



PART 5: THE DETONATOR

Sermon Notes

Text: Luke 24:50-53, Acts 1:1-11

Introduction:

For many, the ascension of Jesus just gets a footnote in the larger context of the gospel, but the ascension is essential for us to understand. It is the detonator for everything Jesus accomplished in his earthly ministry, releasing his work into our lives. Without the ascension the gospel is incomplete.

1. A New Relationship

Luke 24:52 "...they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."

Matthew 28:20 "...surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The ascension is not the absence of Christ and the loss of his leadership – it is the increased and heightened presence of Christ.

When Jesus ascended it didn't mean he went to another place in the universe (up there). It means he now has a different relationship with the universe. Like a king or queen who ascends to a throne, Jesus now has a power and authority over the kingdom that he didn't have when he was limited by time and space.

Jesus is our "man in heaven" representing our interests until we arrive.

2. A New Power

Acts 2:33 "Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear."

John 16:7 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Luke said that his gospel was an account of everything Jesus *began* to do and teach (Acts 1:1), inferring that Acts is a narrative of what Jesus *continues* to do and teach - through his church!

Jesus can't be physically present *to* all of us, but he can be physically present *through* all of us.

"Heaven is the control room for what happens on earth" ~ NT Wright.

3. A New Hope

Hope is a confident assurance of our future.

a) He's preparing a place for us

John 14:2-3 "My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

b) He's coming back

Acts 1:11 “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.”

Conclusion: The Example of Stephen (Acts 7:54-60)

Stephen’s vision of the ascended Jesus:

- Dissolved his fear
- Made him confident of his future
- Transformed him to be just like Jesus.

“The ascension reminds us that Christianity is not only an historical faith, but a faith of the present and future.” ~ David Mathis

Life Group Discussion

1. Warm up: Think back on our Easter Series: “This Changes Everything.” What impacted you? What do you still have questions about? What topics would you like discussed in a future sermon series?
2. Read Luke 24:50-53 & Acts 1:1-11. What stands out to you about these passages?
 - What were the disciples focussed on? What did Jesus want them to focus on? How do we maintain our focus today?
 - What does it mean to be a “witness” (v. 8) for Jesus?
3. Read Ephesians 1:18-23. What does this passage say about the ascension?
 - What does it say about Jesus?
 - What does it say about the church (us)?

4. In what ways does the ascension impact my everyday life? Is there any practical application? How did it impact Stephen’s life in Acts 7:54-60?

5. Pray together:

- a) Pray that we would “see” the ascended Christ, so that our lives would be transformed.
- b) Pray that we would have the same boldness as Stephen, so that the word of God would spread in Penticton.
- c) Other requests:
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