

Into the Clouds

Jesus returns to heaven
Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:4-12

Character Trait: Generosity

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recall that Jesus returned to heaven.
- Children will draw or write their personal response to Jesus' promise to return one day.
- Children will discuss examples of God's generosity.
- Children will share specific ways that they can share the Good News with others.

Supplies:

- *Into the Clouds* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- Paper
- Glue
- Cotton balls
- Coloring supplies

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children.

SAY: It has been wonderful to learn more about God and His Word, the Bible, together. Turn to someone near you and briefly share what your favorite activity or lesson has been. *(Provide a few moments for sharing.)* It is natural to want to share good news with other people.

In today's lesson, we will learn about Jesus' return to heaven and the instructions He gave His disciples to share the Good News about Him.

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following:

- **What did the women discover when they visited Jesus' tomb?** *(Jesus was not there. He had risen from the dead.)*
- **What did Jesus' disciples think they saw when Jesus appeared to them?** *(A ghost)*
- **What did Jesus say was now possible because of what He had done?** *(Everyone's sins can be forgiven if they turn to God.)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *Into the Clouds* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- It was time for Jesus to go to heaven.
- He led His disciples to the top of a mountain near Jerusalem.
- "Here's what I want you to do," He said.
- "Wait in Jerusalem until you receive the promised Holy Spirit. Then tell everyone about Me. Go from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, and then to the rest of the world!"

- "Make many disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teach them everything you learned from Me. I will always be with you."
- When He had said this, Jesus rose into the sky.
- Up He went until He disappeared into a cloud.
- His disciples watched Him.
- They stood there, staring into the sky.
- Two men, dressed in white, appeared.
- "Jesus has gone to heaven," they explained. "He will come back in the same way!"
- So the disciples obeyed Jesus and went to Jerusalem.



Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **Where did Jesus lead His disciples?** *(To the top of a mountain near Jerusalem)*
- **What did Jesus tell the disciples to do?** *(Wait in Jerusalem for the promised Holy Spirit. Tell everyone in the whole world about Him. Make many disciples. Baptize people and teach them everything they learned from Jesus.)*
- **Where did Jesus go?** *(He went to heaven.)*
- **What was the last thing Jesus said before He left?** *(I will always be with you.)*
- **How did Jesus return to heaven?** *(He rose up into the sky and disappeared into a cloud.)*
- **After Jesus left, who appeared to the disciples?** *(Two angels dressed in white)*
- **What did the two angels tell the disciples?** *(Jesus will come back the same way!)*

SAY: When Jesus returned to heaven, He told us He would always be with us. Jesus left us with two gifts: His Holy Spirit to help us and the promise that He would someday return to earth again.

God's Holy Spirit lives inside the hearts of those who choose to accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness. This does not mean that something comes to live inside your physical heart. It means that God's Spirit becomes part of you and starts to change your thoughts and feelings to be more like His. The Holy Spirit is our helper and guide when we make the decision to listen to, learn from, and obey Him.



God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: After Jesus completed His work on the cross, He returned to heaven. He sent His Holy Spirit to help us so that we would not be alone until He returns again. While we wait for Jesus' return, it is important to share with others the Good News of the forgiveness that Jesus offers.

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

Jesus *(touch your middle finger to the other palm, then switch)*
has been taken from you into heaven *(lift arms up slowly)*,
but someday he *(point up)*
will return from heaven *(slowly bring arms down to the ground)*
in the same way you saw *(place hand over your brow and look around)*
him go!

Acts 1:11b (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

Choose two corners of the room as locations where the children are to go as they answer the questions "true" or "false." Then, share a question about the story and have them move to the corner they think is the right answer. Have one corner of the room designated for true statements and another corner designated for false statements. Upon hearing the statement: "Jesus took an airplane to return to heaven," have children move to one of the two corners, according to whether they believe the statement is true or false. Some statements for the story include:

- **No one saw Jesus return to heaven.** *(False. The disciples watched Jesus leave.)*
- **Jesus said to tell everyone about Him.** *(True)*
- **Jesus will return to earth again one day.** *(True)*
- **Jesus left His disciples and us all alone.** *(False. Jesus sent God's Holy Spirit to help us.)*
- **Jesus will return the same way that He left.** *(True)*

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

SAY: As Jesus' disciples watched Him leave, two angels appeared and said that Jesus will come back in the same way!

Give each child a piece of paper and have them fold it in half *(like a card)*. Next, invite them to color the outside of the folded paper like the sky. Provide cotton balls and glue for the children to create clouds. Then, ask the children to unfold the paper and draw or write about how this promise makes them feel.

Character Trait: Generosity

(10 minutes)

SAY: Generosity means giving freely to others. It means sharing what we have with other people. We can share physical things like food and clothing, and we can also share things that are not material such as our time, skills, and talents.

Encourage the children to think more about generosity by asking the following:

- **Think of a time someone was generous towards you. What did they share with you, and how did it make you feel?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **Think of a specific time you showed generosity. What did you share and with whom?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **What are some ways God has been generous with us?** *(He loved us enough to give His one and only Son, Jesus. He made a way to save us from our sins. He sent His Holy Spirit to be our helper and guide.)*

Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: Jesus showed the ultimate generosity by giving His life as payment for our sins. This means that He took the punishment that we deserve. His love was so great that we can now have freedom and blessings in God!

Now, Jesus wants us to be generous by sharing this wonderful news, so that others can also accept His free gift. Do your friends and family know about Jesus and how they can accept His forgiveness? What are some specific ways that you can share His Good News with them? *(Call on a few volunteers to share aloud. Answers will vary but may include telling others about the difference Jesus has made in their own lives and sharing what they have learned about God's Word with others.)*

Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: Jesus is no longer physically here on earth, but He did not abandon us. He loves each and every one of us too much to leave us all alone. When Jesus left this earth, He sent God's Holy Spirit to help and guide everyone who believes in Him. We also have God's Word, the Bible. It can help us learn more about God, His Big Story for us all, and how to follow Jesus' example. The Bible is not just a book. It is a collection of many true stories that work together to tell God's bigger, greater story: His love for us all!

Prayer:

(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
Your generosity cannot be measured. Your love for us knows no end. We are thankful to be part of Your great story. Help us to share the Good News with others so that they can come to know You, too.
Amen.

Notes