

DANGEROUS CAMPING



Sunday Morning Talk

 Acts 1:6–11



BIG IDEA

Jesus went to heaven, leaving his disciples to tell others about him. Jesus will return to claim his friends but we don't know when.

YOU WILL NEED

Large picture of Simba, Pumba and Timon. Large picture of Simba on Pride rock. Large picture of someone you left behind to come here. If the group is bigger than about 20, you could print these pictures on a service sheet with any song lyrics.



TALK OUTLINE

Intro activity: Turn to your family to chat. Imagine Jesus is just about to leave this world to return to heaven. How would you complete the sentence, "Before you go, could you just...?" What would you want Jesus to do, or to fix, or to answer, before he leaves? You can only pick one thing! What would it be?

Space
for notes



Have you ever said goodbye to a friend or a family member? What did it feel like? Did you find it difficult? *Tell a story of someone who always finds it hard to say goodbye or a particular occasion when saying goodbye was difficult.*

Today we read about Jesus saying goodbye to his friends. Not forever. But it is still goodbye.

We can relate to this story. When we hear a Bible story, we often think, "If I'd been there, I would have..." and we try to imagine how we would feel. With this story, it's easy to imagine what it was like. Because for us, now, it's like we have said goodbye to Jesus. His body is not here. We can't see him or touch him. How do we keep trusting him when we can't see him?

So far this weekend we have been in the last chapter of Luke's gospel. This passage is from the book of Acts. Acts was also written by Luke, the same man who wrote Luke's gospel. Luke's first book is the story of Jesus' life on earth. Acts is the story of Jesus going to heaven and how his friends managed without him.

This passage tells us what Jesus did next, after he died and came back to life.

1. Jesus went to heaven to rule as king

Jesus left this world to go to heaven to rule as king. Did you hear what happened as Jesus got ready to leave? His disciples asked him (read v 6), "Lord, are you at this time going to give the kingdom back to Israel?"

That was their one thing. "Before you go, Jesus, could you just get rid of the Romans and give us our country back?"

Listen to Jesus' answer read v 7–10a: "The Father is the only One who has the authority to decide dates and times. These things are not for you to know. But the Holy Spirit will come to you. Then you will receive power. You will be my witnesses—in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world."

"After he said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up. A cloud hid him from their sight. As he was going, they were looking into the sky."

Jesus went to heaven in front of their eyes. His friends, who were left behind, were really sad. They just stood staring into the sky to see where he had gone. They didn't want to say goodbye to Jesus.



But Jesus did what was best for the whole world. He had to go and rule as king in heaven. You see, while he was on earth Jesus could only be in one place at a time, but in heaven he can see everywhere. He can be in charge everywhere. That's the kind of king we want, the kind that is always on his throne, ruling. But it still feels sad for his friends, then and now, because we don't get to see King Jesus every day.

It's like part of the film *The Lion King*. Simba has two special friends, Pumba and Timon. *Hold up picture of Simba, Pumba and Timon.*

They have a terrific time together. They laugh together, they sing together, they eat together. They love being together. But then Simba has to go back to Pride Rock. That was a terrible time for Pumba and Timon. They were losing their special friend. They couldn't play together any more. They would miss him. But Simba had to become the king. *Hold up picture of Simba on Pride Rock.*

And that's what Timon and Pumba would want, isn't it? They wouldn't really want to keep Simba with them, because that would stop him being king. They had to let him go. They had to let him be king.

It's the same with King Jesus. His friends had to let him go so that Jesus could rule on his throne in heaven. It feels sad but it's the best thing.

We need to remember that even though we can't see Jesus, he's ruling right now. Jesus is still the king. He is the only king. Just because you can't see him, doesn't mean he's not ruling.

And he didn't leave his friends on their own. Did you spot that? He said (*read v 8a*), "But the Holy Spirit will come to you." Everyone who trusts in Jesus as their king is given the Holy Spirit to live in them. The Holy Spirit is Jesus living in us. So we are not on our own.

So, Jesus went to heaven to rule as king. But he won't be away forever...

2. Jesus will return to take his friends to heaven

Listen to the angels promising that Jesus would come back (*read v10–11*): "As he was going, they were looking into the sky. Suddenly, two men wearing white clothes stood beside them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into the sky? You saw Jesus taken away from you into heaven. He will come back in the same way you saw him go.'"

One day Jesus will come back. He'll come back suddenly and from



nowhere. One moment he won't be here – the next moment he will be here.

The difference is that next time he comes, no one will miss it. When he comes back, he will be the king that everyone must obey. And Jesus' friends wanted to know when that would happen.

We just don't know when Jesus will come back, but when he does come, everyone will know he is the king. No one will miss it. He will take everyone who has been trusting Jesus as their king to heaven with him.

There are so many times, as a child, when you have to be collected by an adult – from school, from a party, from a club, from a friend's house. Do you have a parent who is often late? Are you sometimes left waiting a little longer than you would like?! Imagine that you're waiting for a parent to collect you after a school trip. *[Pause]* Every other child has been collected. It's just you left, and the teacher. It's starting to feel a bit awkward, perhaps a bit sad. In that moment, is there any part of you that is thinking, "That's it. They don't want me. They won't come. I will be alone forever"? *[Pause]* OF COURSE NOT! That would *never* happen. Your parent might be late. They might even have got the time wrong. But they *will* come. You're their child. You are more loved than you can know. They *will* come to get you.

It is the same with Jesus. He has promised that he will come back. Do you think the king will keep his promise? Of course he will. King Jesus has never broken a promise. He will never break a promise. He said he will come back, so he will. He loves every single person, so I guess he's waiting for more people to find out that he is the king. We might be a bit sad that we can't see him right now, but we can be sure that he will come back.

So until he comes, let's keep trusting Jesus as king. And let's keep trying to obey him. We won't always get it right, but that's alright. Even if we trust Jesus as our king, we still keep betraying him in small ways. But we can then say sorry and remember that he has taken the full punishment for us, so we never have to. Let's keep trusting Jesus as the king, as *our* king.

Have a quick conversation with your dad:

- How hard is it to believe that Jesus is coming back? What's your answer, on a scale of 1 to 10? 1 is impossible to believe. 10 is dead certain.
- Why do you say that?
- What difference does Jesus coming back make to you?

