



**The Ascension:
This Changes Everything**

Acts 1:1-3...¹ *The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*
² *until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,*³ *to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

Jesus' Appearances After His Resurrection

Here's a list of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances recorded by the Gospel writers:

- To Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb in Jerusalem (Mark 16:9; John 20:11–18).
- To other women at the empty tomb (Matt. 28:1–10).
- To two followers on their way to Emmaus (Mark 16:12–13; Luke 24:13–32).
- To Peter, apparently in Jerusalem (Luke 24:33–35).
- To ten of His disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas absent (Luke 24:36—43; John 20:19–25).
- To the eleven disciples in Jerusalem, Thomas present (John 20:26–29).
- To His disciples at Lake Galilee (John 21:1–14).
- To His disciples at His ascension near Jerusalem (Mark 16:19—20; Luke 24:44–53).

The apostle Paul also mentioned three appearances of Jesus not recorded in the Gospel

These appearances were to five hundred believers; to James and all the apostles, and to Paul himself (1 Cor. 15:6–8).

[The following information by Leah Marieann Klett is re-published by permission of The Gospel Herald (@TheGospelHerald).]
<https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2015/05/ascension-day-2015-meaning-context-bible-verses-and-why-its-important-for-christians>. Additional material taken from <https://www.gotquestions.org/ascension-Jesus-Christ.html>; and (Keith Whitfield. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2013/august/why-ascension-matters.html>; Brian Tabb. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/more-than-an-afterthought-six-reasons-jesus-ascension-matters>; and (Jeff Robinson states at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-is-the-ascension-so-important/>”

“The ascension of Jesus Christ is one of the most significant events recorded in the New Testament. In the Christian tradition, Ascension Day marks the 40th day of Easter, and commemorates Jesus Christ’s ascension into heaven following his death and resurrection, as recorded in the passages found in [Luke 24:50-51](#) and [Acts 1:8-11](#). According to the biblical account of the ascension, Jesus appears to the disciples in His glorified state after rising from the dead. Jesus then encourages His disciples that they will “receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.” He tells them that they must serve as His “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Immediately after these words are spoken, the ascension takes place: “He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’” Christ’s ascension into Heaven marked the crowning event of His exaltation, and served as a necessary precursor to His continuing work through the Spirit and the church. Having paid the ultimate price for the sin of humanity—death on the cross—Jesus Christ is now risen and exalted, and applies the salvation He has won by granting the gifts of repentance and forgiveness of sins. Thus, Ascension Day is significant because it provides believers with the hope of Christ’s return and proclaims the hope and glory held out to all who are in Christ” (Klett)

Acts 1:4-11...⁴ *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; ⁵ for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹ Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”*

“In Acts 1 Jesus is saying goodbye to His disciples...for 3.5 years they’ve been intimately intertwined, thru good times and bad! He had changed their lives! They’d never be the same. “In Encounters with Jesus: Unexpected Answers to Life’s Biggest Questions (Dutton), Tim Keller argues forcefully that the ascension is a crucial, if often overlooked, aspect of the work of Christ. “Actually, it makes an enormous difference,” Keller writes. “The ascension, when understood, becomes an irreplaceable, important resource for living our lives in the world—and it’s a resource no other religion or philosophy of life holds out to us.”

The Reasons Why The Ascension Changes Everything

1. **“It signaled the successful end of His earthly ministry, and symbolized Christ’s exaltation by the Father.”** God the Father had lovingly sent His Son into the world at Bethlehem, and now the Son was returning to the Father. The period of human limitation was at an end. All that He had come to do, He had accomplished” (GotQuestions).

Hebrews 10:11-14...¹¹ *And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

It establishes Jesus as the reigning king over all powers in all ages”. (Whitfield) It symbolized His exaltation by the Father (Ephesians 1:20-23). The One with whom the Father is well pleased (Matthew 17:5) was received up in honor and given a name above all names

Philippians 2:9...⁹ *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

2. **The Ascension was necessary for the giving of the Holy Spirit.** It gives us direct access to God. It gives us the spoils of Christ’s victory—gifted leaders and spiritual gifts.

Luke 24:49-53...⁴⁹ *Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” ⁵⁰ And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.*

3. **It allowed Christ to prepare a place for us**

John 14:2... *"¹ Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

1 Corinthians 2:9...*However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"- the things God has prepared for those who love Him-*

4. **It gives us access to God's throne for mercy and grace.** "When Jesus ascended, the intercessory work of Jesus on behalf of His people began. In this ministry, we are assured that we will always have access to the Father forever" (Whitfield).

1 John 2:1... *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

It indicated the beginning of His new work as High Priest and Mediator of the New Covenant" (**Hebrews 9:15**). (GotQuestions). We have an Eternal Advocate in Christ.

Hebrews 4:14-16...¹⁴ *Since then we have a great high priest Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

5. **When Jesus ascended, the church was empowered to accomplish its mission.** In Ephesians 1:22-23, writing about Jesus' resurrection and ascension, Paul said, "[God the Father] put everything under His feet and appointed Him as head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of the One who fills all things in every way." The Ascension removes the devil from God's courtroom. The Ascension breaks the power of this present evil age.

Mark 16:15,16,19,20...¹⁵ *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned..."¹⁹ So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.*

Acts 1:8....⁸ *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

6. **It set the pattern for and a desire for His return.** When Jesus comes to set up the Kingdom, He will return just as He left-literally, bodily, and visibly in the clouds

Acts 1:9-11...⁹ *Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7).

7. The Ascension removes the devil from God's courtroom, and breaks the power of this evil age

“With the Ascension, the devil has been thrown from his place in the courtroom of heaven. This adversary can no longer accuse us as justly condemnable because of Jesus. The great Accuser has been silenced. He cannot use the Law of Moses to condemn. Raised to immortality, Jesus cannot die and will never cease pleading for us. This is the God we have been waiting for. The Ascension strikes at the heart of the way the world worked. The logic of the present evil age (“what goes around comes around” and “an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth”) is upended by grace. Since Jesus lived, died, rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, grace and truth have defeated the power of death over humanity. He has ascended above every power and authority so nothing can ever separate us from His love.

Romans 8:34-39... ³⁴*Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.* ³⁵*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* ³⁶*As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”* ³⁷*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ who loved us.* ³⁸*For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹*nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

1 Corinthians 15:55-57... ⁵⁵*“O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”* ⁵⁶*The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.* ⁵⁷*But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Instead of receiving what we deserve for our cosmic rebellion against God, we have been seated above the rulers of this present evil age (Eph. 1:3–14). We no longer have to fear death or dying in obscurity. We no longer should fear a meaningless life. Grace and truth have met us. Christ's ascension tells us that grace has the last word (Rev. 22:12–14). Christ has broken the world-cycle of shame and death. He triumphed over the devil and the rulers of this age, putting them to open shame by showing love to cowards and sinners (Col. 2:6–15). His mercy to those who would kill him stops the mouths of the wicked”. (Whitfield)

➤ **What Then Does The Ascension Mean for Our Lives.** (Brian Tabb)

“To sum up: Though often overlooked, the ascension completes Jesus's earthly mission and signifies his *enthronement* as heavenly king. Jesus has completed his Father's mission and he now *rules* with all authority and *intercedes* with all sympathy as our mediator and high priest. Remember that Jesus is presently reigning as king & remains active & engaged in our world & our lives.

1. Therefore *live* boldly, confidently, and strategically as servants of the exalted king of heaven. Know that your labors in the Lord Jesus are not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).
2. Sufferers, *take heart* that Jesus is not indifferent to your struggle. He has endured great suffering and is thus the most merciful and sympathetic counselor and mediator. Take your cares to your ascended Lord who hears your prayers and can respond with all heaven's authority.
3. Finally *hope* in a glorious future. The ascended Lord will return as judge and king. He will abolish injustice, end suffering, and destroy death and set up his kingdom of truth, righteousness and love. Best of all, we will be *with* our king forever”. Brian Tabb. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/more-than-an-afterthought-six-reasons-jesus-ascension-matters>