FOLLOWING JESUS VBS · DAY 5 · HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12)

Student Lesson

Jesus Sends Me: Go and Tell! | The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost
(Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41)

Text: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:3-11; Acts 2:22-41

The Great Commission, the Ascension, and the Day of Pentecost

Jesus did not leave His followers with a nice memory. He left them with a mission. “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:18-20). Mark records the same charge: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mark 16:15-16).

Forty days after the resurrection, Jesus ascended (Acts 1:3, 9). The ascension was not the end of His work but the beginning of theirs. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me” (Acts 1:8). The question from the two men in white still fits: “why do you stand gazing up into heaven?” (Acts 1:11). There was work to do, and Jesus will return.

Acts 2 shows the Great Commission carried out for the first time. Peter preached Jesus crucified and raised (Acts 2:22-36). The crowd heard, believed, and were cut to the heart. Their question, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37), received an inspired answer: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). About three thousand obeyed (Acts 2:41).

Jesus Himself taught every step of this response: hearing (Matthew 7:24; Romans 10:17), believing (John 8:24; Mark 16:16), repenting (Luke 13:3; Luke 24:47), confessing (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10), and being baptized (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16). Paul does not describe baptism as a symbol of something that already happened; he describes it as the point where we are buried with Christ and raised to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 22:16). Then Jesus calls us to be faithful until death (Revelation 2:10).

Following Jesus always ends in going for Jesus. You do not need a pulpit to be a witness. Philip simply said, “Come and see” (John 1:46). The journey does not end at VBS. Keep seeking Jesus daily, obey Him fully, and share Him with the people He places in your life.

> And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”
>
> **Mark 16:15-16 (NKJV)**

Four points to remember

- Before He went back to heaven, Jesus sent His followers into all the world with the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15).
- Jesus ascended to heaven and will come again (Acts 1:9-11).
- On Pentecost people heard the gospel, believed, repented, and were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-41).

- Every follower of Jesus has good news to share and a life of faithfulness to live (Acts 1:8; Revelation 2:10).

Background

- Pentecost ("fiftieth") was a Jewish feast held fifty days after Passover. Jews from many nations were in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5-11).
- Jesus was seen for forty days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3), so Pentecost came about ten days after the ascension.
- "Remission" (Acts 2:38) means forgiveness, the sending away of sins.
- Conversions in Acts include hearing the gospel and being baptized (for example Acts 8:12, 35-38; 16:30-34; 22:16).

The response to the gospel (Acts 2:36–41)

Step	What it means	Scripture
Hear	Listen to and learn God's word about Jesus	Romans 10:17; Matthew 7:24
Believe	Trust that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God	John 8:24; Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6
Repent	Turn away from sin and turn to God	Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3
Confess	Say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord	Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32
Be baptized	Be buried with Christ in water for the remission of sins	Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-4; Acts 22:16
Live faithfully	Keep following Jesus every day	Acts 2:42; Revelation 2:10

Discuss

1. Why do you think Jesus gave His followers a mission instead of just a memory?
2. Trace each step in Acts 2: hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized. Where is each one taught by Jesus?
3. What does Romans 6:3-4 teach happens in baptism?
4. What would "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the end of the earth" look like for you?
5. If a friend asked you, "What shall I do?" could you open your Bible and show them?

Live it

- Practice explaining Acts 2:36-41 from your own Bible to a parent or friend.
- Invite someone to worship with you this Sunday.
- Choose one way to keep following Jesus after VBS: daily Bible reading, faithful attendance, or serving at church.

Further reading: "31 Days with Jesus" at The Preacher's Pen (preacherspen.org/courses/31-days-with-jesus/): Day 31: The Ascension (Empowered to Go); Day 29: Breakfast with Jesus (Restoration and Purpose); Conclusion: The Journey Continues.