

## Leave It To Jesus

Pastor Matthew Ude

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INI - SDG

**Luke 24:44-53** <sup>44</sup> Then He said to them, "These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me." <sup>45</sup> And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup> Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, <sup>47</sup> "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> "And you are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> "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." <sup>50</sup> And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, <sup>53</sup> and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

"They worshipped Him." This is a simple statement which we might easily overlook in the greater excitement of hearing about Christ's ascension. It is not as important as Christ ascension, but this statement is still quite important.

For one thing it proves that the disciples knew that Jesus was true God. The deity of Christ was not a doctrine which grew up within the church later as the mythos of Christ spread as some modern scholars have claimed. The truth of His deity was clearly understood immediately by the apostles and the other believers. Thomas declared Jesus to be "My Lord and My God." The brethren in our text worshipped Him as true God.

For another thing it shows that they understood that even though Jesus was physically gone from their sight He was still with them even as He had promised. Indeed, He was with them more closely and more intimately than He could ever have been before His ascension. They knew and they understood that He was present in the word and in the sacraments. Therefore, they worshipped Him, so that they might remain with Him even though He had departed from their sight.

Most importantly they worshipped because they understood what His ascension meant for them. Jesus' ascension meant that He now rules at the right hand of the Father. If He who out of His great love willingly died for them rules, then there is nothing to fear in this life of the next.

We know that Jesus has ascended, but we seldom believe that He is in control. We tend to believe instead that we are in control. We think that if we make the right choices or yell at each other loud enough we can bring about the right outcome.

A couple days ago one young lady in our congregation broke her arm. How would you respond if that was your daughter?

Perhaps depending on the circumstances, you would scold the child. Perhaps you would blame yourself. Perhaps you would blame your spouse. Perhaps you would resolve to maintain greater control over the children in the future.

All these reactions assume that I am in control, or that with enough diligence I can be in control. All these reactions forget that we are not in control Jesus is. It is Jesus who has ascended.

Granted we ought to take reasonable precautions. We don't let the kids play with matches or give a six-year-old the keys to our car, but ultimately, we have to trust that Jesus is in control.

His ascension means that He rules. He rules not just as the son of God but as the son of Man as well. That is that not only His divine nature but also His human nature is all powerful.

As Jesus says, "all power is given to me."

Not only His divine nature but His human nature is here present with us today and always.

As Jesus says, "I am with you always."

Not only His divine nature but His human nature also watches over us with omniscience.

This is called the Genus Majesticum, that the human nature of Christ shares in all the divine attributes. In Christ the same human nature which fell into sin is glorified above all principalities and angels. It is the MAN Christ Jesus, our brother, one like us, one who endured the same temptations as us who rules over all things.

For this reason the disciples worshiped with joy, and having worshiped they got up and went forward with confidence. They knew that the same MAN Jesus whom they had walked with and talked to was now ruling over all things.

The book of acts is an account of the truth of Jesus' rule. The book of acts doesn't just begin with the ascension of Christ. The entire book is the description of what it means that Jesus has ascended and rules all things. The book of acts reveals a Christ who is perfectly in control of all things and uses all things for the good of His church.

When the Jews try to stop the preaching of the Word, the apostle are encouraged to preach more joyful Jesus.

When Saul attempts to murder and persecute the Christians, Saul himself meets the risen Christ and becomes the instrument of Christ to the gentiles.

When a great persecution comes upon the Christians in Jerusalem, they scatter and go everywhere taking with them and preaching along the way the great glad tidings that Jesus is risen from the dead, our sins are forgiven, and He rules over all things for the good of His people.

The truth of Christ's rule, his control over all things, was something which the early church didn't just believe but lived. The apostles rejoiced when they were persecuted because they were confident that

Jesus was in control. Why should they worry about what the Jewish leaders said or thought of did, when they knew full well that Jesus had ascended and sits on the right hand of God in full control of all things.

Stephen went to His death seeing Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

Paul was stoned and left as dead, but then went back into the city because he was confident that Jesus was in control and ruling all things for the good of the church.

Paul and Silas were put in prison but when the doors were opened, they felt no rush to leave the prison but instead remained where they were. Why? Because they were confident that Jesus was sitting at the right hand of God, ruling all things, in control of all things.

On his third missionary journey Paul was warned in every city that if he went to Jerusalem he would be put in prisons. But he still went. Why because he was confident that Jesus had ascended on high and was sitting on the right hand of God in control of all things. The spirit had made it clear that he should go to Jerusalem and so he went, trusting God.

When our daughter breaks her arm or a tyrant comes to power or a nation begins to fall apart around us, it might not look like Jesus is in control. But then again it didn't look like Jesus was in control when they stoned Stephen, yet there He was sitting in the heavens. It didn't look like Jesus was in control when they were persecuting the church, and yet the word of God went out to the end of the earth.

This is why the ascension is so important to us. Because even though we know that Jesus has ascended we often don't believe that He is in control

Jesus has ascended with shouts of joy. The apostles knew it, believed it and lived it. We know this to be true but we often don't believe it. Ascension is so important to remind us that Jesus is in control of all things.

You, confirmands, have done an excellent job studying and preparing for this day. But the world is not in your hands. Your life is not in your hands. They are both in the hands of He who ascended to the right hand of God. Go in confidence knowing that your True Shepherd is in control of all things, and He will guide you. Amen