

Sermon Text: Luke 24:50-53 “Blessed Ascension”

Christ’s ascension to heaven blesses us with joy to worship even while He is bodily departed from us.

1) What happened in the ascension (24:50-51)?

- a) Christ ascends still blessing His people.
 - i) “He led them out” (v. 50a)—The shepherd who leads them to the mountain east of Jerusalem will lead His sheep to heaven.
 - ii) “as far as Bethany”—the place where Jesus began His “triumphal entry” into Jerusalem (19:29); the place where His feet will stand when He returns in the fulness of His kingdom (Zech. 14:4); on the Mount of Olives (Ezek. 11:23; cf. 2 Sam. 15:30)
 - iii) “lifting up His hands He blessed them” (v. 50b)—priestly blessing
 - iv) “while He was blessing them . . .” (v. 51a)—as He ascended blessings descended
- b) Christ departs bodily from His people.
 - i) “He departed from them” (v. 51b)
 - ii) cf. Luke 19:12 “A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.”
 - iii) A sense of absence
- c) Christ is exalted to heaven.
 - i) “He was carried” (v. 51c)— Father exalts the Son
 - ii) “into heaven (v. 51c)—God’s dwelling within creation; also a round-about way of saying “to God”

2) What does it mean?

- a) Christ is our Priest who still blesses us.
- b) Christ is our God and King who rules us.
- c) Christ is coming in the fulness of His Kingdom.
 - i) Holy Spirit
 - ii) Second Coming (Parousia)

3) How should we then live (24:52-53)?

- a) Worship Jesus Christ the LORD
 - i) Corporate and Individual praise of God
 - (1) “they worshiped Him” (v. 52a)
 - (2) “they were continually in the temple blessing God” (v. 53)
 - ii) Obedience to His Word—“they returned to Jerusalem” (v. 52b; see v. 49)
 - iii) Witness to the world (see vv.47-48)
- b) Rejoice! the Lord is King!—“with great joy” (v. 52c)

Doxology: You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in Your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there. Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation!—Psalm 68:18-19