

# SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

## WEEK 25

### Jesus returns to heaven

Acts 1:1-11



## DAY 1

Jesus taught the apostles to witness • Acts 1:1-3

### READ

Acts 1:1-11

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Acts 1:1-3

The book of Acts is about the actions that Jesus did through His apostles by the power of the Holy Spirit. For the apostles to continue Jesus' work and teaching, they needed several things. First, they needed to be the right kind of people. Jesus had already taken care of that. Relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:21-22; 4:18-19), Jesus had chosen these key men to go and bear much fruit (John 15:16). Second, they needed unshakable confidence, so Jesus kept appearing to them over the course of forty days, proving that He was alive and validating His message (1 Cor 15:5-7, 14). Third, they needed to know what to say and do, so Jesus taught them about the **kingdom of God**, which is the realm of God's rule over those who belong to Him. This applied to the apostles' mission in two ways. First, their mission was to extend God's kingdom by calling all people to submit to Jesus as Lord (Acts 2:36). Second, their mission was to make God's kingdom visible on earth by teaching His people to live as His loyal subjects (2:42; 5:29).

### ASK

1. What is the book of Acts about?  
*It is about what Jesus continued to say and do through His apostles by the Spirit.*
2. How did Jesus give the apostles confidence to speak and act?  
*He appeared to them many times.*
3. How long did Jesus keep appearing to the disciples?  
*For 40 days.*
4. What did Jesus teach the apostles about?  
*God's kingdom: the realm of God's rule over His people.*

### DISCUSS

1. What can you do to become the right kind of person, experience Jesus' presence, and learn what to say and do?
2. How can we know that our work for Jesus is not in vain (1 Cor 15:20, 58)?

## DAY 2

Jesus ordered the apostles to wait for the Holy Spirit • Acts 1:4–7

### READ

Acts 1:1–11

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Acts 1:4–7

This is no easy mission! Israel had failed at this same mission (Exod 19:6; Isa 43:10), so not even the apostles were able to do it by their own strength. They needed to wait in Jerusalem until the Father sent the Holy Spirit to work more directly, more permanently, and in more people than ever before (Isa 32:15; Ezek 36:27; Joel 2:28). Jesus called this a “baptism” because just as John baptized people by immersing them in water (Matt 3:11), so *baptism in the Spirit* would happen when Jesus pours out the Spirit over believers (Acts 2:33). All this talk of the Spirit sounded to the apostles like the prophecies about Israel’s restoration (Isa 32:15–18; Ezek 36:27–38), so it’s no surprise they thought Jesus’ earthly kingdom might soon be established. In response, Jesus did not correct their grasp of the kingdom itself. But He did rebuke them for asking about the kingdom’s timing. When Israel rejected their King, Jesus taught that His kingdom on earth was delayed until His return (Luke 19:11; Matt 19:28), but the time of His return is not for us to know (Matt 24:36–42).

### ASK

1. Who did Jesus say would come and give them power?  
*The Holy Spirit.*
2. What did the Father promise even back in the Old Testament?  
*He promised to pour out His Holy Spirit to give cleansing and power.*
3. What did the apostles think might soon be established?  
*Jesus’ earthly kingdom.*

### DISCUSS

1. Why would the apostles be unable to accomplish their mission in their own strength (2 Cor 10:3–4; Eph 6:12)?
2. Whose strength have you been relying on? How can you rely on the Holy Spirit?

## DAY 3

The Holy Spirit would empower the apostles to witness • Acts 1:8

### READ

Acts 1:1–11

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Acts 1:8

The Holy Spirit did not come to help us do whatever we want. He came to empower people to witness about Jesus. Just as Jesus came to tell the truth about the Father (John 1:18; 18:37), so the apostles were to continue that mission by telling the truth about Jesus. Since they were continuing Jesus’ mission, they needed to be empowered by the Spirit just like Jesus was (Luke 3:21–22; 4:1). The apostles were appointed

to found the church (Eph 2:20) and to write Scripture (John 14:26; 16:13), so the Spirit also gave them power to do miracles to prove that their testimony was true (Heb 2:2–4). The rest of Acts records the result: they successfully witnessed in Jerusalem (Acts 1–7), in Judea and Samaria (8:1–11:18), and beyond as far as Rome (11:19–28:31). Now that the Spirit has come, all believers are baptized in the Spirit at the moment of conversion (1 Cor 12:13; Rom 8:9). Although the miraculous gifts applied only to the time of the apostles, all believers continue to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to grow Christ’s church (1 Cor 12:7, 11).

**DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

**ASK** 

1. What did the Holy Spirit give them power to do?  
*Be Jesus' witnesses.*
2. Where were the apostles supposed to be witnesses about Jesus?  
*In Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*
3. Now that the Holy Spirit has come, when are Christians baptized with the Holy Spirit?  
*At the moment of conversion.*
4. How can you experience the Holy Spirit's power?  
*By being born again through faith and repentance, then submitting to the Spirit by trusting His power and obeying God's Word.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. Are all Christians supposed to be Jesus' witnesses, or is that something that only pastors and missionaries do?
2. When was the last time you told someone about Jesus? How can you be Jesus' witness today?

**DAY 4***Jesus' ascension motivated the apostles to witness • Acts 1:9–11***READ** 

Acts 1:1–11

**EXPLAIN** **The truth of Acts 1:9–11**

After giving His apostles final instructions, Jesus ascended. Since Jesus went up into the sky, it's no surprise that He became hidden in a cloud. But this cloud was also a final proof that Jesus is the God of glory. It was like the cloud that hid Him during His transfiguration (Luke 9:34–36), and like the bright cloud of God's presence that had appeared at the Red Sea (Exod 14:19–20), on Mt Sinai (24:16–19), in the tabernacle (40:34), and in the temple (1 Kgs 8:10–11). When the apostles saw Jesus "taken up in glory" (1 Tim 3:16), it gave them confidence that He is even now seated at God's right hand (1 Pet 3:22). He is Lord, reigning from heaven and giving His church authority and power to accomplish its mission (Acts 2:33–36). But at that moment, the apostles kept looking, perhaps wondering if the cloud would go away and Jesus would reappear as He had during His transfiguration. Instead, angels gave them one final encouragement: the glorious cloud of Jesus' ascension is a clear sign that He will one day return in an even greater cloud of glory (Luke 21:27).

**ASK** 

1. After Jesus said all this, where did He go?  
*Up into a cloud to heaven.*
2. How did the angels encourage the apostles?  
*By telling them that Jesus will one day return in an even greater cloud of glory.*
3. How does Jesus' ascension encourage us to be His witnesses?  
*It shows us His glory as the true God, He is in heaven and can be with us spiritually always, and He will one day come back in a cloud of glory.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. At this point, could there be any doubt in the apostles' minds that Jesus was exactly who He said He was?
2. Since Jesus will return to earth in the same way, how should we use our time while He is away?

# DAY 5

Be filled with the Holy Spirit • Ephesians 5:18

## READ

Ephesians 5:15–6:4

## EXPLAIN

### The truth of Ephesians 5:18

Now that the Holy Spirit has come, every Christian is indwelt and baptized by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation (Rom 8:9–11; 1 Cor 12:13). But that does not mean that every Christian enjoys the blessing and power of the Spirit's ministry. We are commanded to be filled with the Spirit, showing that it is something we may be lacking. To experience the Holy Spirit's power, we must not grieve the Spirit by our sin (Eph 4:30). Instead, we must allow the Spirit to have control in our lives (5:18). We do this by obeying the Spirit-inspired Word of God (Col 3:16), confessing sin, and surrendering to God's will. When we do this, the Spirit will work through us more powerfully than we thought possible (Eph 3:16, 20). After all, this is the same Spirit that empowered Jesus for ministry on earth! As we walk in the Spirit, He will produce the fruit of righteousness in our lives (Gal 5:16–23). And one day, by the Spirit's power, the church will finish what the apostles began, spreading the news of Jesus to every nation.

## ASK

1. Why are we commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit?  
*Because we forfeit the Spirit's ministry when we grieve Him.*
2. How are we filled by the Spirit?  
*By obeying the Spirit-inspired Word of God, confessing sin, and surrendering to God's will.*
3. Was Jesus filled with the Spirit while on earth?  
*Yes!*
4. What does the Spirit do as we walk with Him?  
*He produces the fruit of righteousness in our lives.*

## DISCUSS

1. What do you do each day in order to obey God's command to be filled with the Spirit?
2. The "filling of the Spirit" (Eph 5:18) and the "word of Christ" (Col 3:16) produce the same results. What are these results?

## NEXT WEEK

### The Holy Spirit arrives

Acts 2:1–47

