

The Ascended Christ Is Reigning for You!

Text: Selections – NAS 2020

Introduction: Dear friends: The Son of God ➡ came, ➡ lived, ➡ died, ➡ was raised, and ➡ ascended (B-L-D-R-A). Jesus did **not** abandon us, **instead**, He is now doing many important things. What does the Bible say?

1. **Jesus Completed His Saving Work (Luke 24:44–49)** “Now He said to them, ‘...all the things that are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, ‘So it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.’”
 - a. Jesus’ Time on Earth: He fulfilled hundreds of OT prophecies, which included His †suffering, †dying, and †being raised!
 - b. Ongoing Proclamation: Repentance for forgiveness!
 - c. The Proclaimers: 😊The disciples who saw Jesus in the flesh and 😊we who see Him by faith!

- d. A Great Post-Ascension Blessing: Ten days after Jesus ascended, *He poured out the Holy Spirit!* The Spirit is working through the word to give us ✦ assurance, ✦ understanding, ✦ guidance, and ✦ power!

Note: Since we are unable to fulfill God's Law, *Jesus did it for us through His finished work!*

2. **Jesus Ascended Bodily into Heaven** (**Luke 24:50–51**) "...He lifted up His hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven."

- a. He Blessed His Disciples: That means He called down God's gracious power upon them. *All believers have that same amazing blessing!*
- b. He Ascended as Both God and Man: When the Son of God came, He was Spirit – *like the Father and the Holy Spirit*. Then, *as we confess in the Athanasian Creed: "He is God and man... not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God."*

Note: Jesus did not ascend to abandon His Church, *but to reign for her benefit.*

3. **Jesus Now Reigns at the Right Hand** (**Ephesians 1:20–23**) "...[God the Father] raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places... And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and made Him head over all things for the church, which is His body..."

- a. Jesus Possesses All Authority: That fact should bring us much comfort as we live in this fallen world!

b. He Governs History for His Church: It easy to conclude that things occur by chance, *but Jesus is truly working all things together for good for those who know Him*. He is working to ♦keep us as His own and ♦use us to tell others about Him!

Note: The ascended Christ is serving His people by ♦ruling, ♦forgiving, ♦interceding, ♦strengthening, and ♦preserving!

4. **The Work of the Church on Earth:** **Acts 1:8** "...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses... as far as the remotest part of the earth." // **Matthew 28:19–20** "Go... and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you..."

a. The Church Proclaims Repentance and Forgiveness:

i. **Repentance** *requires change* – it's not easy.

ii. **Forgiveness** *brings eternal transformation* – so the change is worth it!

b. The Church Baptizes and Teaches: It's important for us ♦to get equipped, then ♦to encourage baptism and learning!

c. The Holy Spirit Empowers the Mission: We are not a car without an engine; instead, *we have been gifted with the Holy Spirit!* He empowers us to serve!

Note: The Church does not invent its mission. Instead, *the ascended Christ Himself continues His saving work through word and sacrament.*

5. **Jesus Will Return in Glory:** **Acts 1:11** “This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.” // **1 Thessalonians 4:16** “...the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.”
- a. The Ascension Points to the Second Coming: As He left, *He will return!*
 - b. God Has Set the Date: See Acts 17:31!
 - c. Believers Wait in Hope: Let us be certain that Jesus is coming and, *when He does*, we will ✦ enter the fulness of eternal life and ✦ be greatly blessed forevermore!

Conclusion: **What Is Jesus’ Ascension?** It is the crucified and risen Savior:

- Taking His throne!
- Ruling all things for His people!
- Continuing His saving work through His Church!
- Promising to return in glory for all who trust in Him!

Let Us Pray: Dear Jesus, cause us to understand ✦ the immensity of Your saving work, ✦ the power of Your present reign, and ✦ the certainty of Your return. Then, *certain that we are forgiven and heaven-bound*, **cause us to love others so much** that we call them to repent for the forgiveness of their sins! And all God’s people said: Amen!

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube** and **Podcast:** “Benefit from the Bible”
Facebook: “Bethlehem Parma” / **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com; 440-292-5915
7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134 / 440-845-2230