

## LESSON 1

## JESUS GIVES THE GREAT COMMISSION AND ASCENDS

## LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit

**SCRIPTURE:** [Matthew 28](#); [Acts 1](#)

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Jesus—resurrected and alive—appears to the disciples on a mountain in Galilee. He commissions His followers to share the good news and promises to send the Holy Spirit as a helper, then ascends into the sky to heaven.

**WORD OF WONDER:** The Holy Spirit gives us power. —from [Acts 1:8](#)

## FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

**WHO?**

The 11 remaining disciples were with Jesus, and perhaps some of Jesus' other followers. Jesus told them to carry His message to Judea, Samaria, and to the whole world, which means that the good news was for everyone—not just the Jewish people.

**WHAT?**

The *What* is really a *Who*! Before ascending to heaven, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to help His followers complete the mission He gave them to share Jesus with the world. The Holy Spirit is God's powerful, wise, loving presence. The Holy Spirit is God.

**WHERE?**

Jesus brought His followers to the Mount of Olives ([Acts 1:12](#)). Mountaintops were locations conducive to seeing and hearing God. Just as Moses met with God on a mountain, Jesus taught from a hill or mountain ([Matthew 5:1](#)), which conveys His authority.

**WHEN?**

Jesus is thought to have lived about 33 years, with about three years devoted to public ministry. After Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared to His disciples and followers for 40 days before ascending to heaven.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, active throughout all of history. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit empowered people like Joseph, Moses, David, and Isaiah to represent God. Jesus promised that the same Spirit will be with His followers as they spread the gospel.

## Activity: Balloon Bop

Ahead of time, inflate one balloon and use a permanent marker to draw a face on it (or write the word “Jesus” on it). You may want to have extras in case one pops.

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

**Welcome! We’re going to talk today about Jesus telling the disciples He would send a helper to help us tell the world about God. And then Jesus floated up through the clouds to heaven! Come see what we have today. Let’s play and get curious.** Show the kids the balloon.

Invite the kids to keep the balloon up by bopping it.

**This balloon reminds me of Jesus going up to heaven. We’ll learn today about when He went up to heaven.**

If you have a helium-filled balloon, tie a string to it and release it, allowing the kids to watch it “float” up.

**You can help each other keep the balloon off the floor. It’s easier to do when you have a helper. We’ll learn today that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be our helper.**

## Activity: Floating Bubbles

**In God’s big story today, we’ll see how Jesus told His friends, the disciples, that a helper would come so they could tell the world about God. And then Jesus floated up through the clouds to heaven! Can you think of something else that floats?** Allow the kids to respond. **I have an idea ... bubbles! Let’s explore how bubbles float.**

Blow bubbles for the kids. Allow them to explore the bubbles by touching them and popping them. For older toddlers, allow them to try to blow the bubbles.

**Wow! Look at the bubbles floating up. In our God’s big story today, we’ll learn about when Jesus rose up to the clouds to go to heaven, kind of like our bubbles did! He didn’t leave us alone. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to be a helper for His followers.**

**Our Wonder Truth today is: JESUS SENDS THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

**JESUS**—*Point up.*

**SENDS**—*Hold your arms open in front of you, as if giving something.*

**THE HOLY SPIRIT**—*Move arms up and in a circle in front of your body, palms facing out.*

## Prayer and Blessing

Let's talk to God and thank Him for sending the Holy Spirit to help us.

**God, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to help us. God, help us to be excited as we go tell others about You and Your love. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

**Blessing:** Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to all who believe in Him and that includes us! Through the Holy Spirit, God is always with you and in you. May you walk in step with the Holy Spirit this week and always, receiving His help and power to share God's love!

### Activity: Sensory Clouds

Today we learned how Jesus wants us to tell everyone about God and that He would send us a helper to do that. Then Jesus rose up through the clouds to heaven. Jesus didn't leave us alone though. He promised to send the Holy Spirit. Let's play with cotton balls and make our own clouds so we can remember how powerful God is. You can help a friend gather as many cotton ball clouds as you can! Work together and help one another.

Give the kids cotton balls, bowls, cups, and scoops. Let them play with the cotton balls and make pretend cloud formations. Encourage the kids to help one another with the mission.

**Leader Tip:** Watch the kids closely as they play and remind them not to put cotton balls in their mouths.