

The Ascension Of Christ

No. 142

Introduction.

I. Mark records these words in the 16th chapter of his gospel about the ascension of Christ.

MAR 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. 19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.

II. Luke records these words in the 24th chapter of his gospel about Christ's ascension.

LUK 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 And it came about that while He was blessing them, He parted from them. 52 And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple, praising God.

III. Luke gives us even a fuller account of the ascension of Christ in Acts 1.

ACT 1:3 To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. 4 And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. " 6 ¶ And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; 8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. " 9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; 11 and they also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." 12 Then they returned

to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

IV. Both Mark and Luke recorded one of the most exciting and significant events in all history - The Ascension of Christ. I would like for us to discuss, "The Ascension of Christ." A study of the ascension is necessary for us to have a complete understanding of Christ's work of redemption. The ascension is vital to the redemption of man.

I. **What Did The Ascension Mean To Christ?** Let us begin this discussion by asking the question, "What did the ascension mean to Christ?"

A. The ascension of Christ meant the **work of redemption was done on earth.** (Lk. 19:10; Matt. 26:28; Jn. 19:30; Isa. 53:5, 6).

B. The ascension of Christ meant **He was raised from the dead.**

1. **The Bible makes it clear that Jesus died on the cross for the sins of man.** The Bible makes it clear that the physical body of Jesus was buried in a tomb. The Bible makes it clear that the physical body of Jesus was raised on Sunday morning.

2. The risen Lord spent 40 days on the earth following the resurrection. During this time He spent a lot of time with His disciples. He still had the nail prints in His hands and the wound in His side. During this 40 days He ate and slept with His disciples. All of this was to convince His disciples that His actual, physical body had been raised from the dead and to prepare them for the coming of the kingdom and His ascension into heaven.

C. The ascension meant Christ was to be **exalted to the right hand of God.**

ACT 2:25 "For David says of Him, 'I was always beholding the Lord in my presence; For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 'Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; Moreover my flesh also will abide in hope; 27 Because Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Thy Holy One to undergo decay. 28 'Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou wilt make me full of gladness with Thy presence.' 29 "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

1. Peter tells us that David was not speaking of himself, but of Christ. David was in his tomb. It was Christ who died and was buried and it was His body that did not see corruption.

2. **Jesus ascended to be with the Father in heaven.** He did not ascend to be a mere servant or angel, but He ascended to the highest position. He is exalted at the right hand of God. (Acts 2:33, 36; 7:56).

3. The Hebrew writer wrote. (Heb. 1:8).

4. Later Paul wrote.

PHI 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

5. Jesus is the Lord of lords and King of kings. He has “the name which is above every name.” While on earth Jesus had no wealth. Men often belittled Him and made fun of Him. Now all the wealth of heaven is His. Now all authority is His. The day will come when all will acknowledge the supremacy of Christ.

D. The ascension means Christ is exalted **as the head of the church.**

EPH 1:20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. ²² And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.

1. Christ is a part of the body, but He is more than a member. He is head of the body which is the church.
2. He did not receive this exalted position until He ascended into heaven and was exalted as King and Lord. Now all in the church must submit to Him. He is the One who has absolute authority. Apostles, prophets, elders, ministers and all others must submit to Him. No one in the church has any authority except the authority that comes from Christ the Head of the body.

E. The ascension of Christ meant **He is exalted as High Priest.** (Heb. 7:25-8:1).

HEB 7:25 Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.:²⁶ ¶ For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸ For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever. ^{8:1} Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

1. Christ, to the surprise of some, was not our high priest while He was on earth. He did not become our High Priest until He ascended on High.
2. He now makes intercession “always,” day and night, for the saints. (Heb. 7:25).

F. The ascension of Christ meant He is **exalted as our Savior.** (Acts 5:31).

1. Men treated Jesus shamefully while on earth. They shouted, “He saved others, let him now save himself.”
2. Now at God’s right hand Jesus is recognized as the Savior of the world. He is praised as the Savior who came to earth and died for man.

II. What The Ascension Means To Us - Let us now look at what the ascension means to us.

- A. It means Christ is **our King now**. His kingdom is not future. He is now reigning at the right hand of God. We should let Christ rule in our hearts. We should now do those things that please Him.
- B. The ascension means we have **a High Priest in heaven itself**.
 - 1. Hebrews 1:3 informs us after Jesus had made purification for our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High to be our exalted King and High Priest.
 - 2. We **now have a mediator, intercessor, and advocate**.
 - a. Romans 8:34 tells us that Christ died, was raised from the dead, ascended, was seated at the right hand of God and now intercedes for us.
 - b. 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Jn. 2:1
- C. The ascension also **made possible the coming of the Holy Spirit**.

1. The coming of the Holy Spirit was dependent on the ascension of Christ.

John 16:7 "**But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.**

- 2. The Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth. (Jn. 16:13). Acts 2:4, 43.
- 3. He would convict the world. (Jn. 16:8).
- 4. He would be given to Christians. (Acts 2:38; 5:32).

III. **Respond** - How should we respond to the ascension of Christ.

- A. The ascension showed the apostles and us **what happened to the body of Christ**. It did not rot in the grave, but it ascended to be with the Father. He now has a glorified body.
- B. The ascension is **absolute confirmation of the Sonship of Jesus**.
 - 1. We should recognize Him as God's Son. (Rom. 1:4). The ascension of Christ into heaven is even more proof of His Sonship.
 - 2. We should recognize Jesus as Lord, King, High Priest, Head of the church, and our Savior.
- C. The ascension means we should **seek the things above** where our Savior abides. (Col. 3:1, 2).
- D. The ascension means we should **live with assurance that Jesus is coming again**. (Acts 1:11).
- E. The ascension means we should **live in hope that one day we too will be in heaven** and have new spiritual bodies.
 - 1. We know Jesus had a physical body on earth. We know it was His physical body that was nailed to the cross. We know it was His physical body that was buried in the tomb. We know it was His physical body that was raised from the tomb. We know His physical body did not enter into heaven. We know this because of what Paul said. (1 Cor. 15:50).
 - 2. Evidently, since flesh and blood cannot enter heaven, Jesus was transformed when He ascended to heaven and has a new spiritual body.

3. Paul tells us that our physical bodies will be raised, but they will be changed. (1 Cor. 15:49, 53).

Conclusion.

- I. Jesus wants you to ascend one day to be with Him forever. He has prepared a place in heaven for all who will trust and obey Him.
- II. Come and give your life to the One who is exalted on High. Come as we stand and sing.

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