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The Current Work of Christ

Christology

While the Bible gives much attention to the past work of the Lord Jesus Christ, His present ministry in Heaven is of great importance and comfort to the believer. This ministry began with the ascension of Christ, and will conclude with His second coming.

I. THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

A. THE TIME OF HIS ASCENSION:

The Lord remained on earth for 40 days after His resurrection — Acts 1:3.

During this period He conducted what is usually called His “post- resurrection ministry.” Most of this time was spent with His church, teaching it about its:

- **Purpose** — the kingdom of God — Acts 1:3.
- **Power** — the Spirit of God — Acts 1:4.
- **Plan** — the Great Commission — Acts 1:8.

B. THE MANNER OF HIS ASCENSION:

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” — Acts 1:9-11.

From this we note it was:

1. Bodily, Personal, And Visible.

2. A Preview Of His Second Coming In Glory — Zechariah 14:4.

C. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS ASCENSION:

1. It Demonstrated The Completeness Of Christ’s Atonement.

The fact that He was received of the Father is evidence that His earthly ministry was accepted.

There were actually two ascensions of Christ.

John 20:17 indicates that Christ ascended to His Father right after His resurrection. He said to Mary “Touch me not,” but later the same day allowed (encouraged) His disciples to touch Him — see: John 20:20,27; I John 1:1.

Having accomplished the great sacrifice of Himself for sin, Christ went to Heaven in order to present His blood before the mercy seat, according to the pattern of Leviticus 16.

See: Hebrews 9:16-18.

He then returned to earth to accomplish His post-resurrection ministry.

2. It Opened The Way For The Sending Of The Holy Spirit.

The return of the Son to the Father facilitated the sending of the Comforter, Whose blessed Person would indwell every believer everywhere, and through Whom Christ could be Head over His many churches everywhere.

“(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” — John 7:39.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you” — John 16:7.

D. THE PRESENT LOCATION OF JESUS CHRIST:

1. He Is Seated.

See: **Hebrews 10:12** **12** But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

The fact that He “sat down” indicates the completeness of His work of redemption.

2. He Is Seated At The Right Hand Of The Throne Of The Father.

The fact that Christ sat on the throne of God at The Lord’s right hand and did not sit upon His own throne, or upon the “throne of David,” indicates He is expecting to become King over the earth.

3. He Is In His Resurrection Body.

Christ is not an immaterial spirit in Heaven. He is in the form in which he ascended which makes Him differ from His pre-incarnate form.

Now that we understand the purpose of Christ’s ascension, the manner in which He ascended, and the current location of Christ, now we can better understand the benefits of His ascension.

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II. THE PRESENT WORK OF CHRIST FOR THE BELIEVER

This is everything that Jesus Christ is currently doing for me and you. You might think that Jesus doesn't care about you as a believer, or you might think that He has forgot about you. Christ before the foundations of the world had you in mind and He has always been working to reach you and to help you.

A. CHRIST MAKES INTERCESSION FOR ALL BELIEVERS:

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” — Hebrews 7:25.

This intercessory work began during Christ's earthly ministry (John 17) and will continue in Heaven as long as His own are in the world. (What a wonderful thought in John 17:20 — that Christ prayed for me!!)

B. CHRIST APPEARS BEFORE GOD AS THE BELIEVER'S ADVOCATE:

Satan is called the “accuser of the brethren” in Revelation 12:10. He is somehow able to accuse every Christian when he or she sins.

An “advocate” is a defense attorney. Christ speaks upon our behalf, and His advocacy is based upon His shed blood that continues to speak for us.

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” — I John 2:1.

“And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” — Hebrews 12:24.

C. CHRIST CONTINUES HIS CLEANSING WORK ON BEHALF OF EACH BELIEVER:

I John 1:7-9 — “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”

This cleansing is freely given on the basis of the confession of our sins. Confession involves an acknowledgment of the sin, and agreement with God that it is sin, and the act of repentance from the sin.

D. CHRIST ENJOYS SWEET FELLOWSHIP WITH EACH BELIEVER:

According to Ephesians 2:6, each Christian is seated with Christ in heavenly places. This fact has to do with our **STANDING**

in Christ and assures us not only of permanent UNION, but of continual COMMUNION.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” — John 10:27.

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” — I John 1:3,4.

E. CHRIST PROVIDES EVERY BELIEVER FREE AND CONFIDENT ACCESS TO THE FATHER THROUGH PRAYER:

“And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full” — John 16:23,24.

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” — Hebrews 4:14-16.

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” — Hebrews 10:19-22.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” — I John 5:14,15.

F. CHRIST IS PREPARING A PLACE FOR EACH CHRISTIAN IN HEAVEN:

“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” — John 14:2.

III. THE PRESENT WORK OF CHRIST FOR HIS CHURCHES

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of each true New Testament Baptist church, Colossians 1:18. He is the “Chief Shepherd” (Pastor) and “Bishop” over each of His churches — I Peter 2:25; 5:4. He is the Bridegroom preparing to come and

receive His bride — John 3:29; II Corinthians 11:22; Revelation 19:7-9.

In this capacity, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who:

A. ADDS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF EACH CHURCH:

“And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” — Acts 2:47b.

“But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him” — I Corinthians 12:18.

B. CALLS MEN INTO MINISTRY:

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry” — I Timothy 1:12.

C. BESTOWS GIFTED MEN UPON EACH CHURCH FOR SPIRITUAL BENEFIT:

Ephesians 4:11-16 — “And HE GAVE some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of

men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love”

D. SANCTIFIES AND CLEANSSES HIS CHURCHES:

“...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” — Ephesians 5:25b-27.

Compare: II Peter 2:13.

E. LASTLY – CHRIST SUPPLIES EACH CHURCH’S NEEDS:

Philippians 4:15-19 — “...when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were

sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. But my GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED according to his riches in glory BY CHRIST JESUS”

This morning we can see that Christ has blessed us. He has done so much for us already, but yet He continues to bless us daily with these wonderful benefits because He ascended and now sits at the right hand of the Father forever making intercession for you and me.