

Acts: The Spirit, the Church and the Spread of God's Word

The Return of the King

Acts 1:8-11

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / May 19, 2019

I. You Don't Need to Wonder What You Should Be Doing as a Christian Now

A. You Should Be Witnesses

Acts 1:8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The power of His Spirit has a very specific purpose and passion to make much of Jesus.

You can have this power, but still have no desire to use it. **Luke 24** gives us critical insight about what needs to be going on in our hearts if we're going to talk about Jesus.

Luke 24:51-53 "Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen."

B. You Have to Be a Worshipper Before You'll Ever Be a Witness

Worship has to precede witness because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks! If you don't have a heart for it, you won't speak about it.

II. You Don't Need to Wonder Where Jesus Is or What He's Doing Right Now

A. The Ascension Exalted Jesus to the Highest Place

Ephesians 1:20-23 "... [God] raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."

The Greek word 'seated' in **v. 20** means to install or formally put someone into an office or position of power and authority.

His power and authority trumps all other powers and authorities in this world and outside of this world, because Jesus is Lord of all.

B. The Ascension Unleashed the Ministry of Jesus for His People on a Level that Had Never Been Seen Before

1. Jesus Intercedes for Us in the Presence of God

Hebrews 9:24-25, 28a “For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another— ...so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.”

If you're a Christian, Jesus continually stands in the presence of God as your representative, so that when God the Father thinks about you, He sees the perfect life of His Son!

Hebrews 7:22-25 says Jesus is the personal guarantee and security for the new terms by which you can relate to God now as your Father. Those terms are secured by Christ's perfect sacrifice that never need repeating and will never be diminished in its ability to satisfy the Father.

The more you understand Jesus' ascension, the more you'll settle into a place of security and tranquility will quiet your fears and silence the accusations that scream in your head saying that you don't belong in the family of God.

2. Jesus Gives Us Unlimited Access to the Throne of God

Hebrews 4:14-16 “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

We can have a posture of boldness when approaching God's throne because Jesus ascended and is in the presence of the Father for us now.

When you're cut off from boldly approaching God, you're also cut off from the grace and mercy you desperately need every day to live the Christian life.

When you understand the ascension of Jesus and what He's doing for you right now, you can talk back to the devil just like Jesus did in **Matthew 4:10** when He was tempted in the wilderness.

3. His Ascension Changes the Level of Intimacy We Can Have with God Now

Romans 8:14-17 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ...”

To go from being an enemy of God to being an adopted son or daughter who can call God ‘Abba’ or ‘Daddy’ is a mind-blowing change of circumstances.

4. His Ascension Changes What We Think We Can Do (Eph. 1:18-20)

5. His Ascension Changes Who We Think Is in Control (Eph. 1:11, 21-23)

III. You Don't Need to Wonder If You'll Ever See Jesus for Yourself

Acts 1:11 "... This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Jesus will return in a personal, visible and glorious way, but instead of quiet, private event like His ascension in front of 11 apostles, His return will be seen by every living creature and it will cause every knee to bow and tongue to confess that Jesus is Lord! See **Rev. 1:7** and **Phil 2:9-11**.

I Thessalonians 4:16-17 "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air..."