



## ***DOES CHRIST' ASCENSION BENEFIT YOU?***

Forty days after Jesus's resurrection, the bible tells us that Jesus disappears. *"He was taken up before their very eyes,"* Luke tells us, *"and a cloud hid him from their sight"* (Acts 1:9). Two angels then tell the disciples that Jesus was *"taken into heaven"* (Acts 1:11)

So, what do we make of this twist in the Christ's resurrection story? How should we understand our crucified and risen Lord's ascension? Some people treat Christ's ascension as little more than a dazzling exclamation point for the resurrection rather than as just a special event in its own right. Yet the ascension of Christ is a vital part of the redemption story. If we simply collapse the ascension into the resurrection, we miss stunning benefits tied directly to Jesus

being taken into heaven.

Ephesians 1:20–21 speaks of the power God exerted when he *"raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come."* Further, the ascension provides for us to also *be "seated with him in the heavenly realms in Jesus Christ"* (Ephesians 2:6–7). This is remarkable! Not only do we participate in Christ's resurrection life; we also share in his exaltation and victory over the powers of eternal death in hell. The ascension made this victory over evil powers possible because Jesus Christ did not ascend spiritually, leaving behind his body and world history; rather he ascended in the flesh, opening up space for all who will truly believe in the resurrected and alive Christ for eternal life.

It's the Lord's power that makes this possible (Ephesians 6:10). This is a power we can access as believers seated in the heavenly realms with our ascended Lord. We need this power since the problems we face appear to be human conflicts, but are ultimately struggles with the forces of darkness (Eph. 6:12).

Now you know one of the reasons why Jesus disappeared and ascended to heaven before the eyes of his believers. His ascension wasn't merely an exclamation point at the end of the resurrection; it provided his followers with power, grace, mercy, presence, gifts, and anticipation enabling them to advance his mission. On this Ascension Day (40 days after the resurrection), take time to reflect on how Jesus's ascension changed everything. Respond to the psalmist's call to *"forget not all his benefits"* (Psalm. 103:2). Indeed, some of our own personal life benefits flow to us as a result of Christ's ascension to God's right hand.

---

Compiled and presented by Rev. Ted Althouse, Pastor-The Chapel of Cypress Cove