



The Ascension of Jesus!

JESUS SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY

Acts 1:1-1 Ephesians 1:15-23 Luke 24:44-53

May 29, 2022

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We believe that Jesus “*ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.*” The “*right hand of God*” is a figure of speech for the authority, power and glory of God. Martin Luther wrote:

I believe that Jesus ascended into heaven and has received from the Father power and honor above all angels and creatures; that He accordingly sits at the right hand of God; that is, that He is king and lord over all that belongs to God, whether it be in heaven, in hell or on earth. For this reason He can help me and all believers in every need, in defiance of all our adversaries and enemies¹.

The *right hand of God* is a symbolic way of saying that Jesus is the **ruler of all things** and **He is always with His People**. Jesus at the *right hand of God* comforts and encourages us; it gives us hope and peace as we face daily life².

The Ascension teaches us that Jesus is in control of all things. The Risen and Ascended Lord Jesus Christ works through the **events of history – and the events in your own life FOR GOOD**. He works through all the **brokenness**, the **unexplainable**, the **horrible** and the **tragic**. He *works through it all for good: for the benefit of His Church and for the salvation of all people*. **History** is the story of God at work for the benefit of His Church and the salvation of all people. Your **life story** is a part of that: it is God at work in your life for your good!

¹ Martin Luther, J. N. Lenker trans, *Luther's Two Catechisms Explained by Himself* (Minneapolis: The Luther Press, 1908), p. 206.

² Jesus as the “Right Hand of God” is large subject with many applicable points. Over the last two weeks, we have seen that Jesus is the King who rules God's Kingdom, He is the High Priest who sacrificed Himself for us and now serves us the Holy Things of God, He has sent the Holy Spirit to us as promised, and He continues to speak and teach us through the New Testament! (See the previous two weeks sermons for overviews of these points.)

The Bible doesn't teach us why things happen, other than we live in a sinful, broken world. But God does give us a promise: *we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him*; the promise is that the Risen and Ascended Lord Jesus Christ *works through it all – whatever the cause -- for benefit of His Church and the salvation of His people*. That's the **Christian world view** we are to have based on Scripture: **The Risen and Ascended Christ works through it all for benefit of His Church**. He sits at the *right hand* of God the Father almighty!

In the Ascension, we learn that Jesus is all powerful, in all places, and knows all things; He is **Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient**. Here is how the Book of Ephesians teaches it to us:

Christ was raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. God the Father put all things under Christ's feet; He is over all things and is the Head of the Church. Paraphrase Ephesians 1:21-23

Even if we do not understand how, God has promised to work all things for good... for His Church ... *and for you* as an individual believer.

- ⇒ This includes your health and wellbeing
- ⇒ This includes your home and family
- ⇒ This includes our country and world events
- ⇒ This includes whatever MAY HAPPEN today, tonight, or tomorrow!

Because Jesus sits at the right hand God the Father Almighty, we know that our lives are in His hands, and we have full confidence in His promises to use His mighty power for our good! That's His promise to you!

Jesus at the
right hand of God
comforts and encourages us;
it gives us hope, peace, and
stability as we face daily life.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ to the Right Hand of God means that He is involved in your life --

He knows you and He cares about you. **The world around you and the events in your life are not spinning out of control!** There is *safety* in Christ; there is *stability* in the Lord; there is *peace* in His promises! No matter how it feels; no matter how it looks, God's promise to you in the Ascension is that God will **not** let your life spin out of control!

- That's Christ's promise to you in the Ascension;

- That's how you can make sense out of your own problems, pain and stress in your life
- That's how we can make sense out of this broken, evil, and corrupt world that we live in

The world around you and the events in your life are not spinning out of control! They are firmly in the hands of the Risen and Ascended Lord ... and He is at work for the good of His People!

The first thing that we learn in the Ascension is a **worldview**: that **the Ascended Lord Jesus Christ Who sits at the right hand of God the father it is with you, watching over you, and He is at work for good in the events and the details of your life!** You can trust Him! you can put your faith in His Word and promises!

A second thing that the Ascension of Jesus Christ to the *right hand* of God the Father teaches us is that He will return on the Last Day. As Jesus was ascending into Heaven, the angels told the disciples:

"Men of Galilee," they 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

The Bible teaches us that Jesus will return to the earth on the Last Day; and that every eye will see Him.

Look, He is coming with the clouds, and **every eye will see Him**, even those who pierced Him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of Him. Revelation 1:7

Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and **He will appear a second time**, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him. Heb 9:28

When Jesus returns, **you'll see it.** You won't miss it;
NO ONE WILL BE "LEFT BEHIND"!

Here is how we confess it to the world in the Nicene Creed:

(Jesus) "ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. **And He will come again with glory** to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end." Nicene Creed

In the Ascension of Jesus we learn that He will return on the Last Day. On the Last Day when Jesus returns, history as we know it will end. Suddenly and unexpectedly, the sky will open and you will see Jesus in full glory, power, majesty and might; with all the holy angels with Him.

- It will be *Judgment day for the unbelievers, a terrible day of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.* Unbelievers will be thrown into the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
- And at the same time, it will be the *long awaited Homecoming Day for believers,* for the baptized disciples who trust in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for salvation. On the Last Day, Jesus will take you to your heavenly home, and reunite you to your loved ones who have died in the faith.

The only way to be prepared for the return of Christ on the Last Day is to repent of your sins and trust in Christ for forgiveness.

Jesus taught us to “watch and pray”; we are to be alert and understand the Signs of the End that we see every day.

The Last Day is coming and it is coming soon. It will be sudden and unexpected!

The only way to be prepared is to renounce sin and trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins!

The Ascension of Jesus Christ is an important event in the work of Christ our Savior, in the history of His Church, and in your life as an individual believer.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ to the *right hand* of God the Father teaches us to frame our lives around two significant truths:

- The **past event** of the Ascension means that Jesus is making all things work for good for you! From the , Jesus blesses you with all good things, and He is even at work in your problems, pain and stress. Jesus is the King who knows you and loves you; and He is all powerful, all knowing and everywhere.
- The **future promise** in the Ascension of Jesus Christ is that He will return: suddenly and unexpectedly! On the Last Day, He will take you home to His eternal Kingdom in Heaven!

Frame your life around these two truths! Like bookends, let these two truths guide you through life. Let the Ascension of Jesus Christ To the right hand of God the Father empower you to **remain faithful** and to **live boldly** as a disciple of Jesus Christ!

AMEN!

**Ascended Lord Jesus Christ,
Who sits at the Right Hand of God the Father,**

**we thank you for revealing to us
your power, glory, and authority.**

**Help us to trust in you and your promises
as you work for good in the world around us
and in our very own lives.**

**Strengthen our faith
so that no matter what may happen,
we will not be shaken, fearful, nor worried.**

**As we live each day in your care and watchfulness,
keep us mindful of your sudden return on the last
day.**

**Come Lord Jesus,
come soon!
Amen!**

Ephesians 1:15-23

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. 17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Acts 1:1-11

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” 6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 “Men of Galilee,” they 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.”

Luke 24:44-53

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." 50 Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. 51 While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple blessing God.
