

# The Ascension

## What's happening in this story?

This story takes place after Easter but before Pentecost, when the Apostles receive the Holy Spirit. This passage describes Jesus' final farewell, as well as the commissioning of the disciples. This text is known as the Ascension story because Jesus is lifted up, and he disappears from their sight. Even once they can no longer see him, the disciples keep looking-hoping, perhaps, to catch a last glimpse, or to see him coming back. Two men in white robes appear beside them and redirect their attention. They assure the disciples that Jesus will return. The group leaves the mountain and returns to the city, where they gather together and devote themselves to prayer.

## What does this story mean for kids?

Kids can latch on to the tactile, exciting pace of this passage. For them, being in Jesus' presence as he's lifted up into heaven is compounded by their natural sense of trusting amazement. When they hear this story, they'll be reminded of Jesus' extraordinary nature, and it's their teacher's job to connect that idea to Jesus' divinity. After all, Jesus leaving his work in the hands of the apostles could seem like abandonment until you remember that Jesus is divine, and therefore always with us.

## Opening Conversation:

In today's Bible story, Jesus ascends. *Ascend* means to go up. Where do you think Jesus ascends to? Allow kids to respond. The disciples see Jesus ascend up toward the clouds. Jesus goes to be with God. Before he leaves, Jesus gives the disciples and us an important job. I wonder what job Jesus left us.

## Pass out Leaflet and markers:

Tear off the front leaflet panel. How do you learn stories? How do you tell stories? There are lots of ways to hear stories and tell others stories. Hold up a leaflet panel. Here are pictures of five ways to tell stories to other people. What are they? (We can share stories on the phone. We can read stories to one another from the Bible. We can tell each other stories in person. We can write stories to each other. And we can use books to learn stories and then share them.) Circle the ways you like to share stories with others.

## The Bible Story

Read the story from Acts 1:6-14. Ask these questions after you read the story:

1. Who was wondering about what would happen next?
2. What did Jesus tell the disciples?
3. Where did Jesus go?
4. Why should we share the stories of Jesus?



## **Pass out Leaflet, hole punch, yarn, and scissors:**

Using the white leaflet squares with the pictures of Jesus and the cross...

**Here are three pictures from our Whirl Story Bible. Each picture reminds us of a different story about**

Point to Jesus breaking bread. **Let's tell this Bible story.** With kids' help, tell the story "The Last Supper" (Luke 22:7-20) **Jesus ate the Passover meal with his friends.** Ask kids to pretend to break a loaf of bread. **Jesus blessed the bread saying, "Take this bread and eat it. This is my body. Whenever you eat this bread, remember me."**

Point to the cross. With kids, tell the story "Jesus Is Crucified" (Luke 23:44-48). Ask kids to make a cross using their arms. **Jesus and two other men died on crosses. Jesus said, "Father, into your hands I give my spirit."**

Have kids reverse fold their leaflets along the red dotted line, then punch a hole in the blue circle at the top of the page. Tie a length of yarn to each folded leaflet.

Gather near a door. Have your child throw their yarn over the door. Invite other children in your house to go behind the door, slowly pulling the yarn so that Jesus ascends. Switch groups so that everyone has a turn pulling and watching. Retell today's story, "The Ascension" (Luke 24:36-53).

**In our story, Jesus ascends, leaving the disciples to tell all the stories about God's love and about Jesus. Now you can tell these stories too!**

## **Circle up with kids for a quick review:**

Use your arms and hands to *tell* me (without words) what happened in our story. Allow kids to do so. **Jesus ascended into the clouds, leaving the disciples on earth to spread God's love. We can spread love and be disciples too!**

## **Pass out Leaflet:**

In the middle space on the leaflet, invite kids to draw pictures about today's story or other favorite Bible stories where Jesus does something amazing. Share later with family and friends.

## **End with a Blessing:**

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each child passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

**Extras:** The back of the Leaflet has fun activities to choose from and do at home.