

Explore It FOR LEADERS



THE ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

📖 **Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:9-11** Jesus talks to his followers

🎯 **AIM: To enter into surprising stories more deeply through drama**

In our final session this month, Jesus gathered with his disciples for the last time before he was taken up to Heaven. He gave important instructions to his followers and made a promise that filled his disciples with hope for the future. Today the children have an opportunity to bring Scripture to life through drama.

Each child will need:

- Ascension Bible verses handout
- Prayer handout

Start It

💬 **Say:** In today's session Jesus leads the disciples to a mountain. To help you imagine the scene, have a go at this Mountain quiz together.

Quiz

Summer of adventure: mountain quiz by Beano.com
www.beano.com/posts/summer-of-adventure-mountain-quiz

Ask: What one fascinating fact did you discover about mountains that you didn't know before?

Sing It

💬 **Say:** In today's story the disciples spent time worshipping Jesus. We are going to do the same by sharing our memory verse together.

Memory verse

**'You are my God, and I will thank you.
You are my God, and I will praise your greatness.
Thank the Lord because he is good.
His love continues for ever.**

— (Psalm 118:28-29 *ICB*)

💬 **Say:** Now that we have been reminded of the importance of praising God and giving thanks, let's join together and sing a song of worship.

'Lord I Lift your Name on High' by Hometown Nazareth (2 mins 13 secs)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9VERJSESCo

Tell It

💬 **Say:** We are going to watch a clip that recaps the story of Jesus so far and tells us what happens next.

Video

Jesus' ascension – God's masterpiece, God is with us by Saddleback Kids (2 mins 58 secs)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcFw8pLBSIo

Say: We are going to look at some parts of this story in a bit more detail. To do this we will need to turn to Scripture.

Give each child a copy of the Ascension Bible verses handout.

Read:

'The 11 followers went to Galilee. They went to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. On the mountain they saw Jesus and worshipped him. But some of them did not believe that it was really Jesus. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptise them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have told you. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of the world.'"

— (Matthew 28:16-20 ICB)

Discuss:

- What was the first thing that the disciples did when they saw Jesus?
- Why do you think some of the disciples still struggled to believe that Jesus was alive?
- How do you think you would have felt if you had been there?
- What did Jesus ask his disciples to do?
- What promise did he make to them?

Say: To find out the next part of the story, we're going to jump to Acts 1:9-11.

Read:

'After he said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up. A cloud hid him from their sight. As he was going, they were looking into the sky. Suddenly, two men wearing white clothes stood beside them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into the sky? You saw Jesus taken away from you into heaven. He will come back in the same way you saw him go.'"

— (Acts 1:9-11 ICB)

Ask:

- What do you find surprising about this story?
- Who do you think the two men wearing white were?

Say: Show me what your face would have looked like if you had been there (give the children time to react). This is a pretty amazing story and would have been a dramatic scene to witness. Jesus returned to Heaven but promised the disciples that he would always be with them. That same promise applies to us today.

Action It

Explain to the group that this weekend children from around the United Kingdom and Ireland gather to take part in The Salvation Army's Musical Theatre Day. For the Action It activity, the children have the opportunity to create a short piece of drama retelling today's story.

If there are children who are reluctant to join in with the acting, then they can plan their own version to be shown on the big screen. They can think about where they would set this scene and who they would cast as their main characters. If there is time, then they could create a script as well.

Give the children time to complete the activity and then share your creations together.

Pray It

Say: In our story Jesus gathered the disciples together, gave them special tasks to perform, and made a promise he would always keep. Let's remind ourselves what Jesus said in Matthew 28.

Read:

'Then Jesus came to them and said, "All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptise them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have told you. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of the world."'

— (Matthew 28:18-20 *ICB*)

Say: Unlike many others in the Church, The Salvation Army does not hold special services where we baptise using water. Instead, it is good to know that Jesus still comes to us through his Holy Spirit and baptises us in this way too. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we can make followers of Jesus and teach the world all about him.

Say: To bring this session to a close we are going to read this prayer together.

Give each child a copy of the prayer and read it together. Encourage the children to take the prayer home as it links to the *Explore It For Me* activity.

Read:

Dear Jesus,

We have learned so much from you in our *Explore It* sessions this month. Thank you for dying on the cross to save us. Through the power of your Holy Spirit, help us to do what you have asked us to do and tell the world about your story. Thank you for your promise that you will always be with us.

Amen.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

APRIL
SESSION 05

THE ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

 Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:9-11 Jesus talks to his followers

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FOR ME

TOGETHER



Pray

In this week's session you were given a prayer that we shared together. Take time to read through this prayer every day over the following week. Ask God to give you the courage to tell others about Jesus. Remember that Jesus has promised that he will always be with you.



Create

Ask someone at home to help you follow the instructions to make a paper mountain. Maybe they could have a go at making one themselves. Your mountain will remind you that no matter what you face, Jesus has promised he will always be with you.

Origami mountain by Origami Picture Book
www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVf8KC-V7D4



Song for the week

'Lord I Lift your Name on High' by
Hometown Nazareth

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9VERJSECo



Memory verse

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You are my God, and I will praise your greatness.

Thank the Lord because he is good.

His love continues for ever.'

— (Psalm 118:28-29 ICB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

