

Where Is Jesus Now & What Is He Doing?

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[0:00] Well, we've entered Advent season. I love Christmas time. I love the food. Do I have an amen?

I love the traditions. I do love the singing. You know, last night, we sang 10 songs last night at the Christmas sing, and they were just all full of Advent glory.

Hark the herald angels sing, joy to the world, what child is this? Theologically rich, melodically satisfying, and it was just good to be together.

I mean, we're singing about this miracle of the second person of the Trinity who has eternally existed, took on human flesh, and has remained incarnate since.

Man! Every December, we ponder anew this miracle, this wonder, the miracle of the incarnation.

[1:19] So, have you heard the word Advent? That word Advent may be new to your ears, and that word Advent simply comes from a Latin word that means arrival or coming.

And so, we have entered the Advent season of Jesus, and what we typically are talking about is His first Advent, when Christ became a man.

Humble, helpless, infant, lying in a feeding trough. The second person of the Trinity who became incarnate, and what we respond is, we respond with, oh, come, let us adore Him for what a miracle that is.

But, this Advent season, 224, I want to help you think about Christ's second Advent, the second coming of Jesus, His second arrival.

When Jesus talks about Himself in Matthew 24, as the Son of Man will come on the clouds. So, this Christmas time, I want you to help, I want to help you think about the second Advent of Jesus.

[2:55] And so, we're going to be living in between the Advents this Christmas time. The first Advent, oh, come, let us adore Him. And the second Advent, where we say, amen, come Lord Jesus.

So, think of these next several sermons, as Christmas meditations on the second Advent of Jesus Christ.

And so, this morning, I'm going to tackle, well, if Jesus is no longer in the manger, where is He and what is He doing? And then next Sunday, I'm going to tackle, when is He coming back?

And then the following Sunday, I'm going to tackle, what is He going to do when He comes back?

And then on Christmas Eve, we're just going to kind of drill into this promise Jesus makes at the end of Revelation 22, where He says, surely I'm coming soon.

And we say, amen, come Lord Jesus. So, the question this morning, I want to ask is, where is Jesus now, and what is He doing?

[4:05] He's not a helpless infant in a manger, nor has He come on the clouds. So, where is Jesus now, and what is He doing, and how should we respond to this?

So, let's ask this question and answer, where is Jesus now? Now, if He's not in the manger, and He hasn't yet returned to the clouds, where is He?

What I'd like to do for you now is not my typical approach. Typically, I'll pick one passage and exposit it. But for your edification this morning, I thought we would do a New Testament survey of what a number of New Testament writers have to say, how they answer that question, where is Jesus now?

So, we're going to start off with Luke. Luke was one of the disciples of Jesus, and he wrote the Gospel of Luke, and he wrote the Acts of the Apostles.

It was a two-volume set written to this guy named Theophilus, and in Acts chapter 1, we learn this. In verse 6, Jesus is with His disciples in Jerusalem.

[5:36] They ask Him, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And He says to them, it's not for you to know the 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 all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

And when He 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, angels, stood by them in white robes, and He said, and they said, men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven?

This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will He come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven? He'll come back on a cloud. What Luke does is here, he relays this historic event, and he locates Jesus in heaven.

And if you'd flip to Acts chapter 7, this is the account of when Stephen was martyred, and in verses 54 and 55, we read this.

Now, when they heard these things, the Jews, they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at Stephen. But he, Stephen, full of the Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

[6:56] Now, that little phrase, the right hand of God, is what I want you to hear. Because at least Luke has located the risen, ascended Jesus Christ at the right hand of God in heaven.

Let's see what else some of these New Testament writers have to say. Let's turn to the Apostle Paul. In Romans chapter 8, one of the all-time favorite chapters in the Bible.

Chapter 8, verse 31, Paul writes, What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? That in and of itself is a beauty.

He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? You being condemned, Christian? It is God who justifies. Who is it to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died.

[8:03] More than that, he was raised. Who is at the right hand of God. Who indeed is interceding for us. So Luke places Jesus, the risen Christ, at the right hand of God in heaven.

And now Paul does. And if you flip over to Ephesians chapter 1, in verses 15 through 23, Paul's praying this triune prayer for the Ephesian church.

And in verse 19, he's praying that they would know the immeasurable greatness of his power towards them who believe, according to the working of his great might, that he worked, verse 20, in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and seated him at the right hand 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.

And he put all things under his feet. Where is Christ Jesus right now? At the right hand of God. All things have been put under his feet.

Okay, so we've got two New Testament writers. How about the writer of Hebrews? Hebrews chapter 8, verse 1. Now the point in what we are saying is this.

[9:27] We have such a high priest. One who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven. And then if you flip over to Hebrews chapter 10, verses 11 through 14, we read this.

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had suffered for all time, a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemy should be made a footstool for his feet.

For by a single offering, he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. Do you know what that means? Jesus died on the cross, paid for our sin, and made obsolete for all time the Old Testament sacrificial system.

And he sat down, done, paid for. Where does the writer of Hebrews locate Jesus following his resurrection?

At the right hand of God in heaven. How about 1 Peter? Peter, where do you place Jesus? 1 Peter 3, verses 18 through 22.

[10:53] 2 Peter 3, verses 18 through 22.

Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Where does Peter put Jesus? Having been crucified and raised from the dead, he is at the right hand of God and all things have been subjected to him. And then there's John the Revelator.

In Revelation chapter 5, instead of John kind of writing something to instruct us, he shares a vision with us.

Chapter 5, verse 1. Then I, John, saw at the right, the right hand of him who's seated on the throne. That's God the Father. A scroll written within it and on the back sealed with seven seals.

[12:19] That scroll, my best understanding, is God's unfolding purposes for the fullness of time. And each seal represents an advancement in God's fullness of his plan.

And so God is on his throne holding up a sealed scroll with his right hand. John says in verse 2, I saw a mighty angel proclaim with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? No one in heaven or earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. No one was qualified. John begins to weep loudly, verse 4, because no one was found worthy to open the scroll.

Verse 5, And one of the elders said to me, Weep no more. Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.

And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a lamb standing as though it had been slain with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

[13:31] And he went and he took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. And then he starts opening it. What John does is he pictures for us Jesus, the risen Christ, the lamb that was slain, but is alive at the right hand of God in the throne room in heaven.

And he grabs the scroll that no one else could grab and says, Now it's for me to execute this plan. The right hand of God is the place of royal executive power and authority.

It's the place of the king. So what we see here in these five examples of New Testament writers, they are all pointing to the risen Christ at the right hand of God in heaven.

And I want to let you know is that's fulfillment. Hear the word, brothers and sisters. Hear this from 2 Samuel.

God's speaking to David. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body, the root of David, and I will establish his kingdom.

[15:07] We all know this one. To us, a child is born. To us, a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, of the increase of his government and of peace.

There will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Fulfillment. Psalm 110.1, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

Luke chapter 1, The angel Gabriel speaks to the virgin Mary, And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus.

He will be great and will be called the son of the most high and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father, David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there will be no end.

[16:23] Where is Jesus right now? At the right hand of God the father in heaven seated on David's throne. He's not in a manger and he hasn't returned on the clouds.

In the manger, he was an incarnate, helpless babe. At his second advent, he is going to be the incarnate, glorious, conquering king. And right now, our Jesus is the incarnate king seated on the throne.

And he's living between his advents. Just as we're living between his advents. He is the royal executor with all power and authority to accomplish the father's will in full.

that's where he is right now. When you woke up, when you're stressed out this week, that's where he is right now.

In the Apostles' Creed section says this, on the third day he rose again, he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the father and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. [17:54] Where is Jesus right now? He's not in a manger, he's not in the clouds, he's at the right hand of God in heaven. Now, I realize we're 18 minutes into this sermon and I have just dropped a lot of information on you.

And you might want to check out, like you check out after Thanksgiving, like whoa. You can check out. But, if you're in the room and there's this question that's been raised with you now, okay, he's in heaven, I see that.

And it begs the question, so what is he doing? What is he doing in heaven now? If you want the answer to that question, you just go on with me? Because he's doing four things, at least, this is not exhaustive, he's about four activities right now at the right hand of God on David's throne accomplishing his purposes.

You ready for him? Number one, he's upholding his creation. We read that already from Colossians 1, but I want to point you to Hebrews 1.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

[19:31] He is the radiance of the glory of God in the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Amen. What is Jesus doing right now? He's upholding everything by the word of his power.

There are over eight billion people on the planet as I speak. Everyone has a next breath. Every next breath comes from the throne. All eight billion people on the planet are dependent on this risen and reigning Christ, whether they are willing to acknowledge it or not.

They all depend on him. The first thing he is doing right now is upholding his creation, and he's not breaking a sweat.

The second thing that he's doing in addition to upholding his creation is he's expanding his kingdom. We learned how Jesus is the fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7.

[20:49] He's the descendant of David who will sit on his throne. He is the Isaiah 9, 6, and 7, this wonderful counselor, this mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, whose government is on his shoulders, and it's increasing by the zeal of God.

He's the guy. He's the one. His kingdom has come. It's the saving reign of God in the person of Jesus Christ, and right now our Lord Jesus on the throne.

He is expanding his kingdom. He is delivering people from the domain of darkness and bringing them into his kingdom, the kingdom of light, the kingdom of his beloved son. And so, Matthew 16, 18, Jesus is speaking to Peter.

He says, on this rock, I will build my church and the gates of Hades, hell, will not prevail against it. Right now, Jesus from the throne is building his church. And when you hear church, don't think physical structures.

Think of all of God's people from all around the world, from every tribe, tongue, and nation who are flipped by his grace and become his worshipers.

[22:03] The church. He's expanding his kingdom. In Matthew 28, he's sending out his disciples to make more of his disciples who will treasure him above all else and obey him and all that he commands and magnify him among all people and belong to King Jesus with all of his blood bought.

He is doing this right now from the throne. He's expanding his kingdom. Book of Acts. The risen Christ directs his servants to share the gospel, start and establish churches, and multiply churches. It's in the book of Acts. That's what he's doing. He's doing that now around the world. Ephesians chapter 4, 11 through 12. The risen Christ is giving gifts to the church. Gifts of people, gifts of leaders, under shepherds to bring health, to protect, and direct God's people.

He's giving gifts to the church. Revelation chapter 1, verses 12 through 13. Revelation chapter 2 and 3. John the revelator pictures the risen Christ walking among the churches.

And what is he doing? He's inspecting. He's speaking words of corrections and purification to his church because he loves his church.

[23:23] He's building his church. He's expanding his kingdom. Romans 8, 34. Hebrews 7, 23 through 25. 1 John 2, 1. Jesus enthroned at the right hand of God and the Father.

Brothers and sisters, he is interceding for you right now. You're not nameless to him. You're not faceless to him.

He knows you. He knows what burdens you. He knows the sins you've committed. And he is interceding for you right now by name.

He's your advocate even when you sin, even when you blow it for the 27th time. He's your propitiation. He bore God's wrath for you.

And he is advocating for you at the throne. That's what he's doing. He's expanding his kingdom. Interceding for you. And then 2 Corinthians 12, 8 through 10, John 15, 5.

[24:34] He's pouring out grace. We run to the throne of grace in time of need and he's pouring out grace.

He's expanding his kingdom, the kingdom of grace. Grace upon grace, we bring our weakness. He brings the strength of his grace. That's what he's doing right now.

He's not in a manger. He's not come in the clouds. He's seated on his throne. Expanding his kingdom. So he's upholding his creation.

He's expanding his kingdom. He's receiving his praise. One of the things I didn't point you to when we were in Revelation 5 is the response of all of heaven to him.

Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals for you were slain and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth.

[25:43] Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing. Seven perfect praises of Jesus the risen Lamb.

To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever. He is upholding his creation. He's expanding his kingdom.

He's receiving his praise. Do you remember Matthew 1? The magi come. They find the baby Jesus. Do you remember what they do? They fall down before him and they worship him. Worship.

He's receiving his praise and we get to join all of the angelic host around the throne and the saints that have gone before us and every time we gather we are singing his praises with everybody else. He's receiving his praise. And finally he's awaiting his return.

[26:48] He's looking at his watch. He's on his throne. He's upholding his creation. He's expanding his kingdom. He is receiving his praise and he's looking at his watch.

Oh, you've got to see this passage. Matthew chapter 24. Jesus has just told the son of man is going to be coming on the clouds and his disciples want to know when and where.

And in verse 36 Jesus says, but concerning that day and hour when the son of God returns on the clouds no one knows. Not even the angels of heaven nor the son but the father only.

Not even the son knows that day or hour. And you might be like how is that possible? Well, this is an example of God the son submitting himself to the will of God his father and so you can imagine it in the throne room of heaven.

Jesus is upholding his creation with the word of his power. He is expanding his kingdom of grace. He is receiving the praise due his name and he is every once in a while fathers today the day.

[28:04] Am I going back today? Am I going back today on the clouds to make all wrongs right to judge the world to bring full and forever peace

to the blood but you have given me is today the day.

He's awaiting his return. And so do we. we wait with him.

Jesus is at the right hand of God. Where is he? Right hand of God seated on the throne. What is he doing? Upholding his creation expanding his kingdom receiving his praise and he is looking at his watch awaiting his return.

So what does that mean for us today? Why does that matter now? It broadens your perspective.

Jesus is bigger than a plastic manger seen in a front yard. Way bigger. He's no longer an incarnate helpless baby in a manger and he's yet to be the glorious incarnate king coming on the clouds.

[29:36] No, this wonderfully complicates our Christmas. Perspective. This one in the manger is amazing.

But he's not in a manger anymore. He's all grown up. He's sitting at the right hand of God. He's sitting on G, waiting on O. Go!

He's waiting to be sent. It really does broaden your perspective, doesn't it? It also deepens your awe.

When you consider who Jesus is, what he's done, incarnate birth, what a humble act, wonderful, perfect life, died in the place of you and me, sinners, was raised from the dead, ascended on high. When you consider what he's done and what he's doing right now, what he's doing on the throne, and when you consider what he's going to do when he comes back, we'll get to that in a couple weeks. It should make you awestruck.

[30:47] It should make you wonder. It should cause you to treasure Jesus above all else.

He is that wonderful. It should deepen your awe. It should gladden your worship.

This Christology of Jesus that unfolds in our Bibles is so much bigger than the incarnation itself. It is that, but so much more, which means it has this additional effect.

It loosens your grip on the things of this world. world. It's not about what you give this Christmas.

It's not about what you get this Christmas. It's about who God has given and who he will give again.

[31:54] First Advent and second Advent, and it's about this incarnate king on his throne that is giving grace upon grace upon grace. grace upon grace upon grace upon grace upon what this world has to offer because there is absolutely nothing that this world offers that can come close to satisfying your soul.

Nothing. But the one on the throne can. what difference does this make now?

It broadens your perspective, it deepens your awe, it loosens your grip, and it builds your anticipation. If we're living between the Advents, the first coming, come let us adore him, and the second coming, come Lord Jesus, amen.

if we're living between the Advents, do you know what time it is, church? It's Christ time. We're all living on Christ time.

Synchronize your watches because we're one day closer to the second Advent where we will say, glory, glory, glory to you.

[33:18] we're living between the Advents, and when we think about him being one day closer, it should build your anticipation.

This Advent season, we're not just going to delight in the fact that the second person of the Trinity has become a man, and he remains a man, first Advent glory, come let us adore him.

No, we're also going to delight that this risen king, he's coming again, and we're one day closer to that glorious appearing of the risen Jesus.

But where is he now? He's seated on his throne at the right hand of God in heaven. God's God's love. He's about his business, and we get to be a part of what he is doing.

So we will be singing both, come let us adore him, and amen. Come, Lord Jesus. Will you pray with me?

[34:37] Lord Jesus, we are just delighted that you would humble yourself in order to rescue us, and we worship you for not just your death, and your resurrection, and your ascension, but your present reign, and what you are doing.

Oh, all glory, praise, and honor be to your name, King Jesus. And would you, this Advent season of 2024, would you get something done in our hearts anticipating your second Advent?

It's your name we pray. Amen. Amen.