Preschool–Grade 6

The Great Commission and Ascension

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Jesus wants everyone to hear about Him, and He is with us always.
Bible passage: Matthew 28:16–20 and Acts 1:1–11. Read them before class.
Memory verse: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" *Matthew 28:19 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, two paper hearts, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Matthew 28:19 and another at Acts 1:9.

1. Opening game: Good News Relay (5 minutes)

Make two teams in two lines at one end of the room. Stand at the other end. Give the first child in each line a paper heart. On "Go!", that child walks to you, says, "Jesus loves you!", walks back and hands the heart to the next child. Keep going until everyone on the team has had a turn. Then ask: *How did the good news get all the way down the line?* (Each person went and told it.) Say: "Today we will hear what Jesus told His friends to do before He went back to heaven."

2. Bible story: Go and Tell (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 28, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Jesus died on the cross for our sins, and on the third day He rose again! After that, Jesus showed Himself alive to His followers. They saw Him for **forty days** (Acts 1:3).

Jesus' **eleven disciples** went to Galilee, to a mountain where Jesus told them to meet Him (Matthew 28:16). When they saw Jesus, they **worshipped** Him (28:17). Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (28:18). That means Jesus is over everything!

Then Jesus gave them a big job. **Read Matthew 28:19 from your Bible:** "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Say: "**Teach all nations** means teach people in every country of the world about Jesus." Jesus said to teach them to **observe**, which means obey, everything He had told them. And Jesus made a promise: "Lo, I am with you **alway**, even unto the end of the world" (28:20). **Lo** means look, and **alway** means always. Jesus is with us every day!

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The story continues: Jesus told His apostles not to leave Jerusalem, but to **wait** for God's promise (Acts 1:4). He said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Then they would be **witnesses**, people who tell what they saw and know about Jesus. They would tell it in Jerusalem, in Judaea, in Samaria, and in the farthest places on earth (1:8).

Read Acts 1:9 from your Bible: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Say: "**Beheld** means they were watching. Jesus went up, up, up, and a cloud covered Him so they could not see Him anymore."

The apostles kept looking up into the sky. Then two men in white clothes stood by them (1:10). They asked why the apostles stood gazing up into heaven. They said this same Jesus, who was taken up from them into heaven, would come again the same way they saw Him go (1:11). **Jesus is coming back!**

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Where did the eleven disciples meet Jesus? *(On a mountain in Galilee, Matthew 28:16)*
2. Who did Jesus say to teach? *(All nations, people everywhere, 28:19)*
3. What did Jesus promise? *("Lo, I am with you alway," 28:20)*
4. What received Jesus out of their sight? *(A cloud, Acts 1:9)*
5. What did the two men in white say? *(This same Jesus will come again, 1:11)*

4. Memory verse: Verse Strips (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips up in order: *Go ye therefore, / and teach all nations, / baptizing them / in the name of the Father, / and of the Son, / and of the Holy Ghost: Matthew 28:19.* Explain the old words: **go ye therefore** means so you go, and **teach all nations** means teach people in every country. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jesus wants everyone to hear the good news about Him, and that means you and me too. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! Not many days after Jesus went up to heaven, Peter preached the good news in Jerusalem and told the people how to obey it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: tell one person in your family or one friend, "Jesus loves you, and He is alive!" Invite a friend to church with a grown-up's help.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Great Commission word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/great-commission-word-search), the Great Commission crossword, maze or worksheet, the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/great-commission), or **Good News Practice:** kids pair up and take turns saying to each other, "Jesus loves you. He died for us, and He rose again!" Then each child draws, on the take-home sheet, one person they will tell.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus is alive and that He is with us always. Help us be brave and kind, and tell others about You. Thank You that Jesus is coming again. In Jesus' name, amen."

Telling others, at this age: keep it simple and safe. Kids tell people they already know (family, friends, kids at church), always with a parent's OK. Never send children to talk with strangers or knock on doors.

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