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The Ascension , Jesus Goes to Prepare a Place

Scripture: Luke 24:50-53, Acts 1:1-11

Theme: Jesus went to heaven but promised to come back

High School (Ages 15-18)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

This Sunday school lesson explores the profound theological weight of Jesus' Ascension, a moment that marks both the culmination of His earthly mission and the beginning of His intercessory work in heaven. Drawing from Luke 24:50, 53, we see Jesus ascending in the presence of His disciples after His resurrection, ascending in a cloud (Acts 1:9), while the apostles are left with a sense of both wonder and profound longing. Acts 1:1, 11 then contrasts this moment with the promise of His return, emphasizing that though He left them physically, He did not abandon them spiritually, He remains the bridge between heaven and earth, preparing a place for believers and interceding on their behalf. The lesson will unpack how this event reshapes our understanding of hope, the role of the Holy Spirit in th Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, lowprep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

After Jesus rose from the dead, He spent forty days appearing to His disciples in many places, teaching them about the kingdom of God (Luke 24:46, 49). On the evening of the same day He was taken up to heaven, the eleven disciples were gathered together in Jerusalem, still filled with fear and doubt. As they sat together, Jesus joined them in person, sat among them, and gave them a final lesson. He spoke of His death and resurrection, explaining how the Scriptures predicted all of this, and He urged them to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, that would empower them to spread the good news (Luke 24:48).",

One by one, the disciples left to tell others about Jesus' resurrection. Peter and John hurried to bury the body of Judas, who had betrayed Jesus, and then they returned to Jerusalem, where they rejoiced in the hope they had received. Jesus' last words to His disciples were not about leaving them behind, but about preparing the way for the

Holy Spirit's work. He told them, 'It is not for you to know the times or moments that the Father has set in His own authority' (Acts 1:7), but to focus on fulfilling His command to 'go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to every creature' (Acts 1:8).",

That same day, Jesus ascended into heaven while the disciples watched. Two men in white robes stood beside them, asking why they stood looking up into the sky. They explained that Jesus was taken up to heaven and would return in the same way. 'This same Jesus,' the angels declared, 'who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven' (Acts 1:11). The disciples were filled with awe and joy as they returned to Jerusalem, believing Jesus' promise of His return was real and imminent. Their hope was not just in His absence but in His return, one day soon, He would come again to fulfill His mission on earth.

The disciples' response to Jesus' departure was one of both sadness and anticipation. Peter, who had just mourned the loss of Judas, now faced the weight of the Great Commission with renewed determination. The apostles spent the next few days together in prayer, seeking God's guidance and power (Acts 1:14). Their unity and faith were tested as they waited, but their hope in Jesus' return kept them steady. Jesus' words to them were not empty promises but the foundation of their mission: their authority to speak in His name and work through the Spirit was tied to His return. Without it, their witness would be weak and ineffective.

As Jesus ascended, the two angels' presence was a reminder of divine sovereignty. Their appearance was supernatural, marking the transition from Jesus' earthly ministry to His heavenly throne. The disciples' gazes followed the cloud that carried Jesus away, symbolizing both His departure and the invisible work of God behind the scenes. The angels' message was clear: Jesus' return would be visible, just as His departure had been. This duality, His leaving and His coming back, was not a mystery but a promise woven into the fabric of God's redemptive plan. Their faith would be tested when Jesus was taken, but their trust in His return would fuel their courage to share the Gospel.

The disciples' return to Jerusalem was a turning point. They no longer hid in fear but gathered daily in the Upper Room, where they remembered Jesus' words. The Holy Spirit, promised for their empowerment, was now their constant companion. Their waiting was not idle; it was preparation. Jesus' promise of return was not just for their comfort but for their confidence. They would soon experience the power of the Spirit's descent, enabling them to preach the Gospel boldly, knowing that, though Jesus was gone, He was not forgotten. His return was not a distant hope but the guarantee of His continued work through them.

Key Verse

Acts 1:11 , 'This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.'

The key verse (Acts 1:11 , 'This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.') calls us to respond to God's truth.

Discussion Questions

- On Presence and Absence: Jesus physically ascended, yet claims to b
- On Mission and Preparation: In Luke 24 and Acts 1, Jesus states he
- On Worship and Action: The text describes the disciples being "fill
- On Power and Adversity: Acts 1 links the coming of the "power of th
- On Return and Presence: Jesus tells the disciples, "You will see hi

>> Missions Spotlight

In the Middle East, where Jesus physically ascended from the Mount of Olives, believers face intense pressure. Pray for Christians in Israel, Palestine, and Jordan who live in the very land where Jesus walked, died, rose, and ascended.

-> To the Cross

Jesus ascended to heaven, but He promised to return. The cross and resurrection made it possible for us to be with God forever. Jesus said, 'I go to prepare a place for you.' Because of the cross, we have a home in heaven waiting for us.