

The Purpose of His Ascension

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Date: 23 October 2022

Preacher: Rev RJ Campbell

[0 : 00] Welcome to our service this morning and I'm thankful to the Lord for granting me the privilege of being again with you under the gospel. There is one extra intimation that is not on the bulletin.

Rita from Dwelling Places Uganda is addressing a meeting of the WFM in the MA Hall in Stornoway on Tuesday 25th October at 7.30. An invitation has been extended to the ladies of our congregation to join with them. Please get in touch with Anna-Marie Henderson if you would like to attend.

And the WFM are also happy to collect any blacksmith shoeboxes for delivery to Stornoway by the end of this week. Let us praise God together by singing to his name from Psalm 149.

Psalm 149. Praise ye the Lord unto him sing a new song in his praise in the assembly of his saints in sweet psalms do ye raise. Let Israel in his maker joy unto him praises sing. Let all that science children are be joyful in their king. O let them unto his great name give praises in a dance. Let them timbre and with sharp in songs his praise advance. For God doth pleasure take in those that his own people be and he with his salvation the meek will beautify.

And in his glory excellent let all his saints rejoice. Let them to him upon their beds aloud lift up their voice. We shall sing these verses to the Lord's praise. Psalm 149 verse 1 to 5.

[2 : 04] Praise ye the Lord unto him sing a new song. Praise ye the Lord unto him sing a new song. Praise ye the Lord unto him sing a new song.

Praise ye the Lord through the throne. Let the Allen- eldiven seinem■■■■ alive by us sing a new song. While him sing a new song. Praise ye the Lord true holy rhyme by us sing a new song. Praise ye the Lord also enjoy tonightwith him to sing a new song. Praise ye the Lord since hymnopule andologice■■■■ va icon. Grace to theCause setter's guest 1 a.

Lord regist■■■■ again and shield on their foe across 9 Japan, Và he heared, και fall one juicy middle place. and to embrace his name, let all that silence children are be joyful in their dream.

O let them unto his great name give praises in the dance, let them with him brillant with our saints' songs his praise advance.

For God doth pleasure take in those that his own people be, and he with his salvation the meek will be divine.

[4 : 20] And in his glory excellent let all his saints rejoice, let them to him upon their best, allow them to their voice.

Let us unite together in prayer. Eternal and ever blessed Lord, we seek that as we assemble together in thy name, that thou would grant us thine own Holy Spirit to enable us to worship thee in a way that would be acceptable to thee, and in a way that would glorify thine own name.

And we acknowledge, O Lord, that we are dependent upon thine own spirit at all times, dependent upon thy spirit to lead us and to thy truth, and to prepare our hearts to receive thy word, so that it may be lodged in our heart and bring forth evidence in our lives.

That we would beautify the gospel that we believe, and that in our walk and in our conduct in life, that we would work out the gospel, so that others may see the beauty of Christ.

We give thee thanks, O Lord, for all the tokens of thy goodness and kindness, that you do so abundantly grant to us every day in things that are temporal and in things that are spiritual.

[6 : 33] We thank thee for thy word, and we give thanks that we can gather together around thy word to meditate and to reflect upon it.

And we pray that this day that it may be a word that would be an encouragement to us and a strength to us in our pilgrimage in this world.

That we would indeed be among those who would joy in our Creator. who would sing praises unto him, and who would be joyful in the King, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

We pray, Lord, that thou would bless our homes and our families. Thou knowest the situation and circumstance of each one, and we pray that out of the riches of thy grace through Christ, that thou would meet with them at their point of need.

We pray, Lord, that thou would bless the gospel today, as the trumpet of the gospel is sounded, that thou through thy spirit would unstop the ears of our people, so that they may hear that sound that grants them liberty from their slavery and bondage to sin.

[7 : 52] And so we pray, O Lord, that the gospel proclaimed this day may be made effective by thine own spirit, so that we would see a people coming in repentance and seeking the mercy of God in Christ.

We pray, Lord, that thou would revive thy people and awaken those who are dead in trespasses and in sin.

We pray, Lord, that thou would bless those who are ill, those within the circle of our own knowledge who are terminally ill. We pray, Lord, that thou would draw near to them and that thou would meet with them at their point of need.

We pray, Lord, that thou would remember those who have come to old age and to are frail in their body. O Lord, we pray that thou would draw near to them and that they may come to know that there is one who has promised that if we put our trust in him, that he will never leave us nor forsake us.

Whatever circumstance or situation in which we may find ourselves, that thou art always near to thine own.

[9 : 11] We pray, Lord, that thou would bless us at this time as we come once again together under thine own word. O Lord, we pray that thou would protect us from the enemy who would try to disturb us and who would try and spoil what has been done, even granting wandering thoughts to us.

We pray, Lord, that our thoughts may be stilled and that they may be focused upon thine own word and what thou has to say to us.

We pray for our young people and our children that they would grow up, O Lord, to be witnesses for thyself.

We acknowledge that there are many things to entice and draw them away from the gospel, that the pleasures of sin look so attractive. But we pray that thou would instil into their hearts thine own fear, so that they may grow up in the fear of the Lord and to be thine own witnesses in this world.

We pray for thy people. Grant to us, O Lord, that we may be faithful witnesses for thee in a world that is hostile to thee and to the things of God.

[10 : 35] That we may be as a beacon of light that would shine forth, that we would, O Lord, be granted the spirit and the grace to be Christ-like in everything that we endeavour to do.

We pray for the congregation here and pray, Lord, that thou would, in thine own appointed time, grant to them one who would shepherd thy people here, who would shepherd the congregation here, who would proclaim the whole counsel of God among them.

We give thanks for all that is done from Sabbath to Sabbath, and pray that the seed that is scattered may indeed be owned by thee, and may find lodgment in souls and hearts that have been prepared by thy spirit.

We pray for all our congregations and for all thy servants who have gone forth with thy word this day, that the unction of thine own Holy Spirit may lie upon them, granting them boldness in proclaiming the gospel of Christ.

We pray, Lord, that thou would remember our nation. We have gone far away from thine own precepts. Oh, we pray that thou would grant to us that spirit of repentance, so that we as a nation would turn again unto thee and to the precepts of thine own word.

[12 : 09] We live in a time of great confusion and a time of great uncertainties, but we give thanks that there is one on whom we may lean and on whom we may trust, the unchanging God, the God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We pray, Lord, that thou would bless our king and the royal household, and we pray, Lord, that he may be living under the influence of his late mother, that he may indeed look unto thee for the wisdom that is required into that high office into which thou hast appointed him.

We pray, Lord, that thou would continue with us now as we meet together, that thou would be as a wall of fire around us, and may thy glory be in our midst.

And all that we ask for the forgiveness of our sins, in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. We shall further sing from Psalm 68.

Psalm 68, and at verse 18. Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high, and in triumph victorious led captive captivity.

[13 : 28] Thou hast received gifts for men for such as did rebel, yea, even for them that God the Lord in midst of them might dwell. Blessed be the Lord who is to us of our salvation, God, who daily with his benefits as plenteously leadeth, Lord.

He of salvation is the God who is our God most strong, and unto God the Lord from death the issues do belong. We shall sing these verses to the Lord's praise.

Psalm 68, verse 18 to 20. Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high. Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high.

Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended up on high. Captivity.

Thou hast received a gift for men for such as did rebelled.

[14 : 50] Reign for them that God the Lord may make all them might dwell.

Blessed be the Lord who is to us of our salvation God.

Who did he with his benefits as splendor as the Lord?

He of salvation is the God who is the God most and to God the Lord from death the issues to belong.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let us now read the word of God as we find it in the New Testament in the Gospel of Luke and chapter 24.

[16 : 13] And we'll take our reading at verse 13. Luke chapter 24 at verse 13. And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about three score furlongs.

And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and has not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty indeed, and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. And besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre. And when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the woman had said, but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools and slow of art to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

[18 : 12] Ought not Christ to have severed these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

And they drew nigh unto the village where they went, and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us, for it is tilled evening, and the day is far spent.

And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

And their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

[19 : 18] And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

But they were terrified, and frightened, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do the thoughts arise in your hearts?

Behold my hands and my feet, that is, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

And they gave him a piece of broiled fish and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and it ate before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which was written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me.

[20 : 30] Then opened to their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, And thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up unto heaven.

And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. We shall now sing from Psalm 47. Psalm 47.

[21 : 39] All people, clap your hands to God with voice of triumph shout. For dreadful is the Lord, most high, great King the earth throughout. The heathen people under us he surely shall subdue, and he shall make the nations under our feet to bow.

The Lord of our inheritance choose out for us shall he, of Jacob whom he loved well, even the excellency. God is with shouts gone up, the Lord with trumpets shouting high.

Sing praise to God, sing praise, sing praise, praise to our King, sing ye. For God is King of all the earth, with knowledge praise express. God rules the nation, God's its Son, his throne of holiness.

We shall sing these verses to the Lord's praise. Psalm 47, verse 1 to 8. All people, clap your hands to God with voice of triumph shout. All people, clap your hands to God with voice of triumph shout.

All people, clap your hands to God with voice of triumph shout.

[23 : 17] He should be answered you, and he shall make the nations and the world feed you now.

The Lord of all in heaven's land, true side for us shall be.

Of faith, of good, in a great well, in the great seven sea.

God is with child's unabbed, the Lord, with trumpet sounding high.

Sing praise to God, sing praise, sing praise, praise to our King, sing ye.

[24 : 44] Our God is King of Alley and with knowledge this express.

God rules and nations, God sits on this throne of holiness.

Amen. Seeking the Lord's help and blessing, let us turn back to the portion of scripture that we read together in the New Testament and the Gospel of Luke and chapter 24.

And we shall read from verse 49. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as to Bethany. And he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up unto heaven.

[26 : 08] We often speak about the death and the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But perhaps we don't give enough time or as much as we ought to the ascension of Jesus. So today we will reflect for a short time on his ascension.

On his going up back into heaven to the right hand of the Father. And God willing, this evening we will reflect upon one of the aspects of his ministry there at the right hand of the Father after he ascended into heaven.

Namely, his intercession. The Gospel of Luke ends where it began. And that is at the temple in Jerusalem. At the beginning of the Gospel we have Zechariah, the priest in the holy place offering incense on the altar.

And here at the end we are back at the temple again. Only now there is a large crowd of worshippers joyfully praising God for Jesus Christ.

[27 : 46] As we have in verse 52. And they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

The salvation that was only anticipated at the beginning of the Gospel has now fully come. In the beginning of the Gospel Luke informs us that Zechariah was in the temple.

The people waited for his return in order that he would bless them. And when he appeared he was speechless. But at the end here we find that Jesus lifting up his hands and blessing them.

And that while he was blessing them he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. Luke begins with the story of the coming of the Son of God.

But he ends his Gospel with the story of the Son of God going back. Into heaven. What we call the ascension of Jesus.

[28 : 56] So that we can say that Luke's presentation of Christ is arranged in two great movements. First the condescension of Jesus from heaven to earth.

And then his going from earth to heaven. In other words we can say that at the beginning we have his humiliation. And at the end we have Christ's exaltation.

In the days following his resurrection Jesus had been appearing to his disciples. And then disappearing only to reappear again. The appearances of Christ after his resurrection served a number of purposes at that time.

They assured the faith and hope of his disciples. And by them they were trained gradually for his absence.

He had informed the two walking with him to Emmaus. That according to the scripture it was necessary for Jesus to enter into his glory.

[30 : 05] As we have already read. However, a resurrection without ascension would be unthinkable.

According to God's redemptive purpose. According to God's plan. A resurrection without ascension would be unthinkable.

There needed to be a suitable exaltation of Christ. Not only was he to rise again out of the grave.

Not only was there to be a resurrection. But there must also be an ascension. There must be a going back again to be with the Father.

However, in verse 50 Luke simply tells us that Jesus led them out as far as Bethany. And lifting up his hands he blessed them.

[31 : 07] And while he blessed them he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. I just wonder as they made their way towards Bethany. Maybe the disciples thought that he was going back again to his favourite place.

That he was going back again to the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. However, on the way to Bethany he took them to the slopes of the Mount of Olives.

And from there he departed from them. This was the visible departure of Christ from earth. And his triumphant return to heaven.

From which he will return also visibly on the last of all days to judge the world. Well, what does it mean that Jesus ascended into heaven?

What does it mean that Jesus ascended into heaven? We have already spoken of the condescension of Jesus from heaven to earth.

[32 : 25] Now, we must not think that that meant that there was an empty place in the Trinity. That there was an empty place in heaven.

The three persons were still there. The one God was still there. But he condescended to come to earth.

Now, what do we mean by that? What do we mean when we say that Christ condescended to come to earth? Well, what we mean by that is that he came into the world and he took our human nature into himself.

So that he became the God-man. The second person of the Trinity became the God-man.

He condescended to take upon himself our human nature. And it is important for us to have some grasp of that.

[33 : 32] And in his going back, in his condescension, he took our human nature into himself. And in his ascension, in going back, he took that human nature with him.

He did not discard his humanity. But he took that nature which he took to himself in his condescension. In his ascension, he took that nature with him into the very presence of God.

And sat down as the God-man in the midst of the throne. Recorded for us in John chapter 17, just before, I believe, he left the upper room and crossed over the brook Kitton and entered into the garden, the garden of Gethsemane.

We read that he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee.

So what are we to understand from that prayer? Well, what we are to understand from that prayer is that he is praying that his human nature will be exalted as to shed as far as human nature can in the glory.

[34 : 55] Which as a divine person, he had beside the Father before the world began. And that could only happen in his ascension.

That could not happen until he ascended. In other words, we can say it like this. We can put it this way. The sun is praying.

Father, I am in this frail human nature, in this weak and poor nature. I pray that you glorify me. And glorify me in my human nature.

Transform my human nature. Transfigure my human nature. Remember how that happened. Just a short time before this. On what we call the experience of the Mount of Transfiguration.

Where his human nature was transfigured. Well, he is asking for that transfiguration of his human nature. To put his human nature in the glory that he had with the Father before the world began.

[36 : 04] And that would involve the transformation of the body of Jesus. In this world he had a body of humiliation. A body that was limited.

A body that underwent flocking and bruising and death. But God would raise that body from the dead. And he would raise that body in power and glory.

But he has never discarded the human nature that he assumed in his incarnation when he condescended. But has ascended into heaven in bodily form.

And in that bodily form he will return. And he will return in order to gather all those who have put their trust in him.

All those who are believers in Jesus Christ. All those who are Christians. He will come to and gather his people. And this is the wonderful thing.

- [37 : 07] Is it not? That he will transform our vile bodies. To be like whose glorious body. So that in a sense.
- We are those who are believers in Jesus. Those who are Christians. Those who die. Those who sleep in Christ. They will be raised up.
- And they will share. In the glory that belongs to him. They will be made like into his glorious body.
- And we have faith in the ascension of the body. As much as we have faith in the resurrection of the body. The same Christ who was born and suffered in the body. The same Christ who was born and suffered in the body. Also ascended in the body.
- And in his ascension. We have this staggering thought. Because of the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ. As one already has said. That the dust of the earth now sits.
- [38 : 09] On the throne of heaven. And the throne of heaven. Clement of Alexandria. Once said. He was carried up into heaven.
- So that he might share the father's throne. Even with the flesh. That was united to him. The Scottish theologian Thomas Boston. Said that when the people of God reach heaven.
- They will see Jesus Christ. God and man. With their bodily eyes. As he will never lay aside the human nature. They will behold that glorious.
- Blessed body. Which is personally united. To the divine person. And exalted above principalities and powers. And every name that is named.
- There we shall see with our eyes. The very body which was born of Mary at Bethlehem. And crucified at Jerusalem. Between the two thieves. The blessed head that was crowned with horns.
- [39 : 13] The face that was spat upon. The hands and feet that were nailed to the cross. All shining with inconceivable. The faithful glory.
- That is. What is still awaiting. The people of God. We know not what we shall be. But we know that when we shall see him.
- We shall be like him. For we shall see him. As he is. That was. That was. Now. The words of.
- How Thomas. Boston. Expressed that sight. That is still awaiting. The people. Of God.
- Well let us. For a short time. Look at the manner. Of his ascension. When Jesus was carried up. Into heaven. Or taken up into heaven. As it says elsewhere.
- [40 : 11] He was. Removed from the presence. Of his. His disciples. This was not like the other. Sudden disappearances. Jesus made. After his. Resurrection.
- This time. He did not simply. Vanish. But. He ascended. Into heaven. Rising from their sight. On a.
- Glorious. And a mysterious. Cloud. As we find. In the book of Acts. This. This. Marvellous. Cloud. That took them.
- Jesus. Out of their vision. You see. I believe. That that cloud. Represented. The presence. Of God. And it gives. The ascension. That air.
- Of finality. It is quite. Remarkable. If you study. Scripture. It is quite. Remarkable. How often. We have references. To clouds.
- [41 : 05] In Scripture. When the children. Of Israel. When they left. Egypt. We have. That the Lord. Went before them. By day. In a pillar. Of a cloud. To lead them.
- In the way. And by night. In a pillar. Of fire. To give them light. To go. By day. And night. At the end. Of the book. Of Exodus. There. Where we have.

The information. Regarding. The completion. Of the tabernacle. We find. That a cloud. Appeared. And that cloud. Was between.

The cherubims. In the holy of holies. Between the cherubims. That was on the ark. Of the covenant. It rested there. Between the cherubims.

The presence of God. At the end. Of the book. Of. Exodus. We find. Then that. This cloud. That came upon. The tabernacle.

[42 : 01] Represented. The presence. Of God. Again. Since we made. Reference to the mount. Of transfiguration. Already. We can make another. Reference to it.

Remember. That a cloud. Came and overshadowed them. And out of that cloud. Came a voice. The cloud. Representing the presence. Of God. And out of the cloud. Came a voice.

This is my beloved son. Listen. To him. Well. Here. In the ascension. We have reference. To a cloud. Which. We are told.

Also. In the bible. That his return. Will be in a like manner. In with clouds. The ascension.

According to another. Theologian. Leon Morris. Is the indication. To his followers. That his mission. Is accomplished. That his work.

[42 : 58] Among them. Has come. To a decisive. End. End. When he ascended. Far. Far above. Above all the heavens. The son of God.

Jesus Christ. The God. Man. Returned. To the place. That he had. Descended from. When he became. A man. Yes. It was a sign.

To the disciples. And to me. And you. That his mission. In the world. Had been. Accomplished. It was a sign. For them. And for me. And you. That his work.

Has come. To a decisive. End. That. The atonement. Had taken place. He was to be restored. To the glories.

Of heaven. And the worship. Of the heavenly angels. Believing this world. He was going. To the father. He himself said. I go. To my father.

[43 : 53] And you will see me. No more. I came forth. From the father. And I'm coming. To the world. And I leave the world. And I am going. Back to the father. You know.

There is a version. Scriptures. Which says. That for the joy. That was set before him. He endured the cross. Despising. The shame. Now. What was the joy.

Set before him. Well. There can be many answers. To that. But I believe. This is one of them. That it was. That he was going. To return back. To the father. He was going back.

To the father. And when he returned. To the presence of God. He took his exalted place. At the father's.

Right hand. He sat down. At the right hand. Of the father. In Acts chapter 7.

[44 : 50] We are given there. The experience. Of Stephen. Who was. Stoned. To death. And we read there. But he.

Being full of the Holy Ghost. That is Stephen. Being full of the Holy Ghost. Looked up steadfastly. Into heaven. And saw the glory of God. And Jesus.

Standing. On the right hand. Of God. And said. Behold I see the heavens open. And the son of man. Standing. On the right hand.

Of God. Now I'm going to come back to that. In a moment. The writer to the Hebrew. Reminds us. When he had by himself. Purged our sins.

He sat down. On the right hand. Of the majesty on high. In Hebrews 10. Verse 12. We read. But this man. After he had offered. One sacrifice.

[45 : 45] For sins. Forever. Sat down. On the right hand. Of God. From henceforth. Expecting. Till his enemies. Be made. His footstool. And this expression.

The right hand. Of God. Symbolically. Indicates. His supreme. Dominion. And authority. And power.

Over heaven and earth. The right hand. Of any ancient. Monarch. Of any ancient. King. Was a place of. Exalted. Honor. And royal government.

Thus for Jesus. To sit down. At the right hand. Of the father. Was to exercise. Equal. And absolute. Rule. Over the entire. Universe. In other words.

The risen Christ. Is the eternal. King. Paul. Writing to the Philippians. Says. Wherefore God. Also. Hath highly. Exalted him.

[46 : 41] And given him a name. Which is above every name. That in the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow. Of things in heaven. And things in earth. And things under the earth. And that every tongue.

Should confess. That Jesus Christ. Is Lord. To the glory of God. The father. He sat down. He has given. All authority. And power. He sat down.

At the right hand. Of. The father. His work. Has been. Accomplished. His work.

Has been. Accomplished. But. Going back. To our. Our. Previous quote. Regarding Stephen. There. There we find. These words. And I saw.

The son of man. Standing. On the right hand. Of God. Now. What does that imply. For me and you. Well.

[47 : 34] It means. That he stands. In order. To greet. The soul. Of a saint. He stood. He stood.

Up. In order. To greet. The soul. Of his. Saint. There are very few. References. That we have.

In the bible. Of God. Of Jesus. Standing. But this is one of them. We have many. References. About Jesus. Sitting. At the right hand.

Of the father. But here is one. Very precious. Reference. To Jesus. Standing. As his. Saint. As his. Disciple. As his.

Follower. Stephen. Gave up. His spirit. As it were. Jesus. Stood. In order. To receive it. Before Jesus.

[48 : 31] Ascended. To the father. Luke. Records. For his. Two blessings. That he gave. To the disciples. Verse 49. And behold. I send the promise. Of the father. Upon you.

What Jesus. Meant. By the power. Of the father. Of course. Was a gift. Of the Holy Spirit. In Luke. Chapter 12. Jesus says. I am come. To cast fire.

On the earth. Now what did Jesus. Mean there. When he spoke. Of fire. Well some. Think that Jesus. Is there. Speaking of judgment. And no doubt. Scripture. Does use.

Fire. Literally. And symbolically. As. Terms. Of. Judgment. Others. Like. John. John. Calvin. Thinks. That it's a reference. To the gospel. Matthew.

Henry. Thinks. Of it. As the fire. Of persecution. Although. Jesus. Is not the author. Of persecution. He. He permits it. But it's. In its context. It can be.

[49 : 26] A reference. Of the outpouring. Of the Holy Spirit. In Acts. Chapter 2. We read. And when the day of Pentecost. Was fully come. They were all.

With one accord. In one place. And suddenly. There came a sound. From heaven. As of a rushing. Mighty wind. And it filled. All the house. Where they were sitting. And there appeared.

Unto them. Cloven tongues. Like as of fire. And they sat. Upon each other. And they were filled. With the Holy Spirit. Or the Holy Ghost. Jesus.

Clearly. Tells us. That Pentecost. Cannot. Precede the cross. He had to suffer. And he had to die. He had to be buried. He had to rise again.

And he had to ascend. Into the. To the father's right hand. And from there. He. And the father. Sends forth. The Holy Spirit.

[50 : 26] You see. The coming of the Holy Spirit. Was something. That was. Very important. To Jesus. Listen. In on the discourse. Of the upper room. And he says there. And I will pray the father.

And he shall give you another comforter. That he may abide with you forever. Nevertheless. I tell you the truth. It is expedient. Expedient for you. That I go away. For if I do not go away.

The comforter will not come to you. But if I depart. I will send him unto you. It was important for Jesus. That the Holy Spirit.

Would come. And it is important for me and you. To be very mindful. Of the ministry. Of the Holy Spirit. To be mindful.

Of how. We need the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit. That gives life. Not man made gimmicks. But the Holy Spirit. That's what we need. In order.

[51 : 24] To have life. In order to have life. We need the Holy Spirit. It is absolutely. Essential. And totally necessary.

For an effective ministry. Without the Spirit. Not even the preaching. The gospel. Would have any effect. On people. Paul in writing.

To the Thessalonians. Says. That the gospel. Came to them. Not in word only. But also in power. And in. The Holy Spirit.

And Jesus was now. Sending the disciples out. Into a hostile world. But as he parted with them. He promised. The Holy Spirit. To help them. That's what I and you need today.

The Holy Spirit. To help us. And Jesus also. Gave his disciples. Not only a promise. But he gave them. A farewell benediction.

[52 : 21] We read. And he led them out. As far as to Bethany. And he lifted up his hands. And blessed them. And it came to pass. While he blessed them. He was parted from them.

And carried up. Into heaven. Now what we have there. Is actually. A priestly. Act. When he lifted up his hands. And blessed them.

It's a priestly act. When Aaron. The high priest of Israel. Was ordained to serve. As the first high priest. He lifted up his hands.

To the people. And he blessed them. And he blessed them. Just as the blessing. Of the high priest. In Israel. Followed the sacrifice. Of atonement. And served to reassure.

The people. Of their forgiveness. Of sin. So the benediction. Of Jesus Christ. Follows his. Atoning work. On the cross. And having risen. To assure us.

[53 : 16] Of the forgiveness. Of our sins now. He lets us know. That we are accepted. By God. By pronouncing. This benediction. Upon us. In Timothy.

Timothy. One of Timothy's letters. There we read. That he was received. Up into glory. Or rather glorious. So that his ascension then. Was an entrance.

Into heaven. In triumph. It was openly triumphant. And it was glorious. We sung today. That when he ascended.

Up on high. He led captivity captive. And gave gifts. Unto men. Paul quotes these. Again in his letter. To the Ephesians.

These quotations. From Psalm 68. There is no doubt. That leading. Captivity captive. Has reference to his. Spiritual conquest.

[54 : 13] Over Satan. And the destruction. Of his power. But. And having. Spoiled principalities. And powers. He made a show of them. Openly. Triumphant over them.

That must mean. That Satan. And the chief. Princes of darkness. Led openly. In sight of all. The holy angels. As. Conquered. Captives.

Conquered captives. The seat of the woman. Having now bruised. The head. Of the serpent. Surely. That is what is expressed. For us. In the.

In the last psalm. That we sung. Psalm 47. What else can it be. What else can be expressed. In that psalm. 47.

But the glorious. Ascent of Christ. Into heaven. And there he reigns. Until his enemies. Are made his footstone.

[55 : 09] The overturning. And destruction. Of all his enemies. And all the remaining power. There he makes sure. That his church. Receives. All the covenant blessings. Which he has purchased.

For them. He has ascended. In order to make sure. That his church. That his people. Receives all the covenant blessings.

Which he has purchased. For them. By dying. In their room. And in their place. All the good things. Of the covenant. Are secured.

Into his people. All the promises. Of the covenant. Are secured. For me and you today. Because Christ. Has ascended. In his human nature.

To the right hand. Of the father. Where he sits down. But stands up. To greet. The soul of a saint. All the good things.

[56 : 08] Of the covenant. Are secured. Into his people. He was brought back. Again from the dead. That he might live forever. To communicate. Those benefits. To his church.

To me. And you. Now the God of peace. That brought again. From the dead. Our Lord Jesus. That great shepherd. Of the sheep. Through the blood. Of the everlasting covenant.

Make you perfect. In every good work. To do his will. Working in you. That which is well pleasing. In his sight. Through Jesus Christ. To whom be glory. Forever. And ever.

Says the writer. To the Hebrews. Jesus often comforted. And refreshed the hearts. Of the disciples. By reminding them.

Of what his ascension. Would mean. For them. If you read. These chapters. In the gospel of John. 13 to 17.

[57 : 04] If you read that. Upper room discourse. You'll find that. Time. And time again. Jesus brings. Before them. What his ascension.

Would mean. To them. He turns to his disciples. On this troubled occasion. And he says to them. That one of the reasons. He is leaving them. Is to go.

And prepare. A place. For them. Let not your heart. Be troubled. You believe in God. Believe also. In me. In my father's house. And many mansions.

I go. To prepare. A place. For you. And if I go. And prepare. A place for you. I will come again. And I will receive you. And to.

Myself. Yes. He will stand. To receive them. I will receive you. And to. Myself.

[58 : 00] The disciples. Were troubled. At what they anticipated. As about to take place. In reference to their Lord. He was to leave them. By dying. And by dying.

In very painful circumstances. A shameful. Cursed death. They were troubled too. At what they anticipated. As about to take place. With regard to themselves. Persecution.

And disappointment. But Jesus. In order to relieve. Their troubled hearts. And their troubled minds. Shows them.

That there were no ground. For trouble of heart. At the thought of him. Leaving them. Either on his account. Or on their account. For ultimately. His departure.

Would prove. Product of a far higher. Advantage. To him. And to them. Than could. Have resulted. If his continues.

[58 : 54] With them. Here on the earth. Jesus. Is not blaming his disciples. For being. Fearful. And sorrowful. He's not blaming them.

At all. For being fearful. And sorrowful. He's not. Blaming them. For being. Agitated. With fear. And sorrow.

He knows. Their frame. For he made it. And he knew too. For in the depth of his love. He had assumed it.

And knowing it. He knew. They could not. But be troubled. Jesus points them though. To his divine. Purpose.

That's. Something we should always. Be mindful of. The divine purpose. Of God. He points them.

[59 : 50] To his divine purpose. And what is his divine purpose? His divine purpose was. Or involves. As I should say. Their arrival.

In heaven. Part of the purpose. Of the redemptive plan. Of God. Is for his people. To arrive. Back.

In heaven. Paul. Writing to the Colossians. Says. If ye then. Be risen with Christ. Seek those things. Which are above. Where Christ sitteth. On the right hand of God.

Set your affection. On things above. Not on the things. Of. The earth. In the prayer. Of John 17. Again. We read these words.

Father. Father. I will. That they also. Where I am. That they may behold. My glory. Which thou hast given me. For thou lovest me.

[60 : 46] Before the foundation. Of the world. Jesus. The one who has ascended. In bodily. In his human nature. Who has ascended.

To the right hand. Of the father. And who is there. Sitting at the right hand. Of the father. But standing. To greet his saints. He is longing. For his people.

To be. In heaven. With him. Father. I will. That they also. And thus given me. Be with me. Where. I am.

He is longing. For them. To be in heaven. With him. Jesus tells his disciples. That when he has finished. Preparing a place for them. He will come. And take them. There. And the promise.

That promise. Has of course. Two fulfillments. One occurs. At the death. Of believers. When their soul. Departs. From the body. And enter into glory.

[61 : 44] And the other. At the saviour. Second coming. When that soul. Will be reunited. With the body. And body and soul. Will go. Into heaven. And on both occasions.

The believers. Will receive. From Jesus. A very rich welcome. He entered heaven. To appear. In the presence. Of God. For us. To make intercession.

For all that come unto God. By him. And we'll spend more time. This evening. Talking about that aspect. Of his heavenly ministry. Christ ascended into heaven.

Or was received up into glory. To exercise his office. Of mediation. On behalf of his people. Until the end should come. You know. When we think of the ascension of Jesus.

We're not to think that he leads in heaven. A life of just glory. Majesty. And blessedness. That is true. But he also leads a life of office. Love and care.

[62 : 40] He lives as the mediator of the church. He lives there as king. Priest. And prophet. Here on. Is our present. Safety.

And security. Upon them. Is our future eternal. Salvation. Depending. That he is there. Exercising.

That office into which he has entered. From heaven. He makes effectual. The atonement that he has made for sin. From heaven. He undertakes the protection of his people.

This is our great encouragement. For we have not a high priest. Which cannot be touched. With the feelings of our infirmities. But was in all points.

Tempted like as we are. Yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly. Into the throne of grace. That we may obtain mercy. And find grace to help. In time of need.

[63 : 38] Christ. Ascended. Bodily. Into. Heaven. Now. The bible makes it clear to us. And this may be.

Very difficult for us to understand. And yet. It is important that we grasp it. We ascended with him. In a mystical way. When he ascended.

Scripture speaks of us. Of our union. With Christ. Our union. With Christ. Now our union with Christ.

Sometimes it's called. A mystical union. The bible says. That the union. Between Christ and his people. Can be compared to the union. Between the various parts of the body.

With the whole body. Especially the head. For instance. My fingers. Are a vital part of my body. They're not just things. That are tied on. There is.

[64 : 35] A living. Organic. Vital union. So that the blood. That flows through my head. Flows. Through my fingers. Flows. What that.

What this means for us. In Christ. Is. What happened to Christ. Happened to us also. What happened to the head. In a mystical way.

Because of our union with Christ. By faith. Happened. To us. Or happens to us. In him. This is how Paul puts it. I have been crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless. I live. Yet not I. But Christ liveth in me. And the life. Which I now live. In the flesh. I live by the faith. Of the son of God. Who loved me. And gave himself.

For me. Paul speaks to the Ephesians. And. He says to them. That they have been raised with him. And are now seated. In the heavenly places. In him. So that they can say.

[65 : 34] We are with Christ. In Romans chapter 5. We read the word. These words. We shall be saved by his life. A better translation of that.

In Romans 5. Would be. We shall be saved in his life. In his life. Before. We had faith. Before we trusted in Christ.

We were outside his life. But once we exercised faith. And unite. And been united to Christ. By faith. We are now.

In Christ. We are united to Christ. We are in his life. So that was true of him. Is true of us. In a mystical way.

Here is the one who died. To deal with our sin. But he rose again. He is the resurrected Jesus. And he ascended to the right hand. Of the father. Mystically.

[66 : 32] We are with him. But the day is coming. And in our experience. We shall ascend personally. To be with him.

And unless he returns. It will be the soul first. But then the body. We will ascend personally. To be with him. But in the meantime. We are to ascend spiritually.

To him. In acts of faith. With love. And desire. Oh it would be good. If we could say like Paul. For our conversation is in heaven.

From whence also we look for the saviour. The Lord. Jesus Christ. A man by the name of John Flavin. He wrote.

That an ascended heart. Is the best evidence. Of our interest. In Christ's ascension. In other words. What he was saying is.

[67 : 28] If we have an interest. In Christ's ascension. Then our thoughts and our mind. Will be very often exercised. On. Where Christ is. At the right hand.

Of. The father. Yes. The ascension of Jesus. Is our security. Today. In the midst of a hostile world.

We are secure. Because Jesus. Has ascended. And he is at the right hand. Of the father. And this evening. God willing.

We will look at one aspect. Of his ministry. At the right hand. Of the father. To further. Validate our. Assurance.

And our security. As regarding. Our salvation. May the Lord. Bless. These thoughts to us. Let us pray. Eternal.

[68 : 24] And ever. Blessed Lord. We give thanks. Today. That Jesus. Is at thine own right hand. And that he is there bodily. That our human nature.

That the dust of the earth. Is in the midst of the throne. Therefore. We have boldness. And confidence. To come into thy presence. And to lay out our petitions.

Before thee. And we give thanks. That because he is there. That our salvation. Is secure. In him. That in him. In a mystical way.

That we are there. With him. We pray Lord. That. That thy people. Would be encouraged. Through their. Thoughts.

Have been upon. The present ministry. That is going on. At thine own. Right hand. We pray Lord. That thou would continue with us. Bless each one of us.

[69 : 23] According to our individual needs. And forgive us. For all our sins. In Jesus name. That is going on. Away. Who■ would upon. Or fear. Who■ would. You. Nobody.

I had a wife. Me. Them. I had a witness. He had a watch. Thank you. She! The. Usually. I have a witness. I was kana errored America.

For all our sins! The true Verkehr. That is going on. The marriage. The old sanctuary.