

HAPPY ASCENSION DAY!

Luke 24:50-52

January 27, 2008 Sunday p.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. Happy Ascension Day! How will you celebrate it this year? Oh, you won't be. Why not?
- B. Every year, the Christian or liturgical calendar always includes "Ascension Day."
 - 1. Its always on Thursday.
 - 2. Its always 40 days after Easter. Why? Because....
Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.
 - 3. This year it falls on May 1.
- C. Every major Christian Creed includes a statement about the ascension of Christ.
 - 1. The Nicene Creed
 - 2. The Athanasian Creed
 - 3. The Apostles' Creed

"...he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father...."
- D. The earliest Christians believed that the ascension of Jesus stood on equal footing with the crucifixion and resurrection.
 - 1. Why?
 - 2. Because it tells us three threes about Jesus right now.

I. FIRST, THE ASCENSION TELLS US JESUS IS NOW IN HEAVEN.

- A. First, the ascension was visible.
 - 1. No one actually witnessed the resurrection.
 - 2. Many saw the ascension.
Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.
- B. Second, the ascension was physical.
 - 1. Jesus ascended bodily, not as a ghost or spirit.
 - 2. This foreshadows our own resurrection and ascension.
I Corinthians 15:52-53 ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.
⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.
- C. Third, the ascension was victorious. It signaled the end of Jesus' suffering.
- D. Fourth, the ascension was liberating.
 - 1. While on earth, Jesus was limited by space and time.
 - 2. Now he can be everywhere, especially with us.
Matthew 28:20 And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

II. SECOND, THE ASCENSION NOT ONLY TELLS US JESUS IS IN HEAVEN, HE IS ALSO WITH HIS FATHER.

WHAT KIND OF A PLACE IS IT?

- A. First, it's a place of permanence.
- B. Second, it's a place of completion. Salvation is complete.
John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

C. Third, it's a place of honor.

Philippians 2:9-11 ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

III. THIRD, THE ASCENSION TELLS US WHAT JESUS IS DOING NOW.

A. He is interceding for us with His Father.(i.e. talks to the Father about us).

Hebrews 7:24-25 ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.
²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them

B. He is qualified to intercede for us because he knows what we are going through.

Hebrews 4:14-15 ¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.

CONCLUSION

A. This is why the Apostles' Creed includes a statement about Jesus' ascension.

1. It tells us where Jesus is now—in heaven and also with us.

2. It tells us who Jesus is with—His Father.

3. It tells us what he is doing right now—interceding for us.

B. So, Happy Ascension Day!