

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.

Curiosity

Play Stations

Greet the kids warmly and briefly explain the play stations to them. Invite them to play at any of the stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Helpers

Set up: Set out toy people figures or dolls. If available, you can set out dollhouses, cars, toy animals, etc.

Play: Let the kids play with the figures and invite them to use the toys to act out scenarios where people help one another.

Play Station: Cotton Ball Clouds

Set up: Set out a bin filled with cotton balls. Provide a variety of scoops, tweezers or tongs, bowls, and cups.

Play: Let the kids play with the pretend "clouds" (cotton balls). Encourage them to work together to fill the containers and make different cloud shapes.

Play Station: Jesus Gives the Great Commission and Ascends Coloring Sheet

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids could also glue on cotton balls to make the clouds look more realistic (or turn it over and draw pictures of the sky).

Faith

Craft: Wind Chimes

Ahead of time, cut six pieces of yarn or string for each kid, of varying lengths. Tie the pieces of yarn or string to a twig or craft stick from one end of the twig to the other. This string will allow the wind chime to hang. Place the beads in bowls.

We're going to make wind chimes. You'll put beads on each piece of yarn. When you get the beads on the yarn, a leader will tie the end so you don't lose any beads. Invite the kids to put beads on their yarn, then help them tie the yarn so the beads stay on.

We can't see the Holy Spirit, kind of like we can't see the wind. But we can feel the wind. We can see things blowing in the wind (like leaves or wind chimes!). We can see the Holy Spirit working in our lives and helping us. We can feel the Holy Spirit's power inside of us. We can remember that even though we can't see the Holy Spirit, we can trust that the Holy Spirit is with us when we follow Jesus. You can take your wind chime home and hang it outside, where it can blow in the wind. When it does, may it remind you of the power of the Holy Spirit that is real and powerful!

Prepare an electric or portable battery-powered fan so it's ready to turn on when the kids finish their wind chimes.

Hold up an example of what they will be making and show how the fan moves the strings, so the beads make noise. You can play music from the [Power of the Spirit Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#) while kids are working on their wind chimes.

After the kids make their own wind chimes, show them how the wind can blow the pieces of string and beads, causing them to make noise when they knock into each other.



Identity

Closing Game: Pop the Bubbles

Today we learned that Jesus went up into the clouds to heaven. Have you ever played with bubbles? Allow the kids to respond. Bubbles can float up toward the sky like Jesus did when He went to heaven.

We're going to play a game of popping bubbles. I'll call out a body part you'll use to pop the bubbles. Don't let any bubbles hit the floor!

Call out the following body parts while blowing bubbles (or use a bubble machine):

- thumb
- pointer (index) finger
- pinky finger
- nose
- head
- elbow
- knee
- foot

If you don't have bubbles, you can have the kids pop balloons instead.

Remember, Jesus didn't just leave us alone! He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us!

Make It Inclusive: For kids who need extra help or visual cues, print pictures of each body part listed below and let kids pull out a picture and point to that body part.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them and thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to help us.

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

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out 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!