

## THIRTY THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT JESUS

#29 | THE ASCENSION AND SESSION OF JESUS CHRIST | ACTS 1:1-12, 5:31

### The Ascension | Acts 1:1-12

- The ascension was a fulfillment of prophecy.
  - Psalm 110:1 tells us that Christ ascended because of the displeasure of God at the treatment of His Son.
  - Jesus prophesied that He would send the Holy Spirit after His departure (John 16:7).
  - Joel 2:28-31 tells us that the sending of the Holy Spirit would be in preparation for the Tribulation.
- As a fulfillment of prophecy, it was not the beginning of the age of Grace (which was an unrevealed mystery during the prophetic age).
- The promise of return (v. 11) was not a reference to the rapture (which closes the dispensation of Grace), because this information would be unknown until Paul.
- The angels asked a specific question to these “men of Galilee,” “Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?”
  - The message: they were to be concerned with Jesus on earth, not Jesus in heaven. Theirs was a Kingdom message. They had a citizenship in Jerusalem, the later church would have a citizenship in heaven (Phil 3:20).
    - The Greek word is a political word, πολιτεύμα [politeuma], referring to the ground rules or *constitution*.
    - Compare to Acts 1:11; the Apostles had an *earthly* mission related to the theocratic Kingdom. We in the church have a *heavenly* mission related to salvation.
  - They were to prepare Jerusalem and all nations for the specific events (Luke 21:25-28) that would occur before He returned (to the same location) to establish His Kingdom.

- With the establishment of the church, our focus is not Jesus on earth, but Jesus in Heaven. We look to the heavens (1 Thes 1:9, Phil 3:20, Titus 2:13) for the time when we will be “caught up” to be with Him. Since there are no signs to alert us when this will be, “now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor 6:1-2).

### The Session | Acts 5:31

- From the ascension to the Second Coming, the activity of Jesus Christ is called *The Session* by theologians.
  - From Latin *sessionem* (nominative *sessio*) “act of sitting; a seat; loitering; a session” (<http://www.etymonline.com/word/session>)
  - There are some poor alterations of the word in modern usage that make the word seem to imply the expression of authority, but it actually refers to the *waiting* of our Lord.
    - Presbyterians have “the session” when the Presbyters are “standing” in leadership.
    - Congress is “in session” when it is acting on matters of business.
- Jesus has been exalted *to* the right hand of God, where He is *in session* until His revelation.
- Being *in session* does not imply that Jesus is powerless, inactive, or lacking authority.
  - He is **far above all principality and power** and is the **head of the church** (Eph. 1:20-23).
  - He is the **mediator of a better covenant** (Heb. 8:6).
  - He is making intercession for His people (Rom. 8:34).
  - He is **an advocate with the Father** for sinners (1 Jn. 2:1).

Next: The Return of Jesus Christ.