

# The Great Commission; Jesus Ascends to Heaven



Matthew 28:16-20



New Testament 5  
Part 2: Jesus' Last Week

## SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 5 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15b).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15b).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["The Ascension"](#)
- ["Our Lord Went Back to God"](#)
- ["Go Everywhere"](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Jesus' Ministry & Last Week](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "N.T. 5 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Crucifixion and Resurrection A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMERS: use the cards, *not the lesson book*; note on cards CE 7.4, 7.5, and 9.1 that the holes would have been in Jesus' wrists)

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can tell others that Jesus loves them. I can invite them to Bible class and worship service.



## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

What very sad thing happened to Jesus? But then what happened to Jesus that makes us very happy? Jesus had done everything on Earth that He was sent to do. Now it was time for Him to go be with God again. Before He left, though, He had special instructions for His 11 apostles. Let's see what He told them to do!

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson.

When your parents are going to be gone for a while (maybe to work, on a date, or to the store) and they don't take you with them, do they ever give you instructions (how to behave, what they want you to do while they're gone, etc.)? (Let the children tell instructions their parents give them.)

Jesus had accomplished everything He was sent to Earth to do. Now it was time for Him to leave His disciples and go back to heaven. But before He left, He had important instructions, not only for His 11 apostles, but for us as well. Let's see what He had to tell us all before He went back to heaven.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Jesus appeared to different people several times for 40 days after His resurrection, continuing to teach the apostles and others. Sometime during those 40 days, the 11 apostles went to a mountain in Galilee where Jesus had told them He would meet them (Matthew 26:32; 28:7,10).
2. Jesus reminded the apostles that He had been given "all authority" from God. This means that nobody has any authority on his own to do what he wants, without permission from Jesus (cf. Colossians 3:17). Using that authority, Jesus commanded the apostles to spread the "good news" (the Gospel), i.e., "that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name" (Luke 24:46-47). He told them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every **creature**..." (Mark 16:15-16).



**NOTE:** When Jesus told the apostles to preach to "every creature," He, of course, was not referring to animals—which could not be taught everything Jesus had commanded the disciples (Matthew 28:20). This may not be clear to the children if it is not explained.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article "[To Every Creature Under Heaven?](#)" by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about what Jesus meant when He commanded the apostles to preach to every creature under heaven.

3. He told them to make “disciples” (followers) by teaching people to do the things Jesus taught and “baptizing them in (“into”) the name (i.e., the authority) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). He said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16). [“he who does not believe is condemned already”—John 3:18b] We call these final instructions of Jesus to the apostles in these passages the Great Commission.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the articles “[Is Mark 16:9-20 Inspired?](#)” and “[The Strongest Argument Against Mark 16:9-20](#)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for discussion about the allegation that Mark 16:9-10 was not written by the hand of Mark.

4. Jesus had sent the apostles out to preach earlier in His ministry, but they had been sent only to the Jews—to their own countrymen. Before He went back to heaven, Jesus told them to preach to **all nations**—in other words, to **everyone**. They were not to keep the good news to themselves. They were to preach and to preach in Jesus’ name (by His authority). Jesus told them, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age,” indicating that He would be with them all the time, in every circumstance, as they taught others.
5. Then Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem for special power (miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit) that would help them to carry out the Great Commission, “even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NAS).
6. After Jesus had finished giving His final instructions to the apostles, He went up into the clouds as they watched.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[Did Jesus Begin His Ascension While in a Physical Body?](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for a response to an alleged difficulty regarding the ascension. See the article “[What will Happen when Jesus Comes Again?](#)” by Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about what Jesus’ Second Coming will be like.

7. They stood looking intently into the sky, even after He had disappeared. Then two men dressed in white (angels) asked them why they were just standing there looking into the sky. The angels said Jesus had gone to heaven and would return some day in the same way (in the clouds). In the mean time, the apostles had much work to do. “They returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Luke 24:52), and a few days later they were preaching to a large crowd in Jerusalem, just as Jesus had told them to do.
8. The apostles were supposed to tell others about Jesus, who would then tell others, etc. Today, Jesus expects us to carry on that work, telling others about His death and His resurrection, and how we can obey Him and worship Him. Missionaries are people who usually go to foreign lands to teach others about Jesus. But Jesus expects all of us to tell others about Him—those we come in contact with where we live and work and go to school.

**PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):**

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#)

**Ages 2-5:**

- [“The Great Commission Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- “Bible Bowling” game: Write review questions over lessons in this unit and put them inside empty toilet paper rolls. Set up the rolls in a horizontal line. Have the children stand in a line away from the toilet paper rolls. Let the children take turns rolling a foam or tennis ball to knock over a tube. Each child answers the question inside the toilet paper roll after he/she knocks it over. Play continues until all have answered at least one question. ([N.T. 5 Review Questions](#) provided on curriculum Web site)
- Print the words “Jesus went back to heaven.” on a white piece of cardstock cut in the shape of a cloud (one per child). Cut the cloud shapes into puzzle pieces. As children are putting their puzzle together, discuss how Jesus went back to heaven to live with God.
- Make a hop-scotch grid on the floor with masking tape. Let the children take turns tossing a beanbag onto a square on the grid, jumping to that square, and then answering a question about this and previous lessons. He/she can continue until he/she misses a question.
- Write key words from this lesson and previous lessons on large cards. Go over each word with the children. Then write each word on the board, with certain letters missing. Let the children fill in the blanks and tell what they remember about the word. (“[Key Words Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)

**1st-2nd Graders:**

- Review memory verses from this unit: Divide the class into two teams. As each team has a turn, give one key word from a verse. If the team can say the verse with that clue, they get five points. If they need another word, they get four points. If they need a third word, they get three points and so on. The teams take turns with the verses until all the verses have been said.
- Review books of the Bible: Have the children sit in a circle. Start by saying the first book in the New Testament. The child sitting next to you must say the second book, the next child the third, and so on. Continue until all the books have been said. Also, index cards could be made with the name of a book of the Bible on each; make as many index cards as you have students. Each child draws a card, one at a time, and says the book that comes before and/or after the book written on his/her card. (“[Review Books of the Bible Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- Make a sequencing activity with key points from lessons in this unit. Write/print the key points on strips of card stock (make two or three sets). Divide the class into two or three groups. Have the groups work together to put the events in the correct order. **Or** make one set of cards and give one strip to each child. Have them work together as a class to line themselves up in the correct order. (“[Sequencing Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- [“The Great Commission Crossword Puzzle”](#) (provided in activity sheets)

**3rd-4th Graders:**

- Review memory verses from this unit: Divide the class into two teams. As each team has a turn, give one key word from a verse. If the team can say the verse with that clue, they get five points. If they need another word, they get four points. If they need a third word, they get

- three points and so on. The teams take turns with the verses until all the verses have been said.
- Review books of the Bible: Have the children sit in a circle. Start by saying the first book in the New Testament. The child sitting next to you must say the second book, the next child the third, and so on. Continue until all the books have been said. Also, index cards could be made with the name of a book of the Bible on each; make as many index cards as you have students. Each child draws a card, one at a time, and says the book that comes before and/or after the book written on his/her card. (“[Review Books of the Bible Activity](#)” provided in activity sheets)
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  - “[The Great Commission Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
  - Have the children read the following:
    - “The Greatest Ascension” article from the [October, 2004](#) issue of *Discovery Magazine*
    - *Jesus Is Risen*, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing House (DISCLAIMERS: p. 15—change “wine” to “fruit of the vine”; p. 43—change “power” to “your kingdom” and change “wine” to “vinegar” in both places it occurs; p. 53—note that the holes would have been in Jesus’ wrists)
    - *Jesus Returns to Heaven*, by Robert Baden, Arch books (DISCLAIMERS: p. 3—change “Easter Day” to “a Sunday”; p. 5—change “Easter Day” to “the resurrection”; skip note to parents)
    - *The Great Commission: Jesus said, “Go and Tell!”* by Kari Vo, Arch books

## FINGERPLAYS:

### “THE ASCENSION”

Author: Unknown\*

(from *Bible Teaching Finger Plays*, by Marian White)

1,2,3,4,5	(count fingers)
Jesus went to heaven alive.	(spread hands upward)
6,7,8,9,10	(finish finger counting)
He is coming back again!	(clap hands softly)

## SONGS:

### “OUR LORD WENT BACK TO GOD” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: chorus of “Blessed Be the Name”)

Our Lord went back to God, He went back to God;  
 He went back to God in a cloud;  
 He went back to God, He went back to God;  
 He went back to God in a cloud.

Where is Jesus now? Where is Jesus now?  
 Sitting at the right hand of God.

Where is Jesus now? Where is Jesus now?  
 Sitting at the right hand of God.

He will come again; He will come again;  
He will come again in a cloud.  
He will come again; He will come again;  
He will come again in a cloud.

We will live with Him; we will live with Him;  
We will live with Him if we obey.  
We will live with Him; we will live with Him;  
We will live with Him if we obey.

**“GO EVERYWHERE” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Bannie Burt  
(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)

Go everywhere, Go everywhere,  
In the world, in the world;  
Go and tell the Good News; go and tell the Good News, to  
Everyone, everywhere.

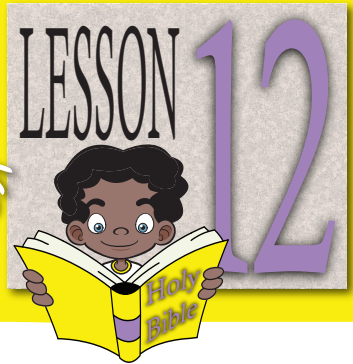
He who believes and is baptized,  
Will be saved, will be saved.  
Go and tell the Good News; go and tell the Good News, to  
Everyone, everywhere.

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE  
“SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE  
CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



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Matthew 28:16-20



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## WEDNESDAY EVENING

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## PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can tell others that Jesus loves them. I can invite them to Bible class and worship service.

## INTRODUCTION:

Review [N.T. 5 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “N.T. 5 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

## POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson (see [N.T. 5 Review Questions](#) for example questions)

Continue lesson with information about the choosing of a new apostle to take Judas’ place (Acts 1:12-26).

## PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson

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