

I. Text from the Apostles' Creed: "He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty From there he will come to judge the living and the dead."

II. Acts 1:1-11. Jesus does 4 things for His disciples as He prepares them for their mission.

1. He reinforces the reality of His resurrection (1-3)

- i. What would it take you to be convinced of your friends physical resurrection?
- ii. This is what Jesus did for His friends for 40 days. They were not predisposed to the idea of a physical resurrection anymore than you are.

2. He reaffirms the Promise of the Father (4-5)

- i. This is the Promise of the Holy Spirit.
- ii. Jer. 31:31; Joel 2:28-31; Isa. 32:15; Ezekiel 36:25-27

3. He redirects their question about the future and gives them their present mission (6-8)

- i. Knowing what you believe about the future is important, however, its not as important as being about Christ's mission in the present.

4. He returns to His Father (9-11)—this is unbelievably good

- i. Jesus leaves the space-time continuum and passes into the presence of the Father.
- ii. He can now take everything He is and has done and apply the benefits of it everywhere. His ministry takes on a cosmic shape. This is why the Ascension matters so much!

III. Note these 4 realities about the Ascension.

1. He's been Exalted As King: To ascend is more than spatial language, it describes relational authority being granted. Think of ascending to the throne of England.

- i. That's what's happening at the Ascension. Jesus ascends to the right hand of God the Father almighty.
- ii. Eph. 1:16-22. Jesus is enthroned beside the Father. His mocking crown of thrones has been replaced with a glorious crown of gold.

iii. He's now sovereign over every part of the created order.

2. *He Has Poured Out His Spirit:* John 15:26

i. The Spirit Enlivens You. Titus 3:3-8 (More on this next week)

ii. The Spirit Empowers You to Carry Forth Christ's Mission Eph. 4:20-21;
Eph. 2:17

3. *He Intercedes On Your Behalf* -Heb. 4:14-16

i. , "He (that is the ascended Jesus) is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25)

ii. Jesus stands as our advocate and representative before the throne of the universe, which means it doesn't matter where you have been or what you have done. It doesn't matter how flawed and foolish you are. When the eyes of God the Father look at you, they see the ascended Jesus!

4. *He is Going to Return*-The Ascension is the deposit on the return of Christ.

i. The Angels said, "This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

ii. He will return.

1. To bring forth heavenly justice against God's enemies (Rev. 19:11-21)

2. To gather His people to Himself (Matt. 24:29-31; Jn. 14:1-3)

IV. When the Ascension is embraced with your heart, it does three things for you.

1. *It Propels Us Out In a Mission Far More Important Than Us:*

i. The Mission of the Kingdom, the proclamation of the Gospel, the making of new disciples is without a doubt far more important than any of our individual lives.

ii. Once you believe that the Ascended Christ could return at any moment, it propels us out in a mission that is far more important than us and enables us to take risks and to spend ourselves on behalf of others because Christ saved us, not just as the risk of His life, but at the cost of His life.

2. *It Secures Us In A Life and A Love Far More Powerful and Gracious Than Us.*

i. Rom. 8:31-39

ii. You are secure in the life and the love of Christ.

3. *It Fills Us With A Hope That is Far More Lasting Than Us.*

i. Jesus is preparing a place for you, right now!

ii. When our bodies break down, we'll wake up in the presence of the Lord.

This should fill us with tremendous hope about our future.