

Toward Understanding Ourselves as a Christian

Lesson 7 -- Understanding Ourselves from the Perspective of the Ascension

Introduction

A. Our Lord, in the Bible, exhorts us to rightly interpret ourselves.

1. In regard to our person: we are created and recreated in the image of God.
2. In regard to our worth: we are a person with rights and great value.
3. In regard to our condition: we are fallen/redeemed and have great resources.
4. In regard to our calling: we are the gifted representatives of the Living God.
5. In regard to our daily life: we are loved/liked/graced/inhabited/protected.
6. In regard to our future: we are enrolled in His Kingdom and will be with Him.

B. The Ascension is the third step in our Savior's work of redemption. Acts 1:1-11

C. A major part of God's provision for us is found in the Ascension of the Lord Jesus. We were represented in this event: We ascended in Him!

But God ... Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ ... And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:4-6

I. The Meaning - Explanation of the Ascension.

A. In the Ascension the Lord Jesus returned home as the Conquering Hero. It was the celebration of His redemptive victory in which He gave gifts to all believers.

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Eph 4:8

B. The Ascension was a vindication of the Lord Jesus and a declaration that His redemptive work was sufficient and completed.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Rom 8:34,35

C. The Ascension was an affirmation that in Jesus Christ the believer has a Forerunner Who has entered Heaven as our Representative.

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever Heb 6:19,20

D. The Ascension was a testimony that the Lord Jesus entered into His intercessory work for the believer as his High Priest.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. Heb 8:1

II. The Message - Application of the Ascension.

A. In regard to salvation, the message is -- ASSURANCE.

... When he (the Lord Jesus) had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb 1:3

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Heb 9:12

B. In regard to the daily life, the message is -- PROVISION.

1. Provision regarding the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

Wherefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Acts 2:33. (See Jn 7:37-39; Acts 1:8)

2. Provision regarding prayer.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God ... Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Heb 4:14-16

3. Provision regarding freedom from the control of sin.

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God... Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry... Anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language Col 3:1-8

4. Provision regarding freedom from Satanic oppression.

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion ... And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. Eph 1:19-23

5. Provision regarding enabling gifts.

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he said, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Eph 4:7,8

Conclusion: Why do we as believers live without the assurance and power of God's abundant provision? Because we don't want to, or we don't think it's important, or we don't think we need Him, or because we don't want to give up our sins, or because we don't want to take the time.

Recommended Assignment (Preparation for the Next Lesson

Monday: Read I Samuel 10:1-11:6. Explain why the Holy Spirit made King Saul angry.

Tuesday: Read I Samuel 15:1-16:14. Why did King Saul lose the anointing of the Holy Spirit which he had been given to be king? _____

Why did God permit a wicked spirit to trouble Saul? _____

Wednesday: Read Psalm 51. Write out the verse that speaks of the Holy Spirit.

Why was David afraid of losing the Holy Spirit? _____

Thursday: Read Joel 2. Explain the prophet's promise of the Holy Spirit. _____

Friday: Read Acts 1 and 2. When was Joel's prophecy fulfilled? _____

_____ How do you know? _____

What does that mean for believer's today? _____

Saturday: Read Matthew 3. What did John the Baptist promise regarding the Holy Spirit?
