**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 4 of 4

# Ascension

### MEETING AIM

To explore what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Acts 1:1-11

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your situation.

This session explores the ascension of Jesus, a truly bizarre story for us to imagine! As the story is situated after the Gospels, in Acts, this passage marks the beginning of a new chapter for the disciples, the moment Jesus ascends to heaven and leaves the disciples with jobs to do! The activities planned are to try to better imagine the event, and also its implications on what it means to be a follower of Jesus after he has physically left us.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

As people join you, share any refreshments you have. Ask the group to share what they have been doing during the past seven days. Encourage them to think about historic people and actions who’ve changed their lives today, and how the impact that influential people have had throughout history has changed the world for better or worse today.

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

Ask for two volunteers to begin acting out a scene between two people. It might help to give them a scenario to start off with (like two children having a picnic, or King Charles and the Prime Minister having a conversation in an office). The couple act out the scenario, improvising as they go, until someone else shouts: “Freeze!” At this point, the person who’s shouted out chooses one of the actors to replace in the scene. They then have to begin a completely new scenario, which the remaining actor has to join in with!

### BIBLE EXPLORATION – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bibles; large sheets of paper; art materials; pictures of the ascension

Make sure everyone has some art materials, even if it’s just felt-tip pens. Read out the Bible passage and ask the group to interpret what the ascension might have looked like by drawing the scene. It might be helpful to show the group images of Renaissance paintings of the ascension. It’s a completely bizarre event to try to picture, so allow them to think creatively, elaborately and bizarrely!

It might be helpful to read the passage out again as they create, or to talk or discuss what it might have looked like. If Renaissance painting feels a bit too aspirational, you could encourage them to think about colour, abstract images, or even cartoon-style pictures!

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Chat about the story using these questions, encouraging everyone to join in if they want to:

* How did the disciples feel about Jesus leaving them and beginning a new chapter?
* How do you think Jesus felt about it?
* Why do you think Jesus chose to say the words he did in the passage as the final words before he ascended?
* What do you think it would have been like for the disciples once Jesus had disappeared from view? What would they have done next?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

**You will need:** large sheet of paper and marker pen; Bibles

Draw out a grid on a large sheet of paper. On the left side, write the heading: “Things that Jesus had taught the disciples” and on the right the corresponding heading: “How the disciples were meant to use these lessons to continue his work”.

Ask the group to think about the different things Jesus taught his disciples. Write these in the left-hand column, and then discuss how the disciples may have continued to use these lessons even once Jesus had ascended. If the group is struggling to think of examples, you could pinpoint them to stories like the feeding of the 5,000, or moments of teaching like Jesus’ parables or the Beatitudes. It might be helpful to give the group some easy-to-use youth Bibles to hunt for moments that feel relevant. You could begin with the two final things that Jesus tells his disciples in this passage: to wait for the Holy Spirit and to continue to be his witnesses throughout the world.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

Ask the group to find a place where they can lie down outside or at least have a view of the sky through a window. Encourage them to reflect on what they have heard and to chat about it all to God.

Ask the group to lie down and look at the sky a couple of times this week as a reminder to them that after Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples were reminded to get on with his work. This is the task for all of us today!

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