

Title: The Ascension of Christ

Passage: Acts 1

Introduction

Today, Jesus is on the throne and is actively ruling over every aspect of our lives. In Christ, we can have peace.

EXPOSITION

Question

Acts 1:6

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

- Disciples asked Jesus - is His kingdom to come now that He has resurrected?

Answer

Acts 1:7-8

He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Response: Jesus' kingdom is:

- Spiritual
- International (all are children of God regardless of race but through faith in Christ)
- Gradual (start in Jerusalem, then Judaea/Samaria, and to the end of the earth)

How?

- Holy Spirit needs to come. As such, Jesus needed to go up.

Sermon Overview

1. Importance of Christ's Ascension (v. 9-11)
2. Impact of Christ's Ascension (v. 11)
3. Implications in lives of apostles and ours

I. IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION (v.9-11)

Acts 1:9-11

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

a cloud took him out of their sight

- cloud = symbol of God's glory

1 Kings 8:10-11

And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

- Jesus is in heaven in His glorified body.
- Jesus will return

Revelation 19:11

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

Question: Why was Jesus Ascension significant?

Necessary sequence to the Resurrection

- Ascension is the proof of the Resurrection (proof that Jesus is God)

Philippians 2:5-9

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

Appearances to Christ came to an end.

Jesus would no longer be seen by physical sight/touch but now by faith.

1 Peter 1:8-9

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Jesus is now our advocate/mediator who intercedes for us

1 John 2:1

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

Symbolic of Jesus' exaltation to the right hand of God.

Psalms 24:7-10

Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory! Selah

Trigger a new era when the Holy Spirit would come in power and indwell in every believer.

- Holy Spirit would also come to convict people in a new way

John 16:7-8

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:

II. IMPACT OF CHRST'S ASCENSION (v.11)

Acts 1:10-11

And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Jesus will come back again

The Apostles must fulfill their mandate

- Jesus will not only come back but come back as the Judge.

Matthew 28:19-20

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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

We are to be witnesses, not star-gazers

2 Timothy 2:1-2

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

We need to tell others about the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Why we need to go and make disciples.

Romans 15:20-21

and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."

III. IMPLICATIONS OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION IN LIVES OF APOSTLES AND OURS (v.12-26)

The Apostles went back to Jerusalem and waited for promise of Holy Spirit

Acts 1:12-14

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Why? An opportunity for the apostles to:

- Practice obedience,
- Be together, and
- Practice Biblical fellowship
- Praying
- Studying Scripture

Practice Obedience

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

- previously, even after news of Jesus' resurrection, the disciples were distracted and fearful. Now, Jesus directly commanded them to go to Jerusalem. Would they do it? They did.

Practice Biblical fellowship

And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James....together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

- previously, they were separated (even Thomas). Here, they were altogether.

Temptation: I am able to do life by myself or apart from any local church.

- Though salvation is by individual basis, you are put in a body of believers so you can grow.
- You cannot grow in your covenant relationship with God without other believers.
- Analogy: A single coal outside of the fire. Alone and separated, it became cold and useless.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Devoted to Prayer

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer,

Romans 12:12

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

Ephesians 6:18

praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Deeply Study God's Word

Acts 1:15-17

In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry."

Acts 1:20

"For it is written in the Book of Psalms, "'May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it'; and "'Let another take his office.'

- during times of waiting, important to continue to study God's Word

Matthew 7:24-25

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

James 1:25

But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Honor of Godly Leadership

Two types of followers of Christ

- Disciples = someone who is a learner
- Apostles = sent one

Criteria:

- Someone who was with Jesus
- Someone alive during Jesus' resurrection
- Commission to the office by Christ Himself (was with Jesus and was accepted by Him to be present)
- Commissioned by rest of the original apostles (casting lots)

Truth: No more "Apostles" today as no one can actually be commissioned by Jesus Himself and by the original Apostles

APPLICATION

If a Christian, remember Jesus is the King of the universe!

Colossians 1:15-18

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

- Satan can do nothing to stop that fact. He can try to tempt and cloud or distract from the truth.

Acts 7:54-56 (Stephen's death)

Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

- Likewise in dark times of confusion, pray for a clear perspective of Jesus.
- Place our confidence in the finished and saving work of Jesus Christ.

If a Christian, get your guidance from the Bible.

- not from social media or the news
- Though things are bad, God is in control.

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- Be immersed in God's Word
- Be constant in prayer
- Honor godly leadership

If you are not a Christian, ask: What do you think happened at the Ascension?

- How could a group of people who were fearful in locked room be turned to be courageous enough to preach about Jesus Christ?
- Your answer not only affects your life now but also for all eternity.

John 3:18

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

John 5:24

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.