

This Jesus Lifted Up

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Date: 24 April 2022

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[0 : 00] As I said, the exaltation of Jesus, I really believe, is a feature of the gospel that is absolutely necessary, but often forgotten about.

And I tried to think through this week, why is it that we don't speak so much about Jesus' ascension, so much about his place on the throne as we do some other things? And I think part of it is that, even rightfully so, we're so fixated on what Christ did and when he was and who he was that we don't make it so far as to consider who he is and what he is doing.

We think back on the things of the cross and the resurrection and the things listed in his life and the mighty signs and works and wonders and the things that we have studied these last couple of weeks in Acts chapter 2.

But we never move on from there to consider the fact that he is actually still living and he has a place. So where is he? He's not on earth any longer. Where is the Lord Jesus? Well, he's on the throne.

And what is it exactly that the Lord Jesus is doing on the throne? And I really think that as we begin to dig into these things, we will find that not only is it necessary for us to understand them, but it's actually wonderful for us to know them.

[1 : 27] And I don't want you to misunderstand me. I'm not saying that we should focus less on the crucifixion and resurrection. That's not what I mean at all. My point is that we shouldn't consider the crucifixion and resurrection apart from the exaltation of Jesus.

And the fact that he is the exalted Lord, that he is presently and eternally reigning over all of creation. And I think there's some dangers that we face in our Christian life and our Christian growth when we don't duly consider the exaltation of Jesus.

I think it presents major weaknesses in three particular areas. I think it points to major weaknesses in our worship, in our Christian maturity, and in our gospel evangelism.

Here's what I mean. Our worship, Sunday by Sunday, our personal private worship day by day, can very quickly become about what is satisfying to us rather than what is glorifying to God when we don't take the time to consider the fact that we have a Lord that we are worshiping and that He demands our worship to be carried out in a particular way.

And when we stop thinking about our worship actually being a sacrifice of praise that is offered to Him, we begin to view our worship as something that is satisfying to us instead.

[2 : 53] That's why so many churches trade sheep so oftentimes in a city like ours where there's so many different churches that you can attend. When the worship or the program or the structures of one particular church I find to be less satisfying to me personally, then I go find a church that is more satisfying to me personally.

And I really think part of this is because we have failed to notice and recognize regularly that we have a Lord, that He is the exalted Lord, that our worship comes to Him, that our worship is not actually about us.

And I think it can reveal some weaknesses there in our spiritual growth and maturity. It's hindered when we think of Jesus as only the forgiver of sin and not also as the judge of our sin.

I'll never forget the first time that a Christian or a professing Christian excused his sin to me on the basis of God's forgiveness.

And it was on the school bus actually one day, riding to school or maybe back home from school in high school. And somehow me and some of my friends were talking about sin.

[4 : 12] I don't even remember what sin it was. But one of my buddies, his name was Paul, he said he was talking about a particular thing that he was planning on doing that night when he got home. And the rest of us were like, well, why would you plan on doing that when you know it's not right?

He was like, well, it's no big deal because Jesus is just going to forgive my sin. I can do the thing and then when I'm finished, I'll ask God to forgive my sin and He'll forgive my sin. And Paul only thought of Jesus as a forgiver.

He didn't actually think of Jesus as a judge, as a Lord. Do you see how that can hinder our spiritual growth? We might tend to maybe not necessarily happily live in sin, but conveniently live in sin because we know the forgiveness is there.

And we're not so much concerned about pleasing the Lord that we follow as much as we are having an escape hatch when we get into trouble and we face consequences for those things. It hinders our worship.

It hinders our growth in the Lord. Similarly to that, our evangelism is impacted by this. We stop preaching a full gospel.

[5 : 25] We hit the parts of the gospel that are most palatable to most people. And we start to plead with people to receive Jesus as a sacrifice of their sin without actually bowing to Him as their Lord.

Do you see? Have you been around people professing Christians who really don't know anything of the lordship of Christ? They don't know anything really of repentance. They just know of grace and they know of forgiveness.

But they've only been preached a half gospel, which is a problem. It affects our evangelism. But the lordship of Christ has always been an essential focus in the worship and in the preaching of the church.

As we'll see throughout our study this morning, the apostles always rejoiced in the glories of the cross and the resurrection in conjunction with the assurance of Christ's exalted place in heaven. For them, the cross and the resurrection and the ascension and the exaltation and the return, all of those truths, all of those dynamics of the gospel were intertwined and closely related.

[6 : 40] They didn't separate them out so that they could focus on the cross and the empty tomb in one place. And just when they get to it, they could focus on the lordship and exaltation of Christ. If you read the New Testament and read what the apostles were preaching, Peter's sermon here being clear evidence of it, they always linked in the lordship, the exaltation of Jesus with the glories of the cross and the resurrection.

And throughout history, Christians have done the same thing, not only in their preaching, but they have continued to persevere through great hardship and persecution because of their hope and recognition of the sovereign rule of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I thought about this week, Charles Spurgeon in the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. Before it was the Metropolitan Tabernacle, it was the New Park Street Chapel.

And in 1856, Spurgeon was only 25 years old. His preaching was fantastic. It drew massive crowds, even at such a young age.

And they were outgrowing the facility in which they were meeting on New Park Street. And so they began to have services at the Surrey Music Hall in London, a place that seats about 10,000, or in that day sat about 10,000 people.

[8 : 02] On one particular night in October of 1856, 14,000 people are estimated to have gathered into the music hall that night in London to hear Charles Spurgeon preach.

And they were using this facility while they were building another facility that would be more accommodating to the size of their church. On that night, just before he actually got up to the platform to preach his sermon for the evening, there were some miscreants in the crowd that decided they were going to cause some trouble for the group.

And there were different places around the building. They began to yell, fire, fire, the balconies are falling, the balconies are falling. And immediately, chaos ensues.

And all of these people, scared for their lives, immediately began to run for the doors, trying to get out of the way because they thought the place was on fire, that there were so many people the building was going to collapse and they were all going to die.

Well, none of those things were true, but it's what they thought were true. And they began to stampede out of the building. That night, seven people lost their lives just being trampled by the crowd.

[9 : 07] 28 other people were hospitalized with severe injuries from the evening because of what had taken place. And of course, Spurgeon, so impacted by this, it said that on the night when they finally told him what had happened with the seven people dying as a result of trying to hear his preaching, that he actually fainted upon hearing the news.

It was a burden that he carried with them his entire life. The newspapers, as you might expect, were very friendly to Spurgeon after that. They were not friendly at all, actually.

They were very critical of him and the church and all these other things. And it just became a major burden for the church. Two weeks later, Spurgeon preaches for the first time after the tragedy happens.

He's back at the New Park Street Chapel. And I want to read to you the way that he opened his sermon, or at least a portion of it. He said, The text I have selected is one that has comforted me and in a great measure enabled me to come here today.

The single reflection upon it had such a power to comfort on my depressed spirit. I have been utterly unable to study, but I thought that even a few words might be acceptable to you this morning.

[10:31] And I trust to your loving hearts to excuse them. And with that, he instructed the congregation to turn to Philippians chapter 2. He read verses 9 through 11, and he preached a short sermon on the exaltation of Jesus Christ.

It's amazing, isn't it? The one scripture that comforted him in his depressed spirit. The one thing that as a pastor he felt like his church needed to know more than anything else, two weeks after such a tremendous tragedy had taken place in their midst.

The one thing that he decided to focus on for that day in pastoring and shepherding his people was the sovereign rule of our Lord. The exaltation of Jesus Christ.

And so it's important for us. We need not neglect it. Peter didn't neglect it. I think his aim was threefold here as he deals with it in this particular sermon. I think he's continuing to identify Jesus as Messiah.

He's affirming that Jesus was actually the agent and giver of the spirit that they had witnessed that day. And then he's also aiming to proclaim that Jesus is the righteous judge of all.

[11:46] And we're going to explore all of those things under three headings today. Jesus as the exalted king. Jesus as the expected king. Jesus as the exclusive king.

So look with me first at verse 33 as we see Jesus as the exalted king. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

Now when we refer to the exaltation of Jesus, generally we're using the term in a broad sense. We really mean to include various facets of the work of Christ, including his resurrection and his intercessory work in heaven, his second coming, his return, all of those things we would include in a broad sense.

But there's a specific event of which the apostles were witnesses that proves Jesus of Nazareth to be the exalted Christ.

And this was his ascension. You're in Acts chapter 2. Flip back a page to Acts chapter 1. And look at it with me beginning at verse 6. This is approximately or right at 40 days following Jesus' resurrection.

[13:09] Jesus is about to go back to heaven as he told his disciples all along he would do. And this is their last encounter with him on earth. So when they had come together, verse 6, they asked him, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

And he said to them, it is 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 in all Judea and Samaria and the end of the earth.

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. Now that's a significant event for these men to witness.

[14:17] They see the resurrected Christ leave the earth in a physical way, gathered in by the clouds, ascending out of sight into the heavens, clearly symbolizing his ascension back to the throne of heaven.

Now Peter was an eyewitness to everything he mentions in this sermon. He saw the mighty works and wonders and signs. He was there when Jesus was condemned and executed.

He saw himself the empty tomb. He interacted on multiple occasions with the risen Christ. And when Peter speaks of Christ's exaltation in this verse, he isn't speaking in theoretical terms of what he think has happened with Jesus, but it's based on the ascension of the Lord that he personally witnessed.

He was there on the Mount of Olives that day. He saw Jesus leave this earth and return to heaven. He heard the angels stand by and say, why are you gazing here?

Go do what he said to do. He's coming back in the same way that he just left. And the Lord's ascension then reflects his exalted position.

[15 : 35] And it impacts Peter's sermon in two ways here. The first thing I want you to see is his place. His place. Look with me again at verse 33. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God.

Of God. This is clearly in reference to a place of authority. Ruling the world at the right hand of God the Father.

Jesus, his son, has been exalted to the throne of heaven. But that doesn't mean it was a position he had never occupied before.

Jesus is co-equal. Co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit. And this is why John begins his gospel in John chapter 1.

In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God. And the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him.

[16 : 37] And without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life. And the life was the light of men. This exalted position is not one Jesus had not yet occupied.

It's one he was returning to. Jesus is not a created being. He's the eternal God. He's the second person of the Trinity.

He's the agent of creation. And he's always had his place on the throne. And the emphasis of the exaltation in the apostles' preaching reminds us that the king who was on the throne condescended from the throne in order that he might make an atonement for our sin.

It's not that he gained an exalted place after his crucifixion. It's that he returned to his exalted place. Which is why Paul wrote in Philippians chapter 2. Though he was in the form of God. He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.

[17 : 51] But he emptied himself not of his deity. But of all of the glories that comes with being the king on the throne. He did not consider those things worth holding on to in order to leave us in our sins.

He does not give away his deity. He's still God. He's always God. But he condescends from heaven, Paul says. And he takes on 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. So that the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. To the glory of God the Father. I really believe one of the most beautiful pictures of this. Is seen in the last supper.

[18 : 54] Do you remember? The night of Jesus' arrest. Began with the Passover feast with his disciples. Jesus sat at the honored seat at the table.

And he willingly steps out of the honored seat at the table. And he takes off his garment. And he goes over and he gets the pot. And he gets the towel. And one by one he condescends to wash the feet of every one of his disciples.

And when he's finished with his work. Providing the cleansing that they needed that night. What did he do? He returned back to the seat of honor at the table.

Is that not what Paul is saying that Jesus has done for us? He is in the seat of honor. The seat of power on the throne. And he willingly steps out of that seat of glory.

And that seat of honor in order to come and serve us. And he humbles himself. And when he finished his work. When he finished the work of providing us with the exact cleansing that we needed.

[20 : 04] What did he do? He returned to his exalted place at the right hand of God the Father. He's the exalted Lord. He always has been the exalted Lord.

And this is the truth that the apostles spoke of again and again. Acts chapter 5 verse 31. This is Peter again. God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior.

To give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things he says. And so is the Holy Spirit. Whom God has given to those who obey him.

Paul writes about it to the Ephesians. In Ephesians chapter 1 in verse 19. According to the working of his great might. That he worked in Christ. When he raised him from the dead.

And seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion.

[21 : 06] 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. And gave him as head over all things to the church.

Which is his body. The fullness of him who fills all in all. And then the writer of Hebrews. Whoever that was. Says the same thing. Chapter 1 in verse 3.

He's the radiance of the glory of God. The exact imprint of his nature. He upholds the universe by the word of his power. This is Jesus this writer is speaking of. And after making purification for sins. He sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Do you see? The apostles never separated the gospel. That includes the crucifixion and resurrection.

From the exaltation of Jesus. That includes his lordship. It's all interwoven together. It's a glorious truth. Because it's from this place.

[22 : 05] Of honor and power. That Jesus rules over the world in which we live. It's from this exalted place. That he according to the writer of Hebrews.

Lives to make intercession for us. It's from this place. According to John. That he works as our advocate. When we've sinned. It's from this place.

That Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 53. That he makes intercession for the transgressors. This is why the exaltation of Jesus. Has brought such peace and comfort.

To Christians throughout the centuries. Because he was not only a lord for 33 years. He's the everlasting lord. He rules the world. Which means he rules our lives.

And we take great peace. And comfort. And help from knowing. That it is our lord. That rules the world. It is our lord. That makes intercession on our behalf.

[23 : 01] It is our lord. Who provides the forgiveness. That we need. What a glorious truth it is. Don't only see his place though.

See his promise. See his promise again. In verse 33. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God. Having received from the father.

The promise of the Holy Spirit. He has poured out this. That you yourselves are seeing and hearing. He being Jesus in Peter's sermon. Jesus made this happen today.

This display of the spirit of God's work. And this is the second way. That the exaltation of Jesus. Impacts Peter's sermon. From his exalted place in heaven.

Jesus was responsible. For pouring out the spirit on his people. What they were witnessing. Was the inauguration of the last days. And Jesus was the true Messiah.

[24 : 01] Who made it happen. Not only was it a reality. That this was happening. But this was the promise of Jesus. He said he would do this.

Turn with me to John's gospel. Would you do that? Just a few pages back from where you are. Start with me in chapter 14. John chapter 14. I want you to notice the promise of Jesus here.

John chapter 14. Look at verse 16. I will ask the father. And he will give you another helper.

To be with you forever. Even the spirit of truth. Whom the world cannot receive. Because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him. For he dwells with you. And he will be in you. Jesus promises. Now skip down a few verses. Verse 25.

[25 : 04] These things I have spoken to you. While I am still with you. But the helper. The Holy Spirit. Whom the father will send in my name.

He will teach you all things. And bring to your remembrance. All that I have said to you. You can picture in Jesus' statement there. The fear of the disciples.

They've spent three years following. And listening to Jesus' teaching. And in those three years. They messed up a lot. There's a lot of things that weren't clicking for them. Right? Now Jesus is saying.

He's going to have to leave. He's going to go back to the throne. And they're worried. What if we forget? What if we forget the things you've taught? And he says.

Don't worry. It's good for you. Because the father is going to send the spirit in my name. He's going to remind you of all these things. He's going to teach you all these things. Flip over to chapter 15. [26 : 00] Verse 26. But when the helper comes. Whom I will send to you from the father. The spirit of truth. Who proceeds from the father.

He will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness. Because you have been with me. From the beginning.

So what happens? 2,000 years later. Somebody brings the word of God. That the apostles have. Were used by God to write for us in the New Testament.

And they begin to preach the truth of this scripture. And the Holy Spirit of God does this amazing work. Where he bears witness about Jesus in our hearts. That's his role. That's the role of the spirit. He points us back to Christ. And then he says. But you will be my witnesses too. Because you've been with me. That's a statement to the apostles. What does he mean? You're going to see me crucified.

[26 : 56] You're going to see me resurrected. You're going to see me ascended. And then you're going to take that message. And you're going to preach it. And the Holy Spirit is going to use the preaching of the truth. Look at chapter 16 now.

This is the last one. Chapter 16 verse 7. 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. Do you see why this was so important to the apostles?

And why it should be so important to us? The king. The king sends his spirit. So that we can know him.

So that we can believe him. So that we can follow him. And obey him. And endure the struggle of this life. This is the promise that comes from Jesus the king.

[27 : 55] The sovereign ruler. It's a part of his exaltation. He sends the spirit. You know why all those Christians through the years. Have been able to persevere. Despite the great persecution.

It's not because of what was in them. It's because of who is in them. The spirit of God doing his work. Comforting their hearts.

Giving them assurance. Teaching them the truth. Helping them to persevere. In the faith. So from his exalted position. Jesus sends his spirit.

As a sign of his salvation. And as our helper. In all matters. Of faith and obedience. And it's because he has ascended.

To the right hand of the father. That we can have confidence. That the spirit of truth. Has indeed descended. Upon all who believe. Because he is the exalted Lord.

[28 : 55] That's why we can trust this truth. I want you to see the expected king now. That was the long one. Okay. The next two are short. That was the exalted king. I want you to see Jesus.

The expected king. Verse 34. For David did not ascend into the heavens. But he himself says. The Lord said to my Lord.

Sit at my right hand. Until I make your enemies. Your footstool. This is the third time in this sermon. That Peter explicitly quotes the scriptures.

As the foundation for his message. The preaching of the apostles. Was always thoroughly biblical. Preaching must be thoroughly biblical.

And in this case. Peter goes to Psalm 110. And we talked about this at length. A couple weeks ago. In our study of Mark. Jesus quoted the same verse.

[29 : 54] Verses in Psalm 110. Let me just remind you. But based on a covenant. That God had made with David. King David. The Jews expected. That the promised Messiah.

Would come from the lineage of David. David. And in Psalm 110. David spoke of the Messiah. Not as a great king. But as the greatest king.

And he prophesied. That this king would be exalted. To the right hand of God. And would conquer any and every enemy. Of God's people. That's the part that Peter actually quotes.

There from Psalm 110. The Lord said to my Lord. Sit at my right hand. Now this posed a problem for the Jews. When they were trying to interpret this. Psalm. Because they. For a while.

They considered it to be something. Related specifically to David. But there was a problem with that. Because David died. David saw corruption.

He says, let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain, God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus who you crucified.

So after proving through the life and death and resurrection and ascension, Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah, Peter reminded the people of how they had rejected him.

[35 : 54] He says, God sent you his Christ and you killed him. You killed him.

Of course, Peter's already covered the fact that it was the definite plan of God that the Christ died for our sins. But that didn't mean the people weren't still responsible and culpable for rejecting their Messiah.

And it's at this point that Peter reminded the people that Jesus is the everlasting Lord to whom they must answer.

He's the judge. He's not just the forgiver. He's also the righteous judge. Instead of praising him, they cursed him.

Rather than celebrating his coming, they denied him. When they should have bowed to him, they hung him on a tree to die. And Isaiah said this would happen.

[37 : 03] Isaiah 53.3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised and we esteemed him not.

God sends his Messiah. They reject the Messiah that they were waiting for. Now I want you to notice the exclusivity of Peter's claim here.

Notice again. Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain God has made him both Lord and Christ.

There is no other Lord of Christ. This is a statement of exclusivity. This is the preaching of the gospel that refers to the exclusivity of Christ.

There is no other way to the Father. There is no other way to forgiveness of sins. There is no other Lord. There is no other Christ. He did not say that God has made Jesus a Lord and a Savior.

[38 : 18] He said God has made him the Lord and the Savior. Exclusivity. Only Jesus, Peter says.

And let me remind you. Jesus is not simply an option on a menu of religious leaders that you can choose to follow in order to make your way to God.

You cannot follow the Oprah method of salvation that says there's a wagon wheel. A religious wagon wheel. God's at the center.

It doesn't matter which spoke you take. It's all eventually going to get you to God. That's the primary thought in any type of secular understanding of the things of God in our nation today.

It doesn't matter how you get there. Eventually, you're going to get there. It's just not true. He's not a Lord. He's the Lord. He's not a Savior. He's the Savior.

[39 : 15] And you do not receive salvation by choosing him to be your Lord, but acknowledging that he is the only Lord. That he is the only Christ.

Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone. And true repentance recognizes that every other Lord is false.

Every other way is the broad way that leads to destruction. Jesus himself said it. If you want to get to the kingdom, take the narrow path, find the narrow gate, because there are few people that find it.

Because everybody else is on the broad way. And they get to the wide gate that leads to destruction. And the exaltation of Jesus proves this is true.

He ascended to heaven. He sits on the right hand of the throne of God. And you and me will all stand before him one day to answer to him and to him alone.

[40 : 21] And I said at the beginning, the exaltation of Jesus has been a source of comfort and encouragement and strength to Christians since the days of the apostles.

And in addition to the things I've already mentioned, I want to close by giving you three reasons why you should take hope in the Lordship of Christ. why this should be at the forefront of your mind constantly as a believer.

The first is hope. It brings us hope. There is no greater peace and comfort in this life than to know that Jesus is in total control of this world and everything in it.

Everything we see, it's chaos. It's chaos. Can you imagine a God that isn't in control? There's hope that comes from knowing that despite the chaos and the destruction that ensues as a result of the sinfulness of men's hearts, that there is a Lord in heaven who is in sovereign control over all things that are unfolding around us.

And he will ultimately judge every evil work. And he will ultimately reward every righteous deed.
[41 : 48] There's comfort in that. There is nothing in your life, no sickness, no heartache, no anxiety that is beyond his concern and that is out of his control.

Spurgeon, again, spoke on this so often. It was Spurgeon who said, I rest my head each night on the pillow of God's sovereignty. What was it that brought him comfort amidst great tragedy and depression that he faced?

The knowledge that he is in control, that one day he will right all wrongs, that one day this sin and this death and this heartache will come to an end because he is coming back.

The king is coming back. He brings us home. He truly is the ruler. He's working all things together for good for his people and for his glory.

Victory is certain and you can endure because of it. Press on. Press on. The king is on the throne.

[43 : 01] He will give his spirit. Trust him. Believe him. Persevere. It also gives us assurance.

Assurance. In his exalted position, he's our advocate. He's interceding for us before the Father. And on your darkest day, when your sin is weighing heavy on your heart, you can rest assured that Jesus' sacrifice is enough.

It's enough. You can be assured that it's enough because of his exalted place. The Father has received his sacrifice for your sin.

Not just the sins you have committed, but every sin you ever will commit. And no matter how badly you blow it, you can trust that your Lord and Savior has conquered your sin.

[44 : 10] What a wonderful assurance that is. Now remember, he's the judge. He's the one before whom every person will give an account.

And if he's your Lord, you can trust him as your judge. because he will not look at your life at the end and judge you on the basis of what you have done or what you have not done.

Because he's also your Christ. He will judge your life on the basis of what he has done for you. And the perfect judge will forgive you and grant you mercy and grace in eternity because he paid your price.

holiness. There's wonderful assurance in the exaltation of Christ. Finally, holiness. Holiness. When you think on the exalted position of Christ, it brings hope, it brings assurance, and then it should drive you to holiness.

Because it reminds us that we have a Lord to serve and that we will answer for how we have served him. not on the basis of eternal damnation, but according to the apostles, on the basis of eternal reward.

[45 : 32] We will still give an account. And the same fear of his lordship that drives the unbeliever to fear for his soul drives the believer to pursue righteousness.

Not to earn God's favor, but to obey his Lord. To submit to his king. And remembering the lordship of Jesus will lead us to a fruitful and joyful life of righteousness.

This is a huge deal. Don't neglect it. When you think of the cross and the resurrection, think also of the throne in heaven. Think also of the intercessory work of our Lord.

Think often of him as judge and as Lord to whom we must follow. And follow him. And follow him faithfully. NING