

## **Table of Contents – Lesson 23**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Review.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>The Women at the Tomb .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Jesus Appeared to His Followers .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>The Last Command of Christ.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>The Ascension of Christ .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>After the Meeting.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Review of the Lesson’s Themes.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Practice Telling the Bible Stories .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Teaching Tips for Teachers .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>To the Honorable Teacher.....</b>	<b>22</b>

## **Bible Lesson 23 (BTJ)**

### **1. Introduction**

This lesson is about the resurrection of Christ. It is a very important lesson because what is true about the resurrection of Christ defines the meaning of all history.

In this lesson the truth that Jesus Christ willingly took our place and bore the punishment for our sin is brought out. It is brought out again so that the resurrection event and its importance in history is more readily understood.

As Jesus Christ interacted with his disciples prior to his crucifixion and death, he told them about future events which would happen to him, but they did not fully understand what he was talking about. When they heard about his resurrection it took time for them to process this information. However, before he died, Jesus did tell them that it was necessary for him to die, be buried, and resurrect in order to fulfill Scripture.

The fact that his disciples and other followers were amazed and even doubted the truth of his resurrection is not the main point of this lesson. After all they were people as we are so when this historical and momentous event happened, it is understandable as to why they were confused.

The lesson brings out how Jesus ministered to them after his resurrection to dispel any reservations and doubts that they had concerning him. He wanted them to know and understand that truly he was the risen Jesus Christ whom God had promised to send. He fulfilled all of his work that he came to do and then he ascended into heaven which is where he is today.

Christ is at the right hand of God today because God accepted his work on our behalf. There is no more sacrificial work for Christ to do. It is done and it will never again be repeated in history. This is the message that God wants us to teach and preach to those who still need to hear all over the world.

## 2. Review

**Setting:** The people asked Teacher to discuss the teaching with them and help them understand all that had happened to Christ.

**Patrick:** We want to understand the meaning of everything that happened to Jesus. Will you help us to understand all that you have been teaching us from the Bible especially the things that happened to Jesus which led to his death?

**Teacher:** Yes, I will gladly help you. It is necessary to understand the teaching in order to truly believe it. Let's start with the Passover meal that Jesus ate with his disciples. Do you remember the story about the first Passover?

**Patrick:** Yes, I remember that story well. When the Israelites ate the Passover meal, they were still in the land of Egypt. They were slaves of Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

**Teacher:** Were they able to set themselves free from the Egyptian rule?

**Patrick:** No, they were not able to set themselves free from the Egyptians. They needed God's help or they would just have remained slaves in Egypt.

**Teacher:** At that time God provided a way for them to escape his judgment which was going to be upon the whole land of Egypt. God said he was going to kill all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. What was the way of escape for the Israelites? God told them to kill a lamb, catch its blood in a basin, and apply its blood on the door frames of their houses. Then they were to roast the lamb and eat all of it. They had to stay inside their houses which had the slain lamb's blood applied to its door frames. Around midnight when the Lord went through the land of Egypt and killed all the firstborn people and animals, the Israelites were saved from destruction. When the Lord saw the blood which they had applied to the door frames of their houses, he passed over them and they lived.

**Patrick:** That's right. God showed mercy and favor to the Israelites and provided a way for them to be saved from the awful judgment he executed upon the whole land of Egypt.

**Teacher:** When Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples, it was to remember God's great mercy and grace to the Israelites when he provided a way of escape for the Israelites. Then, Jesus applied the meaning of the Passover meal to himself. He said the bread which he broke and they ate symbolized that his body would be broken for them. And the wine which they drank symbolized his blood which would be shed for them.

**Patrick:** Jesus knew what would happen to him before he was crucified, didn't he?

**Teacher:** Yes, Jesus knew what would happen to him because he is God. Even though he knew he would suffer and die, he willingly offered himself up as the perfect Lamb of God to pay the price for our sins.

**Patrick:** Jesus truly loved us by willingly giving his life for us.

**Teacher:** The evil people who opposed him and those involved in crucifying him could not have done so had he wanted to stop them. He had the power to stop them but he didn't. Jesus Christ, our Deliverer, came so that we could have our sins forgiven and receive eternal life from God because of him.

**Patrick:** When Judas betrayed Jesus, he turned against Jesus, the person who had chosen him to be one of his disciples. Why didn't Judas believe in Jesus?

**Teacher:** Judas and the other disciples were with Jesus many times and they saw how he lived a perfect life. They heard his teachings, they saw him show compassion on the sick and heal them, they witnessed his power over the wind and the stormy seas and they saw him cast out evil spirits. Even though all of them witnessed the same things, they responded differently to the evidence. The other disciples believed in Jesus and trusted him. They believed that he was the one God had promised to send.

Think about the response of Judas compared to the response of the other disciples. He made a moral choice to not believe in Jesus for no just reason.

**Patrick:** How could he not believe in Jesus after seeing Jesus perform miracles and listening to his teachings?

**Teacher:** There were two ways for the disciples to respond to Jesus; in belief or in unbelief. There are two ways to respond to Jesus today. A person can believe that Jesus is the true Deliverer, or he can chose to reject Jesus. Everyone who has heard this teaching about Jesus has either responded in faith and believes it or does not believe it.

**Patrick:** Why did the scribes and the Pharisees hate Jesus so much? Why did they not believe in him? Why did they incite the crowd to be against Jesus? What kept them from believing in him?

**Teacher:** Do you remember Jesus' parable about the four kinds of soil? Only one kind of soil produced a harvest. The farmer sowed the same kind of seed on the four kinds of soil.

The soils were different from each other just like people's hearts are not the same. The scribes and the Pharisees were too proud to admit that they were sinners. Who tempted them to be proud about their own goodness, their self-righteousness?

**Patrick:** Satan worked hard to steal the good seed that was sown among them.

**Teacher:** That's right. The scribes and Pharisees heard Jesus teach, they saw him perform miracles, and they saw him cast out evil spirits from demon-possessed people. But, that did not lead them to believe in him. They said that Jesus did these things by the power of Satan. They rejected the truth that Jesus was God in a human body.

**Patrick:** If the scribes and the Pharisees would have believed that Jesus was God, then they would not have rejected him, would have they?

**Teacher:** That's right. It is very important for people to believe that Jesus is God. Otherwise, people will not believe in him. Think about this: The more the scribes and the Pharisees heard Jesus' teaching and witnessed his supernatural power, the more they opposed him. On the other hand, many of the common people believed that Jesus was the promised Deliverer when they heard his teachings and witnessed the miracles he performed.

Again, as it has been stressed throughout these lessons, there are two ways to respond to God's truth. A person either believes or rejects God's truth. Right now God wants you to believe all that the Bible teaches you. Satan wants you to doubt biblical truth. He wants you to turn away from it. He wants you to think that you're okay the way you are. He does not want you to admit that you are a sinner. He wants you to think that you do not need the mercy and grace of God. He knows that if you believe in Jesus, God will forgive you of your sins and you will not be guilty for your sins or be punished in the never-ending fire of punishment when you die. You will be in heaven in the presence of God forever. Satan hates God and he does not want people to be saved from their sins. That's why he tempted the scribes and the Pharisees to reject Jesus. That is why he tempts people today to reject Jesus. If you do not believe the Bible's teachings about Jesus, it is the same as obeying the temptation of Satan to rebel against God. God wants you to believe in Jesus. He wants you to believe that he was the promised one, the true Deliverer.

**Patrick:** If Pilate knew that Jesus was not guilty of wrongdoing, why did he condemn Jesus to be crucified? Shouldn't he have made a rational decision to free Jesus?

**Teacher:** Pilate knew that the Jews were jealous of Jesus. He asked Jesus many questions

but he could not find any fault in him. Pilate knew that Jesus was not guilty of wrongdoing. But he was pressured by the Jews to condemn him. Pilate allowed himself to be persuaded by the Jews' pressure to him to condemn Jesus. Pilate should have been fair to Jesus and allowed the evidence to be the basis of his judgment. Pilate knew if he set Jesus free the Jews would be angry with him. So he condemned him and gave the order to crucify him even though he knew that Jesus had done no wrong whatsoever.

**Patrick:** That was so unfair to Jesus because he was innocent of any wrongdoing.

**Teacher:** Yes, Jesus was free of any wrongdoing. But, remember it was God's plan that Jesus should die for the sins of the world. Jesus willingly allowed himself to be beaten, condemned, and crucified in order that his sacrifice would atone for our sins. It was God's plan for Jesus to sacrifice himself and pay for our sins by his death and shed blood so that we could be forgiven and not have to pay for our sins.

**Patrick:** It appears as if Pilate, the evil Jewish religious leaders, and the soldiers who crucified him, overpowered Jesus and killed him but Jesus willingly allowed it.

**Teacher:** That's a very important point. The people who opposed Jesus Christ did not overpower him. He willingly gave his life to make it possible for us to have eternal life. Those who opposed and condemned Christ were instruments in God's plan to provide a way whereby people can be made right with him and not have to die separated from him. Jesus did no wrong. He never sinned. He took our place and bore the penalty for our sins so that we can be made right with God through him. Because of him, we do not have to pay for our sins.

**Patrick:** Why was the Temple's curtain torn in two when Jesus died?

**Teacher:** From the time of the tabernacle until the time when Jesus died, the temple curtain hung between the holy place and the most holy place. Once a year on the day of Atonement the high priest would enter the Most Holy Place with the blood of the sacrificed animal and sprinkle it on the mercy seat. The mercy seat is the place where God was. If everything was done properly then God forgave the sins of the Israelites for the past year.

When Jesus died on the cross, his blood was shed for us. His blood was the atonement for our sins. Jesus death and blood fully paid for our sins. The animal's blood which was sprinkled on the mercy seat merely covered sins and foreshadowed a greater sacrifice to come. The sacrifice of Jesus is that greater sacrifice. He was crucified and he died because he is the lamb of God who was offered as a sacrifice to God to make us right

with God. There is no greater sacrifice than the sacrifice of Jesus dying on the cross.

When God tore the Temple curtain in two, he demonstrated that the practice of animal sacrifices was over. Complete payment for our sin was made by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. God was pleased with this sacrifice, and put an end to the former way of sacrificing animals. No longer would sinners be shut out from God if they admitted their sinfulness and trusted in Jesus sacrificial work for them. God forgives everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ's sacrifice as the payment for their sins.

**Patrick:** I have another question. After Jesus had died on the cross a wealthy man Joseph asked for his body to bury it. Pilate gave him permission and he was buried in a tomb. What happened after that?

**Teacher:** I'm glad that you asked. Listen carefully as I teach you what happened to Jesus after he was buried.

### **3. The Women at the Tomb**

After Jesus died on the cross, Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy man, received permission from Pilate to bury Jesus' lifeless body. Joseph took him down from the cross and wrapped his body in a clean linen cloth. Then he laid his body in a tomb which had been cut out from a rock and a stone was rolled across the tomb's entrance to close it. When Joseph buried Jesus, some women from Galilee saw the tomb and the way Jesus' body was placed in it. They knew where Jesus was buried.

After Jesus had been in the tomb for three days and nights, Mary Magdalene, and Salome and Mary the mother of James went out and purchased burial spices so they could anoint Jesus' body. They believed in Jesus and had loved him very much. They knew that he was a good man sent to them from God. They knew that he had been killed on the cross for no just cause.

In those days, it was a custom of the Jews to put fragrant spices on the bodies of the dead before they were buried. However, because Jesus had been hurriedly buried they hadn't had time to put the spices on his body. So very early on this Sunday morning, at sunrise, with sad hearts about Jesus' death, they went to the tomb to anoint his body with fragrant spices.

As the women were walking along the road going to the tomb, they were asking each other who would roll away the large stone from the entrance to the tomb? This stone was large and heavy and they did not know if they would be able to move it away from the

entrance of the tomb. When they arrived at the tomb, they were surprised to see that the stone had already been rolled aside. Who had rolled away this big stone? Listen to this: Before they came to the tomb there was an earthquake because the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and rolled away the large stone.

The women entered the tomb expecting to see the body of Jesus laying in the tomb just as it had been placed there. Then they saw a young man, an angel, clothed in a white robe sitting on the right side of the tomb. The women were alarmed. “Who is this? What is going on?” they wondered. They didn’t know that they were seeing an angel.

Then the angel said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is not here! He is risen from the dead! Look! This is where they laid his body.”



**Show #88: An angel told the women that Jesus had resurrected**

The women looked at the place where the body of Jesus had been laid. It wasn’t there! Where was it? It was gone! Jesus had truly risen from the dead just as he had told his followers many times before he died that he would rise on the third day. The women were amazed to see the empty tomb. They were amazed to hear the angel speak to them announcing the resurrection of Jesus. The angel also told them, “Go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died.”

No doubt the women had heard Jesus speak about his death, burial, and resurrection before he was crucified. Though they believed in him and knew that he was the promised Deliverer, they did not fully understand everything that Jesus had said about himself. Jesus fully knew everything that would happen to him during his life on earth. He knew that he would be crucified and buried. He knew that his death and shed blood fully paid for the sins of the world. He knew that he would rise from the dead and never die again. Jesus knew that he would have victory over sin, death, and Satan. Even though Jesus had told his followers about his death, burial, and resurrection, his followers, though they believed in him, did not clearly understand everything that he had taught them.



The women, who came to the tomb early Sunday morning, saw that the tomb was empty. They saw the place where Joseph had laid the body of Jesus wrapped in linen, but, there was no body laying at that place. They were trembling and bewildered as they fled from the tomb and they said nothing to anyone because they were too startled and frightened. Truly, Jesus had resurrected from the dead. He was alive!

Let's talk about the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus was condemned, crucified, and buried because he had willingly given himself to be the sacrifice for our sins. Before he was crucified and died, he told the Jewish religious leaders and others that he was the Son of God. He wanted them to know that he was divine. The scribes and Pharisees and other religious leaders heard his claim to divinity and hated him for it. That is why they schemed and plotted to have him killed.

When Jesus Christ was killed by crucifixion, they believed that they had successfully put an end to him and his claims. Was Jesus Christ truly the Son of God? Yes, Jesus Christ in his human body was truly the Son of God. God raised him back to life again to prove to everyone that he was the Son of God, the Deliverer whom God had promised to send in order to save us from the guilt and penalty of our sins.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ shows us that God was fully satisfied with his sacrifice on the cross to pay for our sin. When Jesus died God ripped the curtain in the Temple from top to bottom to show that people can be made right with him because of the sacrifice of Jesus. When God raised Jesus from the dead it proved that God was fully satisfied with the sacrifice of Jesus. His death and his shed blood fully paid for our sins. If God would not have been satisfied with the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ, he would not have raised him up to life again.

It is important to understand that Jesus did not die because of his own sin. Jesus Christ died because he bore the penalty for our sins. He willingly substituted himself for us. We are the ones who have sinned and are guilty before God. We deserve death because all of us have sinned against God. We cannot do anything on our own to cause God to forgive us. No matter how hard we try, we cannot be good enough on our own, by our own strength or actions, to cause God to forgive us of our sins. That is why God showed mercy to us and made it possible for our sins to be forgiven because of the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ for us.

Jesus Christ paid the full price for our sins and God as a righteous judge was completely satisfied with the work of Christ. That's why he raised him back to life again. If God had not been satisfied with the work of Christ, he would not have raised Christ to life again. This teaching about Jesus being the lamb of God who paid for our sin by sacrificing

himself is true. There is no other sacrifice for our sins that God will accept. There is no other message to believe in for the forgiveness of sins. It is necessary to believe the Bible's teaching that Jesus gave himself to fully pay for our sins in order to be saved from the guilt and penalty of sin. Jesus Christ wanted to die in our place so that we could believe in him and be saved. He wanted to do this so that we can be reconciled to God and receive eternal life from him.

Do you believe that the sacrificial work of Christ fully satisfied God's requirement? Do you believe that Jesus' death and blood paid for your sins? Do you believe that God raised him back to life and that he is alive today? God wants you to believe in Christ. He wants you to believe that his death and blood fully paid for your sin. He wants you to believe that Jesus is alive today and will never, ever die again. God wants you to trust in the sacrificial work of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Do you believe this?

During his life, Christ he proved that he was God in a human body. He demonstrated his divinity by exercising his power over the natural world. People who were sick were healed. He walked on water and he calmed the stormy sea with spoken commands. He raised people to life again which proved that he had power over death. He healed demon-possessed people and the demons fled at his command. He did not die on the cross because others overpowered him. He willingly gave his life to pay for our sins. In the tomb, his body did not lay there beyond three days. No, it was resurrected and he is alive today. Listen to this: Jesus Christ has had victory over sin, death, and Satan. Satan is a defeated foe. Jesus Christ is victor forever!

#### **4. Jesus Appeared to His Followers**

After Jesus had risen from the dead, he appeared to Mary Magdalene and some other women. Of course, they were startled to see him alive again. They were filled with fear and amazement. After all, it was only three days ago that he had been crucified, died and buried in the tomb.

The women to whom Jesus first appeared after his resurrection went and told the disciples that Jesus was alive again. Did they immediately believe their report? No, they did not believe that Jesus had come back to life again. They heard what the women said but thought that they were speaking nonsense. At this time, they did not recall that Jesus had foretold his death and resurrection before he had been crucified.

On the same day two of the disciples were walking from Emmaus to Jerusalem when Jesus appeared to them. He spoke with them and explained how Christ, the Deliverer whom God had promised to send, had to experience death, burial, and resurrection

according to Scripture. When they had arrived at their destination, inside the house, Christ took some bread, gave thanks, then broke it and began to give it to them. Then they recognized who he was, the risen Christ. Then he disappeared from them.

The two disciples returned to Jerusalem and found the Eleven disciples and those who were with them discussing the fact that Jesus had appeared to Simon. Then the two disciples told everyone there about their experience with the resurrected Christ. They told them that Jesus appeared to them while they were walking on the road from Emmaus and how he had broken bread with them. While they were excitedly telling everyone the details of their encounter with Jesus, he appeared among them and spoke to them. The disciples and those with them were startled and frightened. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

Jesus spoke with them and assured them that it was really him that they saw. They were not seeing a ghost. “Why are you troubled?” he asked them. He wanted them to know who he was and that he was alive again! Then he told them to touch him and to feel him because a ghost doesn’t have a physical body like he had. Then he showed them his hands and his feet. They could see the scars from the crucifixion on his hands and feet where nails had impaled them. The disciples were amazed and filled with joy but they still did not believe it.

Then Jesus asked them, “Do you have any food here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it and ate it as they watched him. He did this to prove that he was not a ghost. He was real. He was alive again! Then he said, “This is what I told you while I was with you that everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms.”

Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, was not with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them. When they told him that they had seen the risen Christ he did not believe them. He said, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.”

A week later the disciples were together again and Thomas was with them. All of the doors to the place where they were meeting were locked. Just then Jesus came and stood in their midst. Then he said to them, “Peace be with you.” Jesus did not want them to be unnecessarily frightened. He wanted them to relax and be calm as he was among them again. Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here. See my hands. Put your hand into my side, stop doubting and believe.” Thomas heard the risen Lord speak to him and he saw the evidence of the nail prints on his body. All the evidence he needed in order to believe was before him. Immediately he acknowledged that Jesus was alive and his Lord.

Jesus appeared to the disciples on various occasions after he had risen from the dead. He demonstrated that he was the man whom they had seen crucified, and buried in the tomb. He convinced them with many infallible proofs that he was the Christ, risen from the dead, just as the Scriptures prophesied. He wanted them to know without any lingering doubt that he was the true Christ, the one God had promised to send, who had overcome the power of death.

Today, Jesus wants people to believe in him. He wants all people to believe that he was crucified and died in order to fully pay for our sins. He wants people to know that God raised him from the dead and that he is alive today. God raised him from the dead because he was fully satisfied with the sacrificial work of Christ. Death could not contain Christ; Christ overcame death. He showed himself to his disciples and many other followers and gave to them many evidences which are irrefutable. The right thing to do is to believe in Christ the one who had victory over Satan and death.

## **5. The Last Command of Christ**

After Jesus arose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples over a period of forty days. He gave them many convincing and infallible proofs that he truly was Christ, the promised Deliverer. God had fulfilled his promise which he had first spoken to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Christ had completed all that God had sent him to do on the Earth and now it was time for him to return to heaven to be with his father, God.

The eleven disciples were gathered with Jesus on a mountain which he had designated. They worshiped him, but, some were doubtful as to who he was. They did not fully understand everything about Christ. Then Jesus spoke to them and said, "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 the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The command which Jesus gave to his disciples is the reason and the authority for teaching you the Bible's message. Jesus commanded his followers to obey him and to tell everyone about him. He wants people to know that he was the true sacrifice which takes away the sins of the world. He wants everyone to know that he defeated sin, death and Satan. He wants people to believe in him so that they can be saved from the penalty of their sins. He wants people to be saved so that they will not spend eternity in the never-ending fire of punishment.

God sent me to you to teach you about the true way of salvation. He wants you to fully understand the sacrificial work of Christ for all mankind. He wants you to admit that you are spiritually lost and without a way to make yourself right with him. He wants you to believe that Christ's sacrificial work truly paid for your sin.

If you believe that Jesus Christ's death and shed blood paid for you sins, God will forgive you and you will not die separated from him. You will not need to pay for your sins in the never-ending fire of punishment. If you trust the sacrificial work of Christ, God will forgive you of your sins and take you to heaven to be with him when you die.

What does God want you to do about the sacrificial work of Christ for the payment of your sins? God wants you to trust Christ's work in history for your salvation. It is very important that you trust in Christ's sacrificial work for yourself. If you believe that he died to pay for your sins, God will forgive your sins and give you eternal life.

When Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins, he was our substitute who was sacrificed to pay for our sins. How do we know that his sacrificial work for us really did pay for our sins? We know that Christ's sacrificial work was accepted by God because God raised him back to life again.

Do you know of any sacrifice which came back to life again? Did the lamb which Abel offered come back to life again? Did the ram which Abraham offered in Isaac's place come back to life again? Did any of the sacrifices which your forefathers offered to deities come back to life again? No sacrifice in history has ever come back to life again except Jesus Christ. He came back to life again because he fully paid for our sins and God was completely satisfied with his sacrifice.

Remember this important point: Sin's payment is death. Everyone's sin must be paid for by death. Either the death of Jesus Christ, the substitutionary lamb of God, will pay for your sins and you will be forgiven or you will pay for your own sins in the never-ending fire of punishment. It is up to each one of you. God wants you to believe in Christ's substitutionary sacrificial work for you so that you will be saved. Do you believe in the work of Christ as the payment for your sins?

## **6. The Ascension of Christ**

Jesus commanded his disciples to take the good news about him to all the earth so that others would believe in him and be saved. At that time, he was with his disciples who still hoped that he would free them from Roman rule and restore the Kingdom of Israel. They asked him if he was going to do that at that time. Jesus said to them, "It is not for you to

know the times or the dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the other parts of the earth.” Then, as they were watching Jesus, he was taken up into a cloud and they saw him no more.

Why did Jesus return to heaven to be with God? Jesus had completed his work on the earth so he returned to his heavenly home. He had commanded his disciples to spread the good news about him to all people in all countries.

As the disciples watched him disappear into a cloud, two men appeared before them. These men were angels and they were dressed in white clothing. Then the angels told them that in the same manner which Jesus left them, he would someday return again to the earth.

Why did the angels say Jesus would return to the earth again? The angels wanted the disciples to know that Jesus had completed his first mission to the earth.



Show #90: Jesus ascended into heaven

When Jesus comes again he will not offer himself up as he did the first time. The next time he will come as a judge and a ruler. Everyone will be judged by him. People who have believed in him will not be condemned because they have trusted in his work for them and have received eternal life. People who have not trusted in Christ’s sacrificial work for their salvation will be condemned. That means they will have to go to the never-ending fire of punishment.

When Jesus comes the second time he will exercise his power and authority over Satan. Satan will be cast into the never-ending fire of punishment. The demons, the angels who rebelled with Satan, will also be thrown into the never-ending fire of punishment and will be punished forever.

Let’s think about the Ascension of Christ into heaven. Christ ascended into heaven and is now at the right hand of God. If the work of Christ had not been perfect, would God have received him back into heaven again? If the death and the blood of Christ would not have been full payment for our sins, he would have failed in his mission. God was totally

satisfied with the redemptive work of Christ for us. That's why he could return to heaven to be with God again. That's why he was received into heaven by his heavenly father God. Right now he is there at his right hand.

It is very important for everyone to believe in the work of Christ for their salvation. There is no other way whereby anyone can be made right with God except through Jesus Christ. All other religious leaders who have died remain in their graves. They were human beings who have posed to be significant persons capable of devising a right religion. However, upon their death, they remain dead because they were false leaders. They are powerless to overcome sin, death, and Satan.

Jesus however did not remain among the dead. He was raised back to life because he was not guilty of having committed any sin. The power of death could not prevent him from coming back to life again. Satan was powerless to prevent Christ's resurrection from the dead. That's because Jesus is God, he had never sinned, and death, the consequence of sin, could not keep him in his grave. Jesus had victory over death, sin and Satan. When his work on the earth was done, God received him back into heaven and that is where he is today.

Do you see why you must believe in the work of Christ for you in order to be made right with God? There is no other way for anyone to be made right with God than through Jesus Christ. God wants you to believe in him right now and he will save you from the guilt and penalty of your sin. Do you believe in him?

#### **7. After the Meeting**

**Setting:** Many of the villagers were excited to hear about Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven. They continued talking about it.

**Wade:** When we heard that Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a grave we wondered how the story would end, didn't we? We believed in him and we hoped that he would save us from the guilt and penalty of our sins. Then he died and we were wondering what would happen next.

**Alan:** Today Teacher taught us the story of the women going to the place where Jesus was buried but they did not see his body there. An angel spoke to them as they were looking for the body of Christ and told them that he had risen from the dead.

**Wade:** Those women did not know that Jesus had risen from the dead. Their hearts were heavy like ours were when we heard about him dying on the cross and being buried in his grave. Then Jesus appeared to his disciples and others who believed in him.

**Alan:** After Jesus was resurrected from the dead he appeared to his disciples and showed them that he was alive. Our ancestors taught us about spirit beings and their appearances. Jesus' appearance was not like the stories our ancestors taught us. His appearance was real, he talked to them, and he ate food in front of them.

**Wade:** Thomas, the disciple, did not believe that Jesus had been raised from the dead. He doubted the other disciples' testimony about having seen Jesus again.

**Alan:** That's true. At first Thomas didn't believe Jesus was raised from the dead.

**Wade:** When Jesus appeared to him he quickly changed his mind. He saw the scars on Jesus hands and knew that the man standing in front of him was the resurrected Jesus Christ. Then Thomas did the right thing. He quickly worshiped Jesus and said, "My Lord and my God!"

**Alan:** None of us have seen Jesus. But we have heard the teaching about his death, burial, and resurrection. When I heard this teaching, I was convicted that the message which Teacher taught us is unquestioningly true. Within myself I said, "I believe in Jesus. I believe his death and shed blood fully paid for my sin. I am trusting in him for my salvation."

**Wade:** I also believe in him. All of us must trust in the sacrificial work of Christ for us.

**Alan:** There are two ways to respond to Jesus. Some of the Jews saw Jesus and believed in him while others rejected him. I believe in him and I believe it is wrong to doubt him.

**Wade:** Now that we know the full story about Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, God expects us to believe it for our salvation.

**Alan:** Jesus appeared to his disciples and other followers many times after his resurrection so they would know that he is alive. For forty days after he resurrected he spoke with his disciples, and showed them irrefutable signs or proofs that he truly was alive. Death and the grave were defeated by him. Then as he was with his disciples on the mountain, God received him up into heaven to be with him again.



**Wade:** God accepted Jesus back into heaven again. That's where he is today. That's where we will go when we die if we believe in him.

**Alan:** God received Jesus back into heaven because his work on this earth was finished. He completed the work God sent him to do. God would not have accepted him back into heaven and given him the place of highest honor at his right hand if his work on earth had been incomplete.

**Wade:** When the disciples saw Jesus go up into the cloud, two angels appeared to them and told them something important. They said as Jesus went up into the clouds, in like manner he would someday return to the Earth.

**Alan:** When Christ comes back the second time he will come to judge the whole world. When that happens, everyone who has not believed in him for their salvation will be sent to the place of the never-ending fire of punishment.

**Wade:** That is true. And, that is why it is very important for everyone to believe in the sacrificial work of Christ for their salvation.

8. **Review of the Lesson's Themes**

**God is faithful:** God fulfilled every prophecy pertaining to the sacrificial work of Christ.

**God is righteous:** God raised Jesus back to life again because he committed no sins. Jesus Christ died to pay sin's penalty for us. He was raised up again because his work completely satisfied the righteous demand of God that sin be paid for by death.

God received Christ into heaven again which shows that he was completely satisfied with his work. His righteous wrath toward sinners as been appeased by the sacrificial work of Christ on our behalf.

**Jesus Christ is God:** Jesus Christ had victory over Satan, death, and the grave. Only God could do what Christ did for us through his sacrificial work. It is evident that **Jesus Christ is the only Savior**. There is no other way for anyone to be saved than through Jesus Christ.

**God requires people to believe in the work of Christ for their salvation:** People must trust in the work of Christ to be saved. Knowledge about the work of Christ is not sufficient. Faith must be exercised in his sacrificial work.

**God commands proclamation of the Gospel to all people of the world:** Christ's command to take the Gospel to all the world is to be obeyed by believers. It shows his love for all people everywhere. To everyone who trusts in his work, God shows mercy, grace, and the forgiveness of sins. Everyone forgiven of their sins is given eternal life.

## **9. Practice Telling the Bible Stories**

At the end of this lesson, practice telling the story you have just heard to each other. By now, everyone has had considerable opportunities to practice teaching Bible lessons by telling the stories.

These last stories are very important one. Be sure you understand the content well and tell the stories with conviction! Use culturally appropriate ways to show that you really believe what you are telling them. The way you tell these stories is important. If you do not teach them with authority and confidence, you may find the audience less responsive than they could be.

The Table of Contents at the beginning of the lesson lists the stories for each lesson. Practice telling the stories of this lesson in pairs. One pair should teach one of the stories in the lesson according to the divisions in this lesson.

When you are teaching a lesson by telling the story, use culturally appropriate questions and illustrations to keep the story interesting. Be prepared to engage the audience with questions which are crafted to bring out how well they understand the meaning of the story. Emphasize the important points when telling the stories. Challenge them to believe what they are hearing. This is God's expectation.

Use visual aids or objects used in the lesson when you teach a story. Show the pictures at the right time in the story. When illustrations are used, be sure to bring them to a right and logical conclusion. If you do not make the right conclusions through telling the story, people will likely guess what it means and they could easily come to a wrong conclusion.

After you have practiced telling stories to each other, talk about ways to improve your story-telling ability. Be open to critique and be kind to each other as you work together to help each other become master story-tellers. The goal of teaching God's Word via telling Bible stories is the salvation people who need to be saved.

As you tell the stories focus on God working in history? Tell the story so that God's work in history is highlighted. As you tell the story, it should be evident that God expects everyone to believe his Word. It is not your message, but his message given through you.

**10. Teaching Tips for Teachers**

**Lesson Point #2:**

This review is designed to highlight important parts of the last lesson. It will give you opportunity to assess the audience's understanding of the teaching on the betrayal, trial, crucifixion, death, and burial. Engage the people in this discussion as much as is necessary before going to the next point.

**Lesson Point #3:**

Emphasize the main point of this section which is the fact that the women did not find the body of Jesus in the tomb. The gender of the characters involved is not of primary importance. Of primary importance is the fact that the tomb was empty because Jesus had come back to life. The angel that the women had seen at the tomb told them, "He is risen." That means he is alive!

**Lesson Point #4:**

Jesus appeared to his disciples and other followers numerous times before he ascended to heaven. Emphasize that Jesus made these appearances because he wanted his disciples and other followers to clearly know that he was alive again.

In history, various erroneous explanations were given for the empty tomb. Jesus appeared to the disciples and also ate food in their presence to prove the reality of his bodily resurrection. This is an important point.

Do not get caught up with the fact that Thomas doubted his resurrection. It is true that at first he verbalized his doubt concerning Christ bodily resurrection. More important is the fact that Thomas believed in the risen Christ when he saw him. He did not continue in unbelief as the scribes and Pharisees did when they saw overwhelming evidence of Christ's divinity when he performed many miracles.

Emphasize the point which Christ makes about this incident. Christ said, "Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed." This is a good point to bring out. It is not necessary for everyone to be eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Christ. The Scriptures testify to this fact and this testimony is based upon eyewitnesses' accounts of his resurrection. This is the opportunity to emphasize that God requires people to believe in him, to believe that testimony of his Scriptures.

**Lesson Point #5:**

Jesus Christ gave his last command to his disciples before he ascended. This command is known as the Great Commission. Relate to the people that you have taught them these

Bible stories because you obeyed the command of Jesus Christ to take the gospel to people who needed to hear it. Emphasize that you did not merely begin to teach them these Bible lessons because it was your own idea. Emphasize that as you have obeyed the command of Christ to take the gospel to others, so too does he want each believer to tell others about the good news of himself.

**Lesson Point #6:**

The ascension of Christ into heaven validates that God was fully satisfied by his sacrificial work for mankind. Emphasize this point: If God would not have been fully satisfied with the work of Christ, he would not have received him back into heaven again.

Be sure to stress that God's receiving of Jesus Christ into heaven signifies that Christ is divine and in him there was no wrongdoing or sin whatsoever.

Why does this need to be stressed? Because in the world today there are erroneous teachings that Christ was attracted to sin or even did commit sin while he was on earth. Had that happened, then he would have been sinful and could not have been received by God into heaven again. Had that been true then Christ would not have been raised from the dead.

**Final Note:**

It is good to interact with people one-on-one as much as is possible. You want to find out if they have any lingering questions which may keep them from being saved.

Remember this: It is not an issue of you versus them. It is an issue of you trying to help and coach along anyone who has lingering reservations about the truth of the work of Christ for them. For some they may need to be walked through what the gospel really is and helped in their thinking so that they can fully trust in Christ for their salvation.

Do not rush people to state whether or not they believe the gospel of Christ. Remember that faith in the gospel of Christ is brought about through an understanding of the message. As you explain the message in simple terms, not cluttered with things to do, about what Christ did for you, the Holy Spirit works in his special way to bring about the regeneration of the soul. Truly, salvation is of the Lord!

## **11. To the Honorable Teacher**

If any part of this lesson is misunderstood, go over that part again. Play that part of the lesson again. Summarize that part briefly for the students then play that part a second time. Then ask questions to ascertain whether or not this part of the lesson is now understood.

Be prepared to use proper illustrations to clarify a given lesson point. Sometimes it is helpful to use a picture and talk about what is portrayed in the picture as you teach.

Stress to the students that the important themes of this lesson must be understood before proceeding to the next lesson.

Simple drama can be useful to make a point clearer in the people's minds. Before using drama, be sure that it is culturally appropriate to do so. If people are not accustomed to understanding simple drama, it may be best to not use it.

At this point in the teaching is more important than ever for you to mingle with the people to discover how well they understand the lessons and to what degree they are believing the message you are teaching them. It is very important at this point for you to show in an appropriate manner your sincere concern for their spiritual welfare.