1**



ascend—to go up

See Franzmann, *Bible History Commentary: New Testament*, Volume 2, pages 1067–1087; The People's Bible: Wicke, *Mark*, pages 240 and 241; Prange, *Luke*, pages 265 and 266; Balge, *Acts*, pages 8–18; Toppe, *1 Corinthians*, pages 141–143.



Locate Bethany, Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria on a map.



Dear ascended Savior and King, all power and majesty are yours now and forever. Help me face every day confidently, knowing that you are watching over me. Guide me as I study your Word, and bless my work of teaching it to your lambs. Amen.

Looking Back at Lesson 12

Jesus' Burial and Resurrection

Matthew 27:51–61; 28:1,5–8; Mark 15:38–16:8; Luke 23:47,50–24:8; John 19:31–42

Aim: What do Jesus' death and resurrection show?

Truth: The miraculous signs at Jesus' death, the fulfillment of Scripture, and his resurrection all show that Jesus is God's Son, the Savior.

Application: Jesus is our God and Savior.

Response: By God's grace, we believe that Jesus is God's Son, our risen Savior.

Lesson Summary: What Jesus had said and done and the miraculous signs at Jesus' death convinced even a Roman captain that Jesus was the Son of God. The piercing of Jesus' side and his burial in a rich man's grave fulfilled prophecies of Scripture. Early Easter Sunday morning, the women who went to the tomb were astonished to see the stone was rolled away and to hear an angel tell them, "Jesus has risen from the dead."

Memory Treasures: Romans 3:24; Romans 8:1; Colossians 2:9

Alternate Lesson Plan



Sing: Sing “To God Be the Glory” (hymn 399:1,3). With this hymn we praise the Lord for all he has done for us.

Pray: Dear Savior, we praise your name for all you do for us as our King. Guide and bless us every day, and help us remember that you are always with us. Amen.



Tell the children to imagine that they were Jesus’ disciples while he was here on earth. They traveled with him, learned from him, and saw him do miracles. They cried as he was crucified and buried, then rejoiced when they saw him alive again. Now Jesus is going to return to his Father in heaven. Ask the children how this might make them feel. [*Sad, afraid, lonely, etc.*]



Jesus did not want his disciples to sit around feeling sad or afraid. He guided them so that they could continue his work after he ascended. Today you’ll learn the answer to the question, **How did Jesus guide his disciples at his ascension?**



WORSHIP

Sing: Sing “On Christ’s Ascension I Now Build” (hymn 173:1) as a reminder that just as Jesus ascended into heaven, we too will go up into heaven one day.

Pray: Dear Jesus, take away all our doubt and apprehension, or fear, about where we will spend eternity. Use today’s lesson about your ascension to remind us that we too will go to heaven when you call us to do so. Amen.



You will need a **calendar** showing Easter Sunday and the 40 days after.



Display the calendar and mark Easter Sunday. Ask the children what happened on that day. [*Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to a number of his followers.*] Tell or remind the children that Jesus made other appearances to his followers during the days after Easter. Ask a volunteer to find and mark the day 40 days after Easter Sunday. Tell the children that 40 days after Easter, we celebrate Ascension Day. Ask what happened on the Day of Ascension. [*Jesus left the earth and ascended (went up) to heaven.*]



Aim

In today’s lesson you will learn what Jesus did for his disciples before he returned to heaven. Listen carefully to learn **how Jesus guided his disciples at his ascension.**



Note: Remember there are To Do at Home activity options in a separate file on the Teacher’s Guide CD.



If releasing balloons is not in conflict with local ordinances, take the children outside after telling the lesson. Release a **helium-filled balloon**, and have them watch it until it disappears from view. Remind them that the way they are watching the balloon is similar to how the disciples watched Jesus ascend into heaven.

After Jesus rose from the dead, he **stayed on earth** for **40 more days**. During that time he **showed himself** alive to his disciples **many times**. He ate with them, walked with them, and talked with them. **Sometimes** he met with **one person, sometimes** with a **group** of people, and at **one time** with **more than five hundred people** at once! He **did all this so that** his followers would have **no doubt that he was alive** and that he was their Savior.

During this time Jesus **also continued teaching** his disciples. He **wanted** them to clearly **understand God’s plan** for saving the world from sin because **soon** they would **teach** other people **how to be saved** through him. He told them, “**Don’t leave Jerusalem. Wait there for** the **gift** my Father promised—the one I told you about. For the **Holy Spirit** will be sent to you in a few days.”

At the **end of the 40 days**, Jesus **gathered his followers** together for the last time. He met with them **on the Mount of Olives**, near the town of Bethany. The **disciples still thought** that Jesus **might set up** his **kingdom** here **on earth**. So they **asked** him, “Lord, **is this the time** when you’re going to **make Israel a free nation** again?”

Jesus told his disciples **not to concern** themselves **about such things**. He said, “My **Father will decide** when that time comes. It is **not for you to know**.”

Jesus wanted his disciples to think only about the work that he had given them to do. He told them, “The **Holy Spirit will come** on you and **give you power and strength**. Then **you will be my witnesses**—men who will speak for me and tell people about me. You will **begin** right here **in Jerusalem**. **Then** you will talk about me **in Judea and Samaria**. Finally, you will witness about me to the **farthest corners of the world**.”

After Jesus said this, he **lifted his hands and blessed the disciples**. As he blessed them, an amazing thing happened. Jesus **began rising up** into the air! The **disciples saw him ascend** higher and higher until a **cloud hid him** from their sight, and they could not see him anymore.

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



If weather permits, have an outdoor lesson. As you tell the children about

Jesus’ ascension, find something to watch ascend and disappear from view, such as a bird, jet plane, or smoke (or a helium-filled balloon, as described in the primary **Learn**).



At the appropriate times have children point out Bethany, Jerusalem, Judea,

and Samaria on a **map**, such as **Copy Master 15**.



Ask If you would ask a little child, “Where is Jesus?” what do you think he would say? *[In heaven.]* Would he be right? *[Partly. Jesus is in heaven, but he’s also everywhere on earth.]*

Do Have the children read together John 14:2b,3.

Ask Why did Jesus go to heaven? *[To get a place ready for us there.]* Why is it good news for us that Jesus is also everywhere on earth? *[This means he is with us, watching over us and guiding us through our lives.]*

Say We often need guidance in our lives. It can be hard to know what decisions are best for us.

Ask How many of you know what job you want to have when you grow up? *[Answers will vary.]*

Say The disciples knew exactly what job they were going to do.

Ask In what way did Jesus want his disciples to continue his work? *[He wanted them to be his witnesses—to tell others that he is the risen Savior and let people know how they are saved.]* How are we like the disciples? *[We have the same job. We are to be Jesus’ witnesses.]*

As the **disciples stood there, staring** up at the place where they had last seen Jesus, **two angels** suddenly stood **beside them**. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “**why** do you **stand there looking up** into the sky? **Jesus** has gone **up to heaven**. One day he **will come back in the same way** you saw him go into heaven.”

Then the **disciples left** the Mount of Olives and **returned to Jerusalem full of joy**. As they waited for the Holy Spirit to come, they **spent** much of their **time in the temple, praising** God and **praying**.



Ask Why did Jesus appear to his disciples many times after he rose from the dead? *[So that they would have no doubt that he was alive and the Savior.]*

How would this help them with their work of witnessing about Jesus? *[Now they could tell others that they had seen him alive again with their own eyes.]*

Say Jesus also spent time teaching his disciples so that they would understand God’s plan of salvation.

Ask What was God’s plan for saving the world from the punishment for sin? *[It was for Jesus to live a perfect life, then die on the cross to pay for all sins, and rise again from the dead.]*

Why was it important for the disciples to understand God’s plan of salvation? *[So that they could teach others how to be saved.]*

What gift did Jesus promise that God would soon send to the disciples? *[The Holy Spirit.]*

Say Forty days after his resurrection, Jesus met with his disciples on the Mount of Olives.

Ask What did some disciples still think Jesus might do? *[Set up a kingdom on earth.]*

What did they still need to learn about Jesus’ kingdom? *[Jesus’ kingdom is in the hearts of those who believe in him.]*

Say Jesus told his disciples not to concern themselves with when the earthly nation of Israel would be free. Instead, he wanted them to concentrate on the work they would be doing for him.

Ask What did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would give the disciples?
[Power and strength.]

Why would the disciples need this power and strength?
[They would not be able to do Jesus' work on their own. The Holy Spirit would give them the power and strength to do their work.]

Do Ask the children how they would respond to a friend who says, "I wish God would send me some power and strength. I want to be stronger than my brother!" Help the children understand that Jesus was not promising physical strength and power to his disciples. Rather, the Holy Spirit would make them brave and eager to tell people about Jesus. And he would help them remember and understand what they had learned about Jesus.

Say Finish this sentence: "God sends his Holy Spirit to us every time we study his Word."

Ask As we study God's Word, what does the Holy Spirit give us power and strength to do? [He gives us power and strength to do his work here on earth—telling others about Jesus.]

What instructions did Jesus give his disciples about where they were to witness about him? [They were to begin in Jerusalem, then witness in Judea and Samaria, and finally tell about him in the farthest corners of the world.]

How is this command still being carried out today?
[Christians are still talking about Jesus all over the world.]

Say Jesus' disciples could be his witnesses because they saw Jesus do miracles, saw him after he rose from the dead, and saw him ascend into heaven.

Ask How can we be witnesses for Jesus if we haven't seen any of these things? [We learn about them from the Bible. The Holy Spirit gives us the faith to believe that everything the Bible tells us about Jesus is true. And God gives us the courage and strength to tell others about our Savior.]

Say This is how Jesus guides us to continue the work of witnessing about him.

Ask What happened as Jesus was blessing the disciples? [He began rising into the air, ascending into heaven.]

Over what does Jesus rule from his heavenly kingdom?
[All things.]

Say The angels said that one day Jesus would come back in the same way he went into heaven.

Say The disciples had Jesus right there with them, teaching them. We can't hear Jesus' voice teaching us how to continue his work.

Ask How does Jesus guide us today? [Through his Word.]

Say Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the disciples.

Ask What would the Holy Spirit give to the disciples? [Power and strength.] How do we get the power and strength to witness for Jesus? [Jesus sends his Holy Spirit into our hearts as well.] What does the Holy Spirit use to strengthen our faith and give us the power to witness for Jesus? [God's Word.]

Do Have the children name blessings we receive from God's Word, and write their answers in the form of a word web by writing "God's Word" in a circle on the board and drawing lines going out from that circle. List the children's answers at the ends of those lines. [Some possible answers: stronger faith, knowing the way to heaven, guidance for how to live for Jesus, power to be Jesus' witnesses.]

Say Just as Jesus guided his disciples at his ascension, he still guides us through his Word. And just as he promised to give them power through the Holy

Spirit, he gives us power to continue his work. How thankful we are that Jesus helps us be his witnesses!



Ask Were the disciples sad and afraid when Jesus had ascended into heaven? [No.] Why not? [Because before he ascended, Jesus guided them and made a promise to them.] How did Jesus guide his disciples at his ascension? [Jesus told his disciples to continue his work and promised them power from the Holy Spirit.]

Say Our ascended Lord still guides us and gives us power to continue his work. Let's look to God's Word for guidance and strength to witness for Jesus.

Do Sing "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus" (hymn 169:1,3) as a reminder that Jesus has saved us and that he is always with us.

Ask When will Jesus come for the second time? [Judgment day.]

Say The Bible tells us that the disciples returned to Jerusalem with joy in their hearts.

Ask Why would joy fill their hearts when Jesus had just left them? [They knew that Jesus would keep his promise to be with them always, and they were ready—after the Holy Spirit came—to begin their work of witnessing for him.]

Do Ask the children to agree or disagree with this statement: "I wish Jesus would have stayed here on earth to help us and take care of us." Help the children remember that even though we don't visibly see Jesus here on earth, he is still with us. From heaven, Jesus guides and rules all things. He is constantly watching over us and guiding our lives. Ask the children to volunteer specific statements of thanks to Jesus for his care and guidance. [Examples: "Jesus, thank you for watching over me as I walk to school" or "Dear Savior, thank you for protecting my family from the storm last night."]

CLOSE

Ask What important event happened 40 days after Jesus rose from the dead? [Jesus ascended into heaven.]

How did Jesus guide his disciples at his ascension? [Jesus told his disciples to continue his work and promised them power from the Holy Spirit.]

How does our ascended Lord still help us in a similar way? [Our ascended Lord still guides us and gives us power to continue his work.]

Say We look to God's Word for guidance and strength to witness for Jesus.

Do *Pray:* We praise you, almighty King of heaven and earth. Thank you for watching over us and guiding us. Bless us with your Holy Spirit so that we continue your work of telling people about you. Amen.



★ **Matthew 28:19,20**

1 John 2:1b

★ **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.

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him.

But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian church he daily and fully forgives all sins to me and all believers.

On the Last Day he will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

The Third Article reminds us that Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and give us the power to continue his work.

Hymn 173:1

On Christ's ascension I now build
The hope of my ascension.
This hope alone has always stilled
All doubt and apprehension;
For where the head is, there as well
I know his members are to dwell
When Christ shall come and call them.

OPTIONAL

mid-
week
Lesson

- Begin by singing "Draw Us to Thee" (hymn 170:1-4). With this hymn we pray that Jesus would guide us as we travel to heaven to be with him.
- Use **Activity 1** under **Lesson Activities** to review the story.
- Use **Activity 2** to look at how God uses specific Bible passages to guide us.
- Have the children sit in a circle. Ask them to think of some guidance that they have received from God's Word and to thank God for it. Give them these examples: "Thank you for showing me that you are the only God" and "Thank you for teaching me to treat other people with love." After giving the children a few minutes to think, go around the circle and have them take turns saying their thank-you prayers. Close the group prayer by thanking God for all the guidance he gives us in his Word.

Lesson Activities

1. Review

Ascending Hands

Purpose: To play a game that will review the lesson.

Procedure: Have the children put their heads down on their desks or a table so that they cannot look around. Then make statements about the lesson—some true, some false. Tell the children that each time you say something true, each of them should let a hand “ascend” (go up). If the statement is false, they should keep their hands down. After giving the children a chance to raise hands after each statement, tell them whether the statement was true or false. Any children who answered incorrectly should be “out” and sit up, although they could continue to raise their hands for true statements that follow. Continue in this way, challenging the children to see how many can stay in the game to the end.

2. Application

God Guides Us

Purpose: To find Bible passages that remind us of Jesus’ guidance.

Procedure: Have the children work in small groups to complete **Copy Master 1**, and discuss the answers as a class. The answers are as follows:


1. Ephesians 6:1,2; 2. Matthew 22:39; 3. Matthew 18:15; 4. Psalm 50:15; 5. Acts 5:29; 6. John 14:2,3

Encourage the children to use God’s Word to guide them whenever they face challenging questions in their lives.

3. Music

“Jesus Did It All for Me”

Purpose: To sing a song that reviews Jesus’ saving work and can be used for witnessing.

Procedure: Teach the children to sing “Jesus Did It All for Me”  (**Copy Master 2**). Point out that this song talks about all Jesus did to save us and how he ascended into heaven. Encourage the children to witness for Jesus by singing this song for friends and relatives who don’t believe in him as their Savior.

“A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing”

Purpose: To review the lesson events in song.

Procedure: Sing “A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing” (hymn 171:1-4). These hymn stanzas review the lesson events.

4. Art

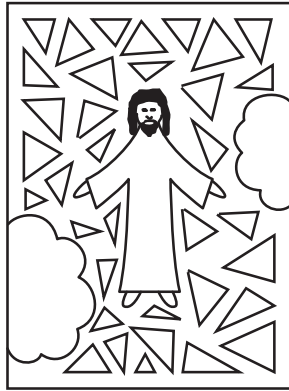
Mosaic Pictures

Purpose: To make mosaic pictures of Jesus ascending into heaven.

Procedure: Follow these steps:

- Give each child two 6" x 9" pieces of construction paper—one black and one white. Have the children draw on the white paper a picture of Jesus ascending and several clouds.
- Then have them cut out the figures and glue them onto the black paper.
- From various colors of construction paper, have the children cut triangles of assorted sizes. Have them glue these triangles onto the picture in a mosaic fashion around the figures of Jesus and the clouds. Black spaces may be left between the triangle shapes. (See diagram, next page.)

Encourage the children to display the pictures in their homes as reminders that their ascended Lord is watching over them.



5. Review and Apply

I Saw Jesus' Ascension

Purpose: To write an account of Jesus' ascension and to unscramble a prayer to our ascended Lord.

Procedure: Have each child complete **Copy Master 3**. The answers are as follows:

Part One: 40, Olives, Bethany, kingdom, Holy Spirit, witnesses, cloud, angels, heaven, Jerusalem (The last blank should be the name of one of the disciples.)

Part Two: Thank you, Jesus, for guiding us through your Word.

The Disciples and Us (Challenge)

Purpose: To have the children compare themselves to the disciples, who witnessed Jesus' ascension, and to write about the guidance they receive through God's Word.

Procedure: Have each child complete **Copy Master 4**. The answers are as follows:

Part One: Wordings will vary, but answers should be similar to the following:

We know that Jesus has risen because the Bible tells us so.

We have been taught in God's Word how people are saved.

We also have the job of being Jesus' witnesses.

We have been given faith and power by the Holy Spirit.

We are full of joy because we know that Jesus is our Savior.

Part Two: Answers will vary.

6. Other Ideas

Balloon Launch

Purpose: To give the children an opportunity to witness about their ascended Savior.

Procedure: As a follow-up to the storytelling idea in the **Learn** section and as a witnessing activity, allow the children to launch their own helium balloons. To each balloon, the children should tie a string with a postcard attached. The postcards should have a decorated message about Jesus (such as "Jesus died for you" or "Jesus loves you") on one side. On the other side write your church name, address, and worship service times along with the note "Thank you for finding this balloon. Please write to or visit our church soon and let us know where you found it!" After each child has signed his first name to a postcard, release the balloons outside. (Reminder: Be sure your local ordinances permit this!)