

WHY THE ASCENSION?

The ascension of Christ would be nothing, not even possible, without the resurrection. But why was it so important, having died for our sins, for Jesus to ascend to the Father on High? There are basically three answers to this question which we shall consider.

First, Jesus ascended **to become our perpetual prophet**. A prophet is one who “speaks forth” a message. The roots of this word are found to be rather interesting. The word “prophet” comes from two words, the first of which means “forth” or “before.” The second is a compound which has as its base the word “light” and means to “speak” or “enlighten.” Jesus, as the Word of God (John 1:1), came as the “light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5). Moses prophesied of Jesus’ being a prophet like unto himself (Deuteronomy 18:15,18). Jesus confessed Himself to be a prophet (Matthew 13:57); was called a prophet (John 4:19); and was declared by inspiration in Peter’s second Gospel sermon (Acts 3:22,23) to be that prophet prophesied. So, Jesus still speaks to us through His word (Hebrews 1:1,2).

Second, Jesus ascended to Heaven in order **to be our high priest**. The prophet said of Jesus, *“Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men that are a sign: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch”* (Zechariah 3:8). Note the subject: high priests and their fellows are a sign. Yet one is coming who stands (or sits) alone...the Branch. Now read, *“and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the*

counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zechariah 6:12,13). Note that He will build the temple (Matthew 16:18), bear the glory (John 5:23), and sit and rule as a priest on a throne. Oh oh...trouble! The false doctrine of premillennialism says that Jesus is coming to the earth to sit on this throne. But the Bible teaches that He cannot be a priest on earth (Hebrews 7:14; 8:4), nor sit on any thrones while on earth (Jeremiah 22:28-30; Matthew 1:11). It also teaches that He is sitting as priest on the throne right now. Who is correct? Of course, we know the Bible is right on this topic (as it is on all topics it addresses). Jesus will not come to this earth to sit nor rule nor be a priest. He does all that now, in the only place He can: **Heaven!** This is why He went there (Hebrews 4:14; 5:6).

Third, Jesus ascended **to be our King!** Is He to be a Heavenly priest on an earthly throne? Of course not, the throne is in Heaven also. He is King in Heaven (Jeremiah 23:5) and His throne is there too (Revelation 3:21). This is why He was born (John 18:37), not why He’s coming back (John 18:36). Without His ascension, we would have no Prophet, Priest, nor King, thus no help from Heaven (Hebrews 7:25). He is our “man in Heaven” (I Timothy 2:5). Thank God!

PROPER REGARD FOR WORSHIP

Worship! What a privilege and an honor to come before the Almighty in the precious name of His Son and worship in spirit and truth! Not just anybody may do this. Although every accountable person is amenable to the Law of Christ which includes worship, not all are yet qualified to do so. But we, brethren have been qualified (made meet) to be His children and to come before Him with the worship

He has prescribed for us to accomplish. Paul would tell the Colossians to, "[give] thanks unto the Father, who **made us meet** to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Colossians 1:12).

From the several Greek words translated "worship" from the New Testament, it is clear that our worship is a prescribed action. God has given us what He desires from us as a means of honoring and exalting His name with our lips and actions. Central to this prescribed action of worship certainly would be Jesus, the subject of our worship. He is, after all, glorified in our singing, remembered in the Supper, reflected in our giving, proclaimed in our preaching and utilized in our prayers to God, the object of our worship. We all recognize that when even a single avenue of this prescribed worship is missing, the true and spiritual worship as God desires for the first day assembly has not been accomplished. This is one of the reasons we are able to show our non-Christian friends that their worship is not acceptable to God. Some of these things are missing. But brethren, how are we any different from them if the thing missing in worship **IS US?** No, this article is not addressing attendance at worship, but rather attendance through **ALL** of worship.

Some brethren seem to think that God is content with their worship if they stay just long enough to eat the Lord's Supper. Where did they get such an idea? Is the Supper "the most important item" in worship? If so, please show the passage which teaches this. To think that one has worshipped just because they were present for part of the worship assembly is a big mistake! If worship on the first day consists of five avenues, and I participate in only three or four, have I worshipped? Am I really any different than the denominations and their faulty worship when they leave out various portions of the prescribed worship? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!** To walk out just before the sermon robs the worshipper of what it takes to build faith (Romans 10:17), and shows very little respect for what God has prescribed. There are **no** reasons for doing this sort of thing, only excuses. Arrange your schedules so that you may worship God fully as He prescribes.

RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

SUNDAY MORNING	BIBLE STUDY	9:30 A.M.
	WORSHIP	10:30 A.M.
SUNDAY EVENING	WORSHIP	6:00 P.M.
WEDNESDAY	BIBLE STUDY	7:30 P.M.
Preachers:	Robin W. Haley	614-751-1082
	James Grayson	614-409-0941

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Weekly Budget: \$1360.00

Wednesday's Wisdom:

"The Bible is always reliable; know it, live by it, and teach it to others!" Austin Truss

Sister Rose Moore's husband has been diagnosed with cancer. He will begin treatments Monday, October 26.

Hocking Hills Hike is still scheduled for this Saturday, October 31. Meet at the Cantwell Cliffs parking area at 10 am. Lunch at the Rock House picnic area at noon.

Time change is coming! Don't forget to "Fall Back" this Saturday (early Sunday morning of November 1st).

From my perspective... I was happy to hear of the sisters putting together some time of fellowship with each other like they had this past Thursday. I hope that they will continue...it's good for them...and the congregation!
Robin