
“What Next? Christ’s Post-Resurrection Appearances and Ascension”

Sunday School Lesson from Luke 24, John 20, Acts 1



It is critical, of course, to study the work and death of Jesus. But all of that is rather meaningless if Christ did not also rise again as He promised. Then what? Following the events of Easter, Jesus appeared to the disciples and gave them instructions regarding what to expect and to do in remembrance of Him and to carry on His work on earth. This lesson visits important elements of these events, culminating with the Ascension and its importance.

Age Range: Upper elementary/middle grades (adaptable older or younger)

Bible Focus: What happened after Easter; Christ’s appearances following resurrection

Highlight verses: Luke 24, John 20, Acts 1

Student application: We are all called to follow the Great Commission, and to celebrate and serve Jesus.

Materials Needed: Baking soda and vinegar or Alka-Seltzer tablets, raisins, clear fizzy soda, cups, yarn/string, cotton balls, glue, decorative materials.

Bonus Ideas: Some more inspiration for your teaching.

- Watch a teaching example of our [Children’s Sermon on the Ascension](#)
- See another [Ascension Children’s sermon](#) from Sermons 4 Kids
- Compare our other [Sunday School lessons on the Ascension](#) and [Jesus’ Final Instructions to the Disciples](#)
- Download the [R is for Resurrection coloring page](#)

Introduction Object Lesson: Bubbling Up

Bubbling up...take an Alka-Seltzer tablet or two and drop them into a glass of water. Demonstrate the fizz and pop of the bubbles. After a minute the carbonation may appear to go down. Stir up the water and watch the bubbles fizz up again.

Other options: watch “dancing raisins”: place clear soda into a glass. Add raisins and watch how they “dance” up to the surface!

Pour vinegar over baking soda and observe the foam that piles up (note: this one can be messy!)

Explain that after the ascension (“Rising up”), Christ instructed His disciples to spread the news of Him and what He came to do. When we do so, we have the power to “stir up” recognition and excitement about God and keep His kingdom “fizzing.”

Watch an example of this from our [Children’s Sermon on the Ascension](#).

<https://youtu.be/urZW0aRYLr0>

Sunday School Lesson: What's Next?

Jesus died and rose again...but He didn't go straight up to Heaven afterwards. He was actually on earth for forty days prior to His ascension, and during that time He appeared in various ways to people. It seems that He may have had different features at this state.

The disciples did not always recognize Him immediately, and Christ seems to quickly appear and disappear.

There are at least eleven instances listed in the Bible depicting how He came to His followers...some significant ones of note include:

- Appearance to Mary Magdalene, the “other Mary,” and Peter on the day of resurrection (John 20:11-18; Luke 24:1-11 and 34)
- Appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus on the evening of resurrection (Luke 24:13-35). Note that here Jesus was not immediately recognized.
- Appearance to the disciples at Jerusalem, and again when Thomas was present with them (John 20:19-24; Mark 16:14-18). The significant elements here involve how Jesus proved who He was. He explained the scripture and fulfillment of God's plan. He also made sure the disciples knew He was not just a ghost or vision—He ate with them, showed His wounds, and allowed them to touch Him as living evidence.
- Visit to the fishing disciples at the heavenly fish fry (John 21:1-23). At this point, it seems Peter is officially reinstated and forgiven for his rejection on the night of crucifixion. Jesus instructs Him in no uncertain terms to follow and to tell others about Him.
- Farewell to the disciples prior to ascension (Acts 1:4-10). Here Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide them, and instructs them to go

into all the world spreading the good news of who He is. This command is for us, too, as is the promise of the Holy Spirit's blessing and guidance.

- "Life re-cap" and instructions prior to ascension....this appears in Luke 24:

He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God. -Luke 24:44-53

The life, death, and resurrection of Christ is the culmination and importance of the whole Bible. It demonstrates fulfillment of God's great plan and proves He keeps His promises. We know the Gospels to be true and with these witnesses to resurrection we know HE is true. What more can we do than follow the instructions of Jesus and bear witness?

Our job is to recognize the significance of what Christ did, and to share that with one another. We are to rejoice in His resurrection and to worship and praise God. We can be eager to continue His work on earth as we love and serve His people.

Follow-up Questions:

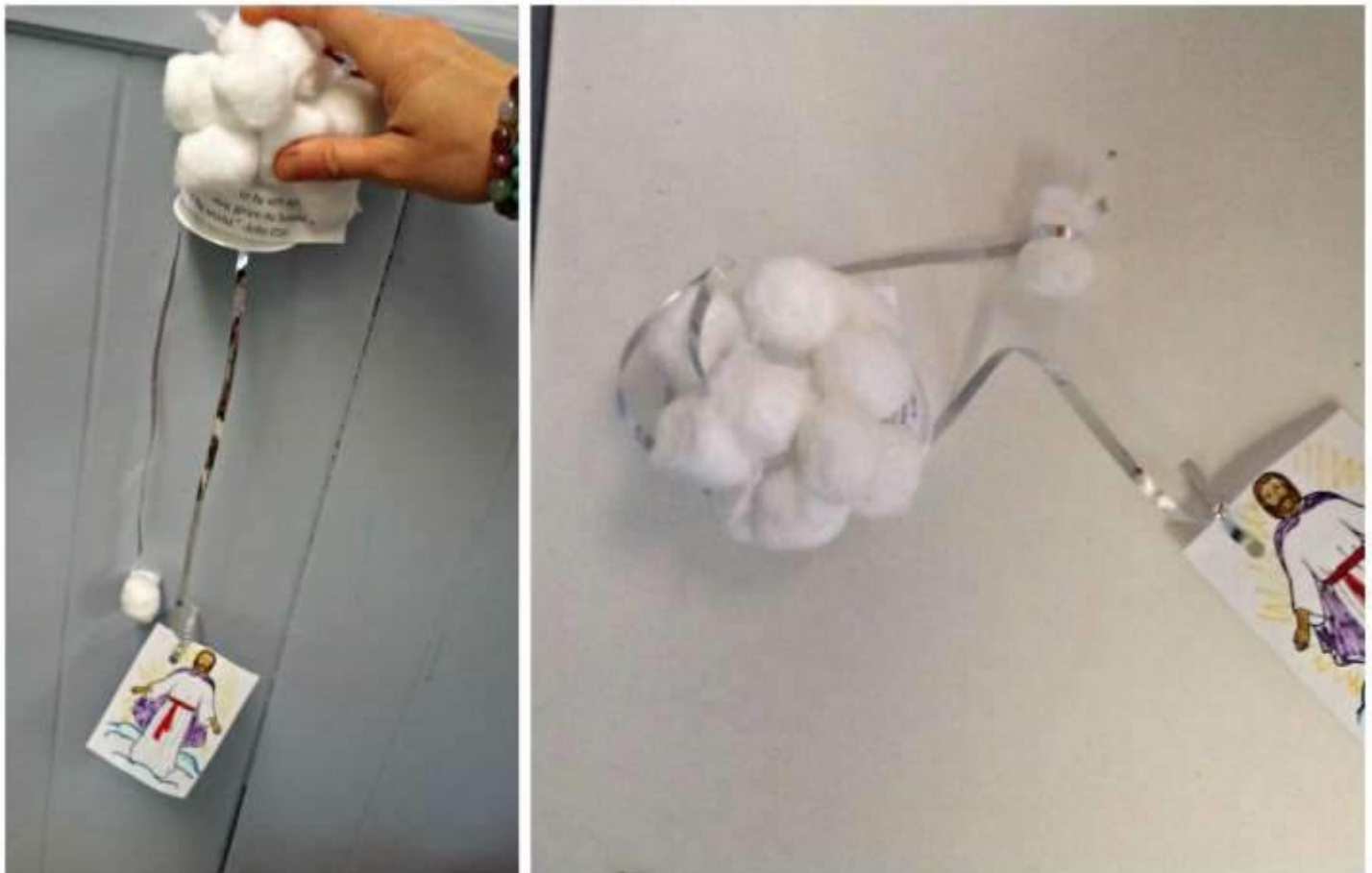
- How do we miss Christ's appearance in our lives? *We burrow in our own concerns or are work, becoming distracted and often thinking we can make it on our own. We neglect to recognize that Christ is the vessel of our salvation and we can do nothing apart from Him.*
- Why do you think people who witnessed the resurrected Savior were often afraid or shocked? Did they not trust who Jesus was or what He had said? *As ours often is, the faith of these early followers was likely lacking. They may have claimed to believe what Jesus said but did not grasp the fullness of it. Or again, they may have been too distracted to understand and when they did see Christ were terrified by the shock.*
- How can we carry out Jesus's exhortations to spread His news? *We daily fulfill His commission by finding opportunities to love and serve others, and to set an example of humility and compassion in all we say, do, or think. We can pray for others and pray that God will work in our lives to genuinely care for them.*

Weekly Challenge: Share the love...We don't need to necessarily be risking our lives in foreign countries to spread the good news of Christ. This week, make an effort to show kindness and love, whether through a smile, note, or just being present. Listen to people and make eye contact. How will you carry on God's love this week?

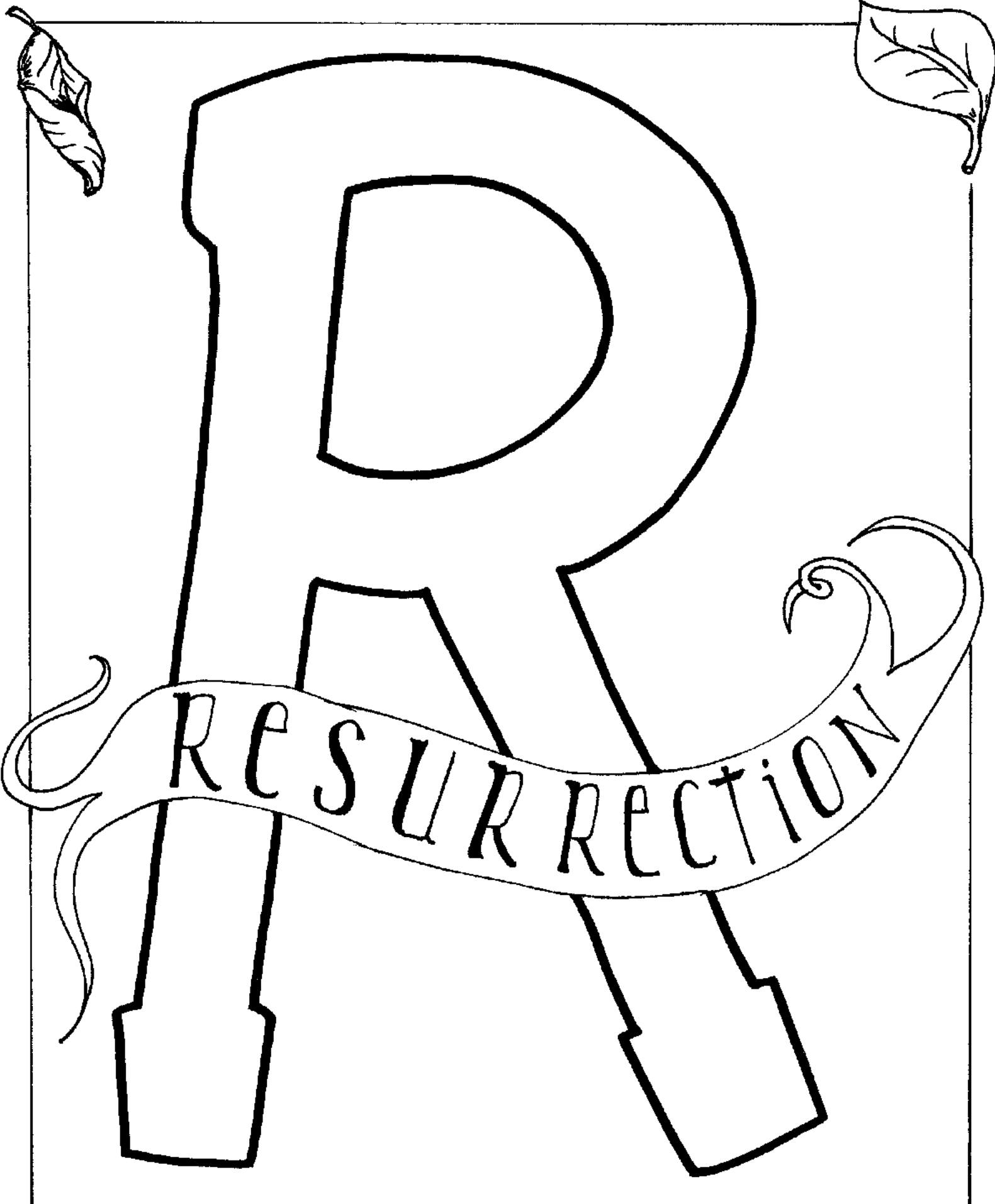
Craft Ideas on the “Ascension of Jesus”

Have students color pictures of Jesus, and cut them out. Attach a piece of yarn, and poke the yarn through a hole in the top of a plastic cup. Glue cotton balls around the cup to illustrate the clouds. This way, Jesus can “ascend” and disappear into the “sky.” OR you can glue your cotton balls to paper or card stock, and slide the Jesus on a string through holes punched into the paper. Attach a verse caption and message, if desired. If you feel extra daring, add glitter. Have fun!

- We found the [Jesus Ascension picture on Google Images](#)







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