

Unit 33, Session 5: Jesus Ascended to Heaven

Acts 1:3-11

Christ Connection:

Preschool: Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit helps us do God's work on earth while we wait for Jesus to come back and make everything new!

Kids: Jesus left earth and returned to heaven, but He did not leave us alone. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to be with us and help us do God's work. One day Jesus will return to make all things new and to rule as Lord over all.

Adult Connection Point:

Read Acts 1:3-11 and 17:16-34.

The gospel story takes us from a beautiful creation and the uniqueness of humanity created in God's image through the devastation of the fall, showing the need for and the glory of the cross of Christ that provides eternal life and restoration. Yet the message of the gospel is incomplete without a call to respond. Each person must personally receive the salvation offered by Jesus through His people. Paul challenged his hearers to repent and believe (Acts 17:30-31). And the same Spirit that empowers our mission is the Spirit who works in the hearts of those with whom we share the gospel, urging to them to respond to our message with repentance and faith. Hence, a person's refusal to believe the gospel does not mean that we have failed in our preaching. It simply means that the Spirit has yet to transform their hearts in such a way as to enable them to respond to our preaching with saving faith (John 3:5-8; Acts 11:18; 16:14).

We live in an increasingly secularized culture that sees conviction about Jesus as more of a vice while tolerance toward a vague spirituality is considered a virtue. In such a society of political correctness, we may not be aware of just how timid we can be in calling people to follow Jesus. Think about this: Paul found himself in a setting of unbelievers who had no respect for the Old Testament or for any exclusivist claims like a singular, resurrected Jesus. Yet he boldly called them to repent, and he warned them of judgment (vv. 30-31). We must do the same.

In verses 32-34, we see three possible responses of people when we share Jesus. Take note of these:

- **Some mocked.** Yes, it is sad, but not all will love Jesus as we love Him. Not all will want His message. Some will mock us. In fact, if no one ever mocks us for our witness, it's a good sign we are not witnessing!
- **Some wanted to hear more.** Many people today have not rejected Jesus; they have rejected a caricature of Jesus. No one has ever really told them the truth of the gospel story. This is why every gospel conversation matters, because even if people do not respond, we might have the opportunity to speak more with them later.
- **Some believed.** Yes, if you are faithful to witness, in God's timing, you will also be fruitful. What could be more amazing than knowing God used you in His great plan to touch someone for eternity!

Not everyone we share the good news with will follow Christ (most did not when Christ Himself called them). But as we share, we are being faithful to the commission Jesus has given us, and that is all He has asked of us.