

Question 51



Of what advantage to us is Christ's ascension?

Answer

Christ is now advocating for us in the presence of his Father and also sends us his Spirit.

Big Idea

The risen and ascended Christ is enthroned in heaven and acts on behalf of his people.

Aim

To help the children understand what Jesus is doing now.

Bible Passage

Romans 8:3–39

Memory Verse

“Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.” (Rom. 8:34)

Virtue

Hope





Notes

Leader's Notes

When children think about the work of the triune God, they usually think about God the Father rather than the ongoing work of God the Son. They may have some understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, but are perhaps slightly confused about where the risen and ascended Jesus fits in. This lesson will help the children understand what Jesus Christ is doing now in heaven. It will begin to help them understand the role that God the Son now occupies in the world and in the lives of individual Christians. This lesson aims to equip the children with a fuller understanding of the work of the ascended Christ.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- Some of these concepts are abstract and will need to be explained well for the children to understand.
- Emphasize the importance of the work of the ascended Christ; help the children to see why this doctrine matters.
- The lesson should bring great confidence and joy to Christian children as they understand more fully the role and work of the ascended Christ in their lives.
- Remember to mix and match the activities in the lesson to fit your time frame (see p. 12 for some sample outlines). You won't have time to do them all. Feel free to adapt each activity based on your class's strengths and weaknesses.

Leader's Prayer

Loving God, thank you that when Jesus Christ ascended back into heaven, you sent the Holy Spirit to indwell each believer. Thank you that Jesus is intimately involved in my life both through the work of the Spirit and also his ongoing work on my behalf from his seat at the right hand of

the Father. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. May they understand the work of the risen and ascended Christ and rejoice in the knowledge that he is their Advocate and Intercessor. In Jesus's Name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- Q51 Catechism Recap (DL)
- Paper
- Markers
- A bowl



- A waste basket or bucket
- Q51 Advocate Required! (RB)
(If you have more than eighteen children, you will need two copies.)

10 Catechism Recap

Have paper and markers ready, along with a bucket or waste basket. Print out Q51 Catechism Recap (DL).

Divide the children into small groups. Give each group eight pieces of paper and a marker.

Explain to the children that in the bowl are the answers to eight catechism questions. The aim of the game is for them to quickly write down the question that goes with

the answer. Draw one of the eight answers from the bowl and read it aloud. Give the teams two minutes to write down the question. Once the two minutes is up, read out the question. The teams that have correctly identified the question may send a representative to a marked point in the classroom to crumple up their piece of paper and shoot for the basket. Repeat until all answers have been drawn from the bowl. The team with the most scores in the basket wins the game.

5 Introduction to Question 51

Explain to the children that whenever a country receives a new king or queen, there is an enthronement ceremony when the monarch is given the charge to rule the country and care for the people. Tell the children that Jesus's ascension results in his enthronement as heavenly King. He has completed the mission that God set for him on earth and now reigns as Lord while seated at the right hand of God

the Father. Introduce Question 51: "Of what advantage to us is Christ's ascension?" Explain to the children that just as a human king or queen strives to look after his or her people, so Jesus works tirelessly to care for his people. Tell the children that this question will help them understand a little more about what Jesus is doing right now.



10 Activity



Ask the children if they've ever heard the expression "friends in high places." Ask them what it means. It means that you know someone in a position of power, who can get things done. If you need something, you could call on your friends in high places, and they would have the power to help you.

Tell the children you are going to tell them about some friends in high places. Give them the following clues:

- I have a friend who works in an important place. A high fence surrounds it. She doesn't live in this place, but someone else does. She sees the president nearly every day. Where does my friend work? (Answer: The White House)
- I have a friend who gets to see movies before they come to theaters. He is very good at drawing and works with lots of actors. He also works with a large mouse. What company does my friend work for? (Answer: Disney)
- I have a friend who wears a uniform to work. He wears stars on his shoulder. He could send an army to rescue me if I were captured. What is my friend? (Answer: An Army General)
- I have a friend who can fly across the country any time she wants. She can get into the cockpit of a plane, even during takeoff and landing. What is my friend? (Answer: A Pilot)
- I have a friend who can hear and see everything in the world. He is always ready to help me. He is seated beside his Father, who is the King of everything. Who is my friend? (Answer: Jesus!)

15 Teaching Outline

Begin the teaching time by asking for God's help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the children might listen well.

Explain to the children that Jesus is actively ruling with full authority from the right hand of God the Father in heaven. Jesus is Lord over all and is working unceasingly for the good of his people and the glory of God.

Ask the children if they know what an advocate is. Explain that it is a person who

fights for the rights of another. Give the children some examples: people who fight for unborn children are advocates for the unborn; people who fight for those who are bullied are advocates for victims of bullying. Highlight that Jesus acts as an advocate for all Christians, representing them to God. Ask the children how having the King of the universe speak on their behalf makes them feel. Highlight for the children that Jesus is intimately involved in the lives of his people.



Read Romans 8:31–39. Provide Bibles for the children to read along.

Tell the children that Paul writes this passage to give the Roman Christians confidence of all that they have in Christ Jesus. He says to them, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” This passage should encourage every Christian to keep trusting God and living for his glory.

Emphasize verse 34 and ask the children what Paul says Jesus is doing for his people in heaven. Paul says that Jesus, while seated at the right hand of the Father, is interceding for every Christian. Explain to the children that interceding is simply praying. Ask the children how the knowledge that Jesus is praying for them should affect Christians here on earth.

Remind the children that Jesus also sent the Holy Spirit to his people after he ascended into heaven. The Holy Spirit now lives in all those who trust in Jesus and helps them

to become more like Jesus as they read and understand God’s Word.

Ask the children if they can see all the different ways that Jesus’s ascension is good news for his people. He is an advocate. Jesus, the one who satisfied God’s wrath, speaks to God on behalf of Christians. The fact that Jesus is in heaven, having triumphed over sin and death, means Christians never need to worry about being punished by God (what a hopeful thought!). He is praying for every spiritual blessing for his people, and he is ensuring that his people are equipped to walk with him and become more like him by sending his Spirit.

Conclude the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 51 and the answer to memory.

(These notes are just for guidance. Please expand or amend them to suit your own children and context. Write out your talk in your own words and include illustrations and applications that you know will connect with your children.)



Activity



Cut out the six different scenarios from Q51 Advocate Required! (RB), and fold each slip in half.

Divide children into groups of three. In each group, appoint one person to be the advocate, one to be the judge, and one to read the scenario (see example below). After the scenario has been read, the advocate should make a persuasive case to the judge. After they finish, ask the judge if he or she was convinced.

When a group finishes, if there’s time, have them swap scenarios with another group and change roles so that a different child is the advocate.

After a couple of advocacy sessions, ask the class why having someone else speak on your behalf may be more effective in some situations.



Notes

Reader: Fourth grader

Advocate: Son or daughter of the school principal

Judge: School principal

Pretend that you live in a place where it hardly ever snows. You just listened to the

weatherman forecast snow for tomorrow. He says that some schools may close. Your good friend is the child of the principal of your school. Ask your friend to convince the principal to close school tomorrow.

After the advocate is finished, ask the judge if the advocacy worked.

5 Discussion and Question Time

Some questions that might arise include:

? Why do we need an advocate if Jesus dealt fully with our sins?

Explain to the children that Jesus's presence in heaven means that sin and death have been defeated and his death has satisfied God's wrath. God has accepted his sacrifice on our behalf. Even though this saving work has been accomplished, Jesus still intercedes for us, asking God to grant us what we need on his behalf.

? How can I know what Jesus is praying for me?

John 17 is a good example of the kind of prayers Jesus prays for his people.

Also use this opportunity to help the children think about their own lives and how this question and answer affects them personally.

- Ask the children if they are excited to know that Jesus is always working for his people from heaven.
- Ask the children how they might explain what Jesus is doing now to someone who is not a Christian.

10 Virtue Vision

Hope

Read this story to the children:

Carlos loved to read. When he was lost in a book, he had no idea what was going on around him. One day,

Carlos started reading a new adventure book on the bus home from school. Suddenly, he heard the bus driver say, "Last stop. Everybody off!" Carlos had missed his stop! Normally when this happened, Carlos told the bus driver,





which was the right thing to do. But today, there was a new driver, and Carlos was too embarrassed. He picked up his backpack and got off the bus.

The other children had already scattered. Carlos didn't recognize any of the houses. He had no idea where he was! He felt totally hopeless. He sat down on the curb with his head in his hands.

Then, he remembered that he had learned at church that Jesus is his advocate in heaven, interceding on his behalf. This made him feel less alone. Surely, Jesus could get him home. And Jesus had given him the Holy Spirit to guide him. Carlos felt hope rise in his heart, even though he still didn't know how to get home.

He picked up his backpack and started walking. In the distance, he could see a playground. As he got closer, he recognized the swing set with the bright orange swings. That was the playground across from his grandmother's house! He ran across the playground and, sure enough, there was his grandmother's house. Carlos prayed a prayer of thanksgiving as he looked both ways and crossed the street. He could see his grandmother through the window. He was not lost anymore!

Ask the children what thought gave Carlos hope.



Memory Activity

Read the memory verse or catechism question and answer with the children a few times. Then work together to develop actions for the memory verse or question and

answer. Allow the children to be creative and come up with actions for as many words as possible. Say the memory verse through with the actions several times.



Closing Prayer Time

Invite the children to give thanks to God for enthroning Christ as King and ruler over all. Encourage them to rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus is their advocate and is interceding on their behalf in heaven.