

The Ascension of Jesus

Acts 1:4-11, 2:1-12,14,22-24,36-41, Luke 24:44-53

May 21, 2017

Pastor Dave Bolte



The Ascension of Jesus into heaven is the beginning of the “**End Times**”. These are the *Last Days*. The Ascension of Jesus into heaven was like the firing of the *starters gun* in a track meet, or the *click of the stopwatch*. The timer is going; the countdown to the Last Day began when Jesus ascended into heaven. Time is now measured and limited; the day of grace gets shorter and shorter. **Only the Father in heaven knows the exact time.**

When Jesus ascended into heaven, the Disciples were gathered around Him; in addition, perhaps 500 other people were also there and witnesses to His resurrection (1 Cor 15:6). At His ascension, Jesus commissioned His disciples, saying *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28)*. The Disciples were to proclaim Jesus’ death and resurrection so that people would repent and believe that their sins are forgiven (Luke 24).

In the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, there are three promises that Jesus gives to you. These three promises guide us as we live our lives in faith in these Last Days.

1. The first promise is that Jesus is always with you.

Here is the very *last thing* that Matthew records Jesus saying before He ascended into heaven:

Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

MATTHEW 28:20

The presence of the risen and ascended Lord in your life is meant to comfort you and strengthen you. It means that you are never alone; it means the Lord Jesus is your unseen traveling companion through life. No matter what may happen, the Lord is with you. He is watching over you, protecting you, and making all things work for good in your life. Remember the Psalm: *The Lord is your refuge and strength, an ever present help in times of trouble* (Psalm 46:1). As you live your life in these **End Times**, in these **Last Days**, the Lord is right there with you. Jesus promised, *Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

2. The second promise of the Ascension is that Jesus gives you His Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity who comes alongside of you to guide, lead and empower you in your Christian faith and life. Here is one of the promises that Jesus makes about the Holy Spirit:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. JOHN 14:16-17

The main work of the Holy Spirit is to lead you to **repentance and faith** in the Lord Jesus.

The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to **convict you of sin**; He exposes your **rebellion and immorality**; He convicts you of secret sins and uses guilt to alert you to sin. The Holy Spirit leads you to turn from your sins and confess them to God.

Then the Holy Spirit works through the Gospel and the Sacrament of Holy Communion to **forgive your sins**. He teaches you about Jesus, and that through His death and resurrection, forgiveness of sins has been earned for you. **The Holy Spirit comforts you and assures you that your sins are forgiven**. He gives you confidence and conviction that you belong to God and are accepted by Him.

**This repentance: *turning from sin and trusting in Christ*, is how we live our lives during these *End Times*; in these *Last Days*. Your entire life is to be one of repentance: *turning from sin and trusting in Christ*!
It is the Holy Spirit at work within you!**

3. The third promise of the ascension is that Jesus will return visibly and in great glory on the Last Day.

At the ascension of Jesus, the angel echoed what Jesus had earlier taught:

“Men of Galilee,” the angel said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11

Jesus said, “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. Matthew 24:30-31

The Return of the Lord Jesus is what all of history is moving towards. On the Last Day, everything in the world that we know and can see will **STOP when Jesus returns. **A day is coming, and will soon be here, when Jesus will appear in the sky in great glory and power with all the holy angels.****

IT WILL BE JUDGMENT DAY.

The crucified, risen, and ascended Lord Jesus will return to earth and raise the dead. Every single person ever conceived will rise from the dead and stand before Jesus.

Those who **rejected Christ** will be revealed by their **evil deeds** and declared **“guilty!”** of sin and condemned to an eternity in Hell.

Those who **trusted in Christ** will be revealed by their **good deeds** and declared **“not guilty!”** and ushered into the Kingdom of heaven.

When you think about the return of Jesus on the Last Day, be sure not to be deceived by the 2,000 year gap...it might seem like a long time to us, but it's just a flash to God. These 2,000 years show that **God is patient and kind**, and wants all men to come to faith and have eternal salvation. Don't grow apathetic in your faith and life.

Don't get sloppy in your faith!

Don't procrastinate when it comes to repentance!

Don't let sin overtake you!

Jesus teaches us to **be alert and ready** for His sudden return!

Remember, time is short.

The stopwatch is going;

the timer is counting down.

The ascension of Jesus Christ marks the beginning of the **End Times**, the **Last Days**. Jesus gives you three promises as you live your life during these turbulent times.

1. **He is always with you**
2. **He has sent the Holy Spirit to you**
3. **He will return suddenly and in great glory.**

Amen!