

Title: **Up and Away?!**  
Text: **Acts 1:1-11**  
Date: **April 9, 2023**

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at [mercyhillchurch.org](http://mercyhillchurch.org).

## Big Idea

Jesus' resurrection and ascension can be distinguished from each other but they cannot be divided. In many ways, the ascension carries to a climax the trajectory set in motion by the resurrection. But if that's the case, why, comparatively, do we think so little about the ascension? And what does it actually mean for our salvation and relationship with God?

### Aspect #1: Victory

Just as God "sat down" and rested, as it were, after finishing the work of creation, so too now Jesus sits down and rests after finishing the work of redemption by way of his life, death, and resurrection (Heb. 1:3; 10:12). He goes up . . . to sit down. The offering for sins has been made. The means of forgiveness has been established. The way back to God has been opened. "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Your work, if you want to call it that, is first to receive his work on your behalf by faith and, thereby, as the author of Hebrews says, to "enter [into] that rest" which he now is enjoying (Heb. 4:11). Quit striving to earn your own rest, and strive, rather, to enter his. He's already earned it for you.

### Aspect #2: Sovereignty

Jesus goes up to sit down—not on a couch or lounge chair—but on a throne. That's what is meant by his sitting down "at the right hand of God." It's a place of power and prestige and authority—of royalty. The ascension is enthronement; it's coronation; it's Jesus sitting down, not just to rest, but to rule and reign over all.

The one who is king over all holds the scepter with nail-scarred hands. Before he put on the crown of gold, he wore the crown of thorns. Before he took his place on the throne, he was nailed in place on the cross. The Lion of the tribe of Judah is also the Lamb of God who

gave up his own life to take away the sins of the world. And he went through all of this for you . . . for me. What does this mean? It means, we can have no doubt: the one who is ruling and reigning over all, will rule and reign for yours and my good . . . if we will have him.

### Aspect #3: Advocacy

What is Jesus doing on Good Friday? He's taking our judgement, our verdict. He goes silently like a lamb led to the slaughter, not opening his mouth, not because he couldn't defend himself. Of course, he could (he tells Peter as much). But he doesn't advocate for himself because he wants to advocate for us. And the only way he can make a case for our forgiveness in the courtroom of heaven is if he takes our condemnation on the cross there at Calvary. He interposes his own blood between our sin and the Father's wrath. Jesus refused to speak up in his own defense, so he could always and forever speak up in ours!

### Aspect #4: Intimacy

Jesus is more than just a distant king or defense attorney. He's a friend and a helper and a comforter and a companion. And he's right here, right now. Jesus actually goes away so that he can come in closer than he ever had been before . . . by way of the Holy Spirit.

### Aspect #5: Urgency

Jesus came at first to be judged in our place, but he will come again to preside as judge over all. And one's eternal well-being hinges on his/her relationship with him. There are, therefore, two steps we really must take in light of this: First, we need to repent and believe. But then, second, we need to go and tell!

## Reflection Questions

- How often have you personally considered the ascension of Jesus? Before listening to this sermon, what you have said the significance of it really is?
- Looking back up at the five aspects covered this morning, which seems most important/relevant to you right now and why?

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## Our Mission & Values

*Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.*

**FAITH:** The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love

**COMMUNITY:** The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for

**MISSION:** The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our church *outwards* in love for the

the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value for God.

**Neighbor** | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal This value presses our one another.

**Back to City** | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.

## Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.  
We are so glad you've joined us today!

## Announcement Spotlight

### Happy Easter!

Thanks for joining us on this special Sunday! We invite you to linger after and enjoy fresh coffee and donuts together. And if this is your first time at Mercy Hill, please grab a visitor gift bag at the back table before you go!

### Ever Wondered? - Next Sunday!

Every now and then we try to specifically take up a question it seems those curious or even skeptical about Christianity might be asking and devote a whole Sunday sermon to addressing it. These sermons are a part of what we've titled our ongoing Ever Wondered? sermon series. The Sunday following Easter, we'll be tackling another one: **Aren't Christians Just a Bunch of Hypocrites?** Have you ever wondered about this? Do you know anyone else who has? Please, INVITE your curious/skeptical friends. And pray God uses this Sunday to help encourage people towards him.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at [info@mercyhillchurch.org](mailto:info@mercyhillchurch.org).

### Ladies Spring Stroll - Next Saturday!

Ladies, please join us for a walk along the Los Alamitos Creek Trail on Saturday, April 15th at 3:00pm. We can enjoy nature together as we catch up with old friends and make new ones. Children are welcome if you don't have childcare. We will meet at Lake Almaden Park in the small amphitheater on the lake, just beyond the bocce ball courts. It's on the Winfield Dr. side of the park. There's a charge to park in the lot, so you may want to just park on the street. We hope you can make it!

Please scan to the QR code below to find the link to RSVP!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at [info@mercyhillchurch.org](mailto:info@mercyhillchurch.org).

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