

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST
ACTS 1:9-11

Introduction

The week before Easter Sunday we saw **CHRIST on the CROSS!**
(We saw “*THE DIFFERENCE THAT JESUS MAKES*”)

On Easter Sunday we looked at **CHRIST’S RESURRECTION!**
(It was “*HISTORY’S GREATEST EVENT*” and we saw “*THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION.*”)

Last Sunday we looked at *Acts 1:1-8* which addresses the 40 day period after **CHRIST’S RESURRECTION! CHRIST** showed **HIMSELF ALIVE** for this 40 day period which is important in that **HIS** showing **HIMSELF** was **NOT** just a brief *apparition* that the **DISCIPLES** saw—It was **BODILY!**

During those 40 days CHRIST spent additional time with **HIS DISCIPLES** speaking to them of things pertaining to **HIS** coming **KINGDOM** as well as **COMMISSIONING** them to spread the **GOSPEL** to the entire world!
(We looked at “*WHAT IS MISSIONS ALL ABOUT?*”)

This morning let’s look at the next event in *Acts 1:9-11*. (*Read Scripture*)

Here, we see that **CHRIST’S DISCIPLES** visibly watched as **HE ASCENDED** from the ground into a cloud and then out of their sight! The **LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO** was clothed in **HIS RESURRECTED BODY**, was transported from the earth into the **HEAVENS** and then disappeared out of their sight! The **DISCIPLES** just stood there looking up!

Two men in white apparel (*i.e. ANGELS*) appeared to them and told them that **JESUS** had been taken up into **HEAVEN**. They also said that **THIS SAME JESUS** would come again in like manner as they had seen **HIM** go up!

Life would go on for **JESUS’ DISCIPLES**, but they would never be the same. The **RESURRECTION** of **JESUS** had made a great impact on their lives. The 40 days that **JESUS** spent with them after **HIS RESURRECTION** made an impact on their lives. And, I believe that **CHRIST’S ASCENSION** also made a great impact on them as it should on us.

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Let’s look first at...

I. THE MAJESTY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST!

Have you ever considered what it must have been like when **JESUS** entered **HEAVEN** after **HIS DEATH, BURIAL, and RESURRECTION?**

JOHN’S GOSPEL records a prayer **JESUS** prayed before **HE** died. *John 17:4-5*—“*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*”

JESUS CHRIST is **ETERNAL**; **HE** was never created. So, before **HE** came to earth, **HE** existed in spirit form with all the **GLORY** of **GOD’S ETERNAL SON!**

When **JESUS** was clothed in human flesh, **HE** laid aside **HIS** glory in heaven and limited **HIMSELF** by taking on humanity!
Philippians 2:7—“*But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.*”

But, when **HE** ascended back to **HEAVEN**, **HE** was **GLORIFIED** with the **GLORY** which **HE** had before the world was! (That’s what *John 17:5* says!) There was the resumption of the exercise of **ALL** of **HIS DIVINE ATTRIBUTES!** All the **SELF-IMPOSED** limitations of humanity ceased when **HE** sat down on **HIGH!**

I want you to get the picture here. **PAUL** quotes from *Psalms 68:18* and tells us in *Ephesians 4:8*:
“*Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*”

Who were the captives **HE** liberated? They were the **SAINTS** in **PARADISE** which was also known as “*ABRAHAM’S BOSOM*” (*Luke 16:23* in the story of the rich man and Lazarus)

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Before **CHRIST'S ASCENSION**, when a **SAINT** died, he did not go directly to **HEAVEN**, but to **PARADISE**, where all the **SAINTS** were prisoners of hope. **JESUS** told the **BELIEVING** thief on the cross he would be with **HIM** in **PARADISE**!

When **JESUS ASCENDED** to **HEAVEN**, **HE** emptied this temporary abode of the **RIGHTEOUS**, and took them with **HIM** to **HEAVEN**!

I believe that **JESUS** was like a victorious general returning from battle with every **OLD TESTAMENT SAINT** forming **HIS ROYAL ENTOURAGE**. Through the spirit realm, this **GLORIOUS** march made its way to **HEAVEN**!

Can you imagine the **OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS OF GOD** gasping at the beauty and **GLORY** of **HEAVEN** and of **CHRIST**? Because the **GLORY** that had belonged to **JESUS** for all of eternity engulfed **HIM** once again like the royal garment of a **KING**!

THE MAJESTY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST!
II. THE MASTERY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST!

The **BIBLE** is clear about what happened when **JESUS** arrived in **HEAVEN**. Look at the words of *Hebrews 1:1ff (esp. vs. 3)*

Mark 16:19—“So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”

The **RIGHT HAND OF GOD** is significant. It is **THE PLACE OF POWER AND PREMINENCE!** (*Ephesians 1:19-23*)

JESUS WHO humbled **HIMSELF** like no one who has ever lived now has been **EXALTED** like no other person. (*Philippians 2:7-11*)

JESUS, in **HIS GLORIFIED** human body, now occupies the **THRONE!** **HE** is **LORD** above all and over all! This is the **WORD** from **HEAVEN!** **JESUS CHRIST** has no rival to **HIS POWER** in this world or in the spirit world.

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HE is **ETERNALLY TRIUMPHANT** and **HE WILL REIGN FOREVERMORE!** We serve an **ALL-POWERFUL GOD WHO** is the undisputed **KING OF KINGS** and **LORD OF LORDS!**

SO, WE SEE: *THE MAJESTY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST,*
THE MASTERY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST!

III. THE MINISTRY OF THE ASCENDED CHRIST!

Okay, so **JESUS ASCENDED** back to **HEAVEN** and **SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD.** But understand that **HE'S NOT JUST SITTING!**

CHRIST is **ACTIVE!** When **HE** left earth for **HEAVEN**, **HIS MINISTRY** did not cease! **HE** has a **PRESENT MINISTRY** both in **HEAVEN** and on Earth in **HIS CHURCH!**

What are the advantages and ministry that come to us through **CHRIST'S ASCENSION?** (*Ephesians 1:3; 2:6*)

A. There is a Present Work Of CHRIST For The BELIEVER:

- 1. JESUS Sent HIS HOLY SPIRIT As HE Promised!**
A verse we've already looked at in Ephesians 4:8 says—*“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”*

John 16:7—“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; **It is expedient for you that I go away:** for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; **but if I depart, I will send him unto you.**”

John 14:16—“And I will pray the Father, and **he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;**”

2 Corinthians 1:22—“Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

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2. **JESUS Closed Sin's Account For The BELIEVER!**
(Hebrews 10:11-14)

If you have believed in **JESUS**, your sin account has been closed forever! Quit beating yourself up over your past! You have received the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of **CHRIST!** You have received the **FORGIVENESS** of your **SINS!**

3. **JESUS Has Prepared A Place For Us!**

John 14:2—“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

4. **JESUS Is Our GREAT HIGH PRIEST And Our GREAT CONTINUING INTERCESSOR!**

Some folks might be thinking, “How can I be saved if I continue to sin? Doesn't my sin disqualify and nullify my salvation?”

The **APOSTLE JOHN** spoke to this when he wrote, *1 John 2:1-2—“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

When we sin, we have an “*advocate*” with the **FATHER, JESUS CHRIST** the **RIGHTEOUS!** We have a “*go between,*” “*a mediator,*” “*a lawyer*” (That's the meaning of the word “*advocate*”)!

JESUS pleads our case on the basis of **HIS SHED BLOOD** that is the **PROPITIATION** (or **ATONEMENT**) for our **SINS!** There is no **DOUBLE JEOPARDY!**

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We cannot be required to pay for the debt of our **SIN** which has already been paid by **JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS!**

That's why the writer of **HEBREWS** says in *Hebrews 7:25— “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”*

True **SALVATION** cannot be lost because of **JESUS' DEATH, RESURRECTION, and CONTINUING MINISTRY** of **INTERCESSION** before the **FATHER!**

Romans 8:34—“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

1 Timothy 2:5—“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;”

Stop and think about this. **JESUS CHRIST, WHO** has **ALL AUTHORITY** in heaven and on earth, is praying for you. **HE** wants you to be successful. **HE** wants you to finish the race that is set before you.

What a prayer partner! This is why the book of **Hebrews 4:15-16** says, “*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*

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We have **ACCESS** to the **FATHER WHO CARES** for us and **JESUS WHO PRAYS** for us as well as the **HOLY SPIRIT WHO INDWELLS** us and **PRAYS** for us even when we don't know how to **PRAY!**

Romans 8:26-27—“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”

What more could we ask?

5. JESUS Cleanses Us!

1 John 1:9—“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

There is a Present Work Of CHRIST For The BELIEVER

B. There is a Present Work Of CHRIST For HIS CHURCH:

1. HE Is The HEAD Of HIS CHURCH!

Colossians 1:18—“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

HE is the **HEAD** of each true New Testament Church!

2. He Is The “CHIEF SHEPHERD” And “BISHOP” Over Each CHURCH!

1 Peter 2:25—“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

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1 Peter 5:4—“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

**3. HE Dwells In The Midst Of The CHURCHES And Holds Each Pastor In HIS RIGHT HAND!
(Revelation 1:12-13, 20)**

CONCLUSION

So, **JESUS** is still very much **ALIVE** and **ACTIVE!**

HE was very **ACTIVE** in **HIS** three year ministry on this earth, but now **HE** is **ASCENDED** into **HEAVEN** and **HE** is still very **ACTIVE** on our behalf even today!

We have seen the **MAJESTY**, the **MASTERY**, and the **MINISTRY** of the **ASCENDED CHRIST!**

In the first century, as **HIS DISCIPLES** viewed **HIS RESURRECTION** and **ASCENSION**, they were radically changed forever. Should things be any different for us?

We too are to:

LOVE JESUS...

LIVE FOR JESUS, and...

LOOK FOR JESUS!

BECAUSE THIS SAME JESUS IS COMING AGAIN! AMEN!