



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 43

THE ASCENSION

Jesus left, but He will return.



MONDAY

THE STORY: ACTS 1:1-5

Luke is the author of the Book of Acts, which is really just a continuation of the Gospel he wrote. We have four Gospels, but we only have one Book of Acts, thanks to Luke. In his opening, Luke gives a recap of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He mentions that Jesus gave many convincing proofs that He was alive again. Many have tried to discredit the resurrection, but it is one of the most documented ancient events, with multiple witnesses. Luke reminds us of Jesus' charge to the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Although Jesus had breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit, they were expecting and waiting for a greater outpouring of the Spirit's power.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Does Luke believe Jesus rose again? How do you know? (Yes. Luke tells us that He appeared and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive.)

What are some of the convincing proofs Jesus gave? (Jesus ate with His disciples and allowed the disciples to touch the nail scars on His hands.)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for all the testimony He left, which makes it easy for us to believe that He, indeed rose again from the dead.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: ACTS 1:6-11

Jesus ascends into heaven. Just before Jesus was lifted up to heaven, the disciples asked the Lord if He was going to restore the kingdom to Israel. They seemed to still be a bit confused about what the restored kingdom was all about. It is a good thing for us that Jesus did not restore the kingdom because we wouldn't have been a part of it. Now we get to enjoy everlasting life with God in heaven!

After He answered the disciples, Jesus was taken up while they were watching. A cloud hid Him. Like we might search for a balloon floating up in the sky, the disciples looked intently, hoping to catch another glimpse of the ascending Lord. Suddenly two men dressed in white appeared and made a wonderful announcement. Jesus would return one day just as He left! Today, we still look forward to His return. Though it is not for us to “know the times or dates,” we should pray for His soon return.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Although the ascension would have been a sad parting for the disciples, Jesus gave them hope for the future. What hope did Jesus leave them with? (Jesus told them He was going to send the Holy Spirit and would return again one day.)

Do we have the same hope? (Yes. Every believer has the Holy Spirit living within. Imagine, God living in our hearts! And we, too, should long for the return of Christ.)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for the Holy Spirit and pray for Christ's quick return.



WEDNESDAY WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: LUKE 24:50-53

If there were any lingering doubts that Jesus was God, they were silenced at His ascension. During the forty days before the Ascension, Jesus had appeared on a number of occasions to the disciples. Each time He was met with doubters. This time, doubters and fear are not mentioned. What a tender moment it was as the Lord said goodbye. For three years these men had lived with the Lord. They had learned much and were arguably the most privileged men on earth. They not only saw the Lord, but they also walked with Him, laughed with Him, were afraid with Him and for Him, watched Him die, and then saw Him risen.

Jesus blessed them and was taken up into heaven. Their last act was to worship the man they had come to believe was God. From there, they went to the temple, where they praised God continually. Likely the curtain, torn in two at the death of Christ, was sewn together again. These men, however, now understood the gospel. Never again would another sacrifice for sin be needed. Jesus, the Lamb of God, had been slain - for them, for you, and for me.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What did the disciples do after Christ's ascension? (The disciples worshipped Jesus and then, filled with great praise for God, returned to the temple.)

What does this tell us about the kind of men they were? (They clearly believed and obviously loved the Lord with all their hearts.)

Will we ever get to share the privilege of seeing Jesus face to face? (Yes! When we go to heaven, not only will we see Him face to face, but we will also have all eternity to hear these same stories from His mouth!)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for His ministry on earth and His ongoing ministry in our hearts.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: ACTS 1:12-14

The disciples return to Jerusalem to wait. The disciples returned from the Mount of Olives and met together in the upper room. They were joined by Mary, the mother of Jesus, along with His brothers. What a joy it must have been for them to relay the story of Jesus' ascension to Mary. She had an incredible life. She experienced the visit of the first angel, witnessed His miracles, agonized through the suffering of her son, rejoiced at the joyful news of His resurrection, and, now, learned of His ascension into heaven. This is the last we hear of Jesus' mother Mary.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why were the disciples meeting? (They were waiting for the Holy Spirit, as Jesus had commanded them.)

Was Mary special? (Mary is not given any special attention in Scripture except when Christ, on the cross, charged John with her care. Mary was a blessed woman, but she was a sinner like me and you. It is good to see her, and the brothers of Jesus, present as believers in the upper room. We will see the whole family in heaven!)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for the way He preserves the faith of those who believe in Him.



FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

THE STORY: ZECHARIAH 12:10,11

John connects this passage to Jesus. The soldiers pierced the side of Jesus instead of breaking His legs, since he was already dead. Jesus endured much suffering for us.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What does it mean to mourn? (Mourning is the emotion of sadness we feel when we have lost someone close to us, usually because of serious sickness or death.)

Who would have mourned the death of Jesus? (The disciples, His family on earth, and others who believed in Him.)

Do we still mourn over the death of Jesus? (Yes, in part, we mourn. When we consider how our sin caused Jesus to suffer and die, the sadness that comes could be considered mourning for Him. But we also know that He rose again. What a joy it is to know our sins are forgiven and that Jesus could not be held by death!)

PRAY:

Thank the Lord for suffering for us for us so we could be forgiven.