

Acts 1:4-11

On earth as it is in Heaven

Warm Up

What's the highest hill/mountain you have climbed? The tallest building you have been to the top of? The longest flight of steps you have climbed? (Covent Garden tube station, nearly killed me!) 😂

Background and context

The ascension of Jesus is one of those stories that often gets overlooked. We skip from the resurrection to Pentecost and miss out this extraordinary event. It seems such a bizarre event that many of us find it hard to accept as literal. However, its significance is huge. Throughout the Old Testament the idea of ascension and ascending to be in the presence of God is a common theme. From Moses on a mountaintop, to ascending the hill of the Lord to attend festivals, going up to meet God was a familiar concept to Jews. This was not lost on the first disciples as they watched Jesus ascend! The ascension reconnects the heavenly realm of God and the earthly realm of man. Christ now reigns in both realms as the glorified Messiah. He is King in heaven and in the hearts of believers through the Holy Spirit.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity

READ Acts 1:4-11. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

1. **Read Daniel 7:13-14 and Isaiah 52:13.** These verses relate to the Son of Man/Messiah. How might the disciples connect these verses to what they witnessed? What would it mean to them?
2. **Read v4-5.** Why does Jesus tell His disciples to wait before beginning ministry?
3. Why is it important today, to "wait on God," before we embark on a ministry or mission?
4. **Read Joel 2:28-29 and Ezekiel 36:26-27.** How can we, as believers, depend more on the Holy Spirit in our lives?
5. **Read v 6-7.** The disciples misunderstood Jesus' idea of "the kingdom." How do we do the same today? Do our expectations of God differ from God's purposes?
6. How do we react when God's timing is not the same as ours?
7. **Read v8.** What does being a witness look like in everyday life? Which "region" is hardest for you, local, cross-cultural, or global outreach?
8. **Read v9-11.** Jesus visibly ascends before their eyes. Why is this important? What does it signify? What does it prepare the disciples for? What hope does it give?
9. Jesus now reigns as Messiah/King in heaven. How does He reign in your life today?
10. How does Jesus bring *heaven to earth* in your life?

Discipleship and Application

11. How can you improve your vision of Jesus as reigning on high? What does it mean to you?
12. How does the hope of Jesus' return give encouragement in your daily life?

Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.