

Rotation.org Writing Team

# The Great Commission and Ascension of Jesus

## Music, Movement, and Drama Workshop

***Hold on, to me as we go***  
*As we roll down this unfamiliar road*  
*And although this wave is stringing us along*  
*Just know you're not alone*  
***'Cause I'm going to make this place your home***

*Settle down, it'll all be clear*  
*Don't pay no mind to the demons*  
*They fill you with fear*  
*The trouble it might drag you down*  
*If you get lost, you can always be found*  
***Just know you're not alone***  
***'Cause I'm going to make this place your home\****

## Summary of Activities

Students will study, listen, view, and dramatize Jesus' "great instructions and promise" as interpreted through the mega-hit song, "Home" (Phil Phillips). To see and hear the lyrics of this song in a new way, students will watch a video clip from "***The Passion ~ Live (from New Orleans)***" where Jesus and Peter sing the song. (Learn more about that video below.)

## Scripture for the Lesson

[Matthew 28:16-20](#) and Acts 1:1-11

**Key/Memory Verse:** <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (NIV)

## Lesson Objectives

See the [Bible Background](#) at rotation.org for this set's complete list of objectives.

**Our musical goal here is simple:** Turn this wonderful "earworm of a song" into a constant reminder of our Savior and his commissioning message to "*hold to me as we go,*" and "*know you're not alone.*" To help do that, we've created a Lyrics ~ Scripture Matching activity to go along with the video. "Home" is one of those songs that's going to be around for a long time, and every time our students hear the song online, radio, and tv, we want them to hear Christ's voice. Along with the music, the dramatic/movement/videotaping activities are the brain glue.

The word for "church" in Greek is "ecclesia." It means something like "the people who are called out." Some have interpreted this as "called OUT of the world," but in the Great Commission, Jesus is obviously

calling his disciples *INTO the world* and promising to be with them. Where's our heart's true home? It's wherever Jesus calls to and walks with us.

## Preparation and Materials

- Read the [Bible Background](#) and scripture.
- Print a copy of the [lyrics~scripture handout](#). Modify to your scripture translation if needed. Make copies of page 1 for each student. Make copies of the page 2 teacher notes for those leading the lesson.
- Preview the video clips and purchase the video.
- A-V equipment to play the video. (DVD Player, TV, etc).
- A video camera, such as a cellphone, and cord to plug it into the TV for playback.
- Simple costumes, including one highly identifiable robe for Jesus.

## Preview Video Clip from "The Passion ~ Live"

The show and clip starts with Jesus (Jencarlos) and his disciples in a coffee shop discussing "who do people say that I am." Peter (Prince Royce) responds. Then after a brief narration by Tyler Perry seen at a park in New Orleans, we return to see Jesus and Peter meet outside the shop and sing "Home." Though the production imagines the song prior to the Crucifixion, in our lesson, we are re-imagining it as Jesus' final instructions AFTER the Resurrection. (BTW: Jencarlos and Prince Royce are two pop stars and Tyler Perry is, of course, known for his "Madea" movies.)

For preview purposes. We strongly recommend purchasing the complete video. It has many other inspirational scenes and songs. More about the song and television show below.

## Lesson Plan

Below are several options to dramatize the song depending on your age group, number of students, time available, and desired outcome. We recommend videotaping whatever you do and playing it back at the end of the lesson to help the words and concepts in the song and scripture blend and sink-in even further. The Opening and Bible Study will help you develop the content for the dramatization.

### Opening

**Welcome** your students and explain a little bit about what they'll be doing today, *without giving away the name of the song just yet*.

**Go the board and write the word "HOME."** Ask your student to tell you what it means to them. Help them think of the deeper significance of what the word means. You might comment that "home has been called the most beautiful word in the English language" --to many (though certainly not to those who grew up in difficult homes).

*For young children, write the word "Home" then draw a home, and draw their answers.*

**Ask: "What does the word 'HOME' mean to a Christian?"** Where's our home? Who's in our home? Who's there to welcome us home?

*Be careful here not to just define "home" as "where we go when we die." Heaven on earth is Jesus' vision, ...a world in which all are baptized, instructed in his ways, and cared for. (Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.)*

**Ask:** Raise your hand if you've ever heard the famous song, "Home" by Phil Phillips --the American Idol winner a few years ago. Then say....

**Say:** Here are some of the lyrics to jog your memory. Raise your hand if you suddenly realize you've heard the song! [**Read the first verse of the song.**]

*After a few raise their hand*, tell them you have a video clip of the song you want to show them. But warn them! It's not Phil Phillips singing, but Jesus and Peter!

**Explain the scene they are about to see using the notes about The Passion~ Live found at the end of this lesson.**

## **Play "The Passion ~Live" version of the song "Home."**

**After setting up the scene play the video of Jesus and Peter singing "Home."**

*Use the notes about The Passion ~ Live found in this lesson to explain who's who, and where they are in the story. Clue-in students that Jesus looks modern, and that Tyler Perry (Madea) will narrate part of the story.*

**After playing the video, ask** "How many of you NOW recognize this song?"

**Ask and Say:** Did you ever think when you first heard this song that "Home" might be imagined as a song that JESUS could sing? Though the song was used before his Resurrection in the video, I think we can also imagine Jesus singing it to his disciples AFTER the Resurrection as a sort of "final instructions and comfort." Our scripture for today is known as the Great Commission, which is another way of saying, "Jesus' final instructions and comfort."

## **Bible Study: Comparing the Great Commission to the song "Home"**

*We've provided the scripture and song lyrics in WORD docx format [attached to this lesson](#) in case you need to change the scripture translation.*

*Give each student a copy of page 1 from the handout.*

**Begin by reading the scripture from the handout**, then explain the activity and invite students to circle a word or phrase in the HOME lyrics that match an idea or word in the Great Commission -circling that word or idea in the scripture and drawing a line between the two.

*See the handout for more instructions and for the teaching notes.*

**After everyone has individually linked words between the scripture and song on the handout**, READ THROUGH THE SCRIPTURE asking students to raise their hand when they have a "song lyric

that matches" one of the scripture words. Pause when anyone raises their hand and have them tell you their match. (This is your teaching opportunity. Feel free to follow up asking them why they thought it matched. See the handout for more insights.)

## **Dramatize and Videotape the Song**

Here are some relatively simple videotaping ideas meant to help glue the song and scripture in their wonderful multi-sensory-loving brains. Each involves a helper with a video camera (a cell phone will do), moving among your "disciples and Jesus" to capture their singing and movements. You'll need to play the song (or music video clip) loud enough in the background to be picked up on the camera, but not necessarily drowning out your students who can sing along.

It will be really helpful to enlarge and post the lyrics behind the camera so that students can see and sing along while looking towards the camera.

### **Drama Idea 1: "Scripture Signs"**

Assign someone to portray and dress up as "Jesus." This should be someone who can sing and feel comfortable singing the entire song along with the music playing in the background. As they sing along with the music, different students step into camera view holding a scripture sign.

The scripture signs are the excerpts from the Great Commission which you and your students "matched" to the lyrics during the Bible study. The lettering on the signs should be at least 6 inches high --big enough to be easily seen on the video playback.

In addition to the scripture signs, add a couple of other signs that reference other keywords from the Great Commission. Examples: **Go! Baptize! Teach!** You can also create signs for words like "Love," "Forgive," "Have Compassion" and show these during the "Oooo-oooo" lyrics.

### **Drama Idea 2: "Motions"**

Assign each lyric line to a particular student, and work with each to come up with a MOVEMENT that captures the idea in their lyrics. Then, line the kids up in order of the lyrics. As the song plays in the background, the person doing the videotaping moves down the line to capture each student singing their lyric line and doing their movement.

Option 1: You can have "Jesus" walking behind the line in time with the music and singing along, embracing each disciple's shoulders as they sing their line and then moving on. (This turns Jesus into the "cue" for each student and provides some visual interest.)

Option 2: Have "Jesus" standing and facing the camera, and line up the "disciples" next to him in order of the song lyrics. Jesus stays "on camera" while the disciples quickly file forward to sing with him and do their movement, then peel off to make room for the next disciple.

## **Reflect**

Play back the video and reinforce some of the points made in the dramatization and song. Remind them that our "heart's true home" is not a place, but wherever Jesus calls us to serve and walk with him.

## Show and Song Background

**The Passion** (also known as *The Passion: New Orleans*) is an American music television special originally broadcast on March 20, 2016. It is a contemporary retelling of the Passion of Jesus Christ set to popular music, through a mixture of live and pre-recorded segments broadcast from New Orleans. It stars singer-musicians Jencarlos Canela (Jesus), Prince Royce (Peter), Chris Daughtry (Judas), and Seal (Pilate). Tyler Perry hosts and narrates the special. The story of Christ's last days is set in various locations in New Orleans and culminates in the arrival of the players, along with a public cross procession at Woldenberg Park where the audience, Tyler Perry, and Pilate await. (From Wikipedia.)

Copies of the video are available on Amazon. Preview clips of various segments and songs, such as the one shown in this lesson plan, can be found on YouTube.

### "HOME"

Originally performed on *American Idol*, "Home" is the song that helped Phil Phillips win that competition and become a pop star. It was written for him by Andrew Pearson and Greg Holden.

Hold on, to me as we go  
As we roll down this unfamiliar road  
And although this wave is stringing us along  
Just know you're not alone  
'Cause I'm going to make this place your home

Settle down, it'll all be clear  
Don't pay no mind to the demons  
They fill you with fear  
The trouble it might drag you down  
If you get lost, you can always be found  
Just know you're not alone  
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