

Ascension Power

by Erlo Stegen

The ascension of the Lord gives us the power to be witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth and reminds us of the importance of bowing to Jesus and submitting to His authority and power.

Duration: 42:12

Scripture: Matthew 24:43, Mark 13:32, Acts 1:7, Acts 1:9, Philippians 2:9-11, Revelation 1:7

Topics: "Resurrection Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of repentance and turning away from sin. He reminds the audience that seeing the wounds of Jesus should make it difficult for them to continue sinning. The preacher also discusses the topic of the return of Jesus, highlighting that no one knows the exact time of his coming. He encourages the audience to focus on being witnesses for Jesus in their local communities and to the ends of the earth. The sermon references Bible verses such as Acts 1:7-8, Philippians 2:9-11, and Revelation 1:7 to support the preacher's message.

Transcript

This is a very special day and the ascension of the Lord is so great. I don't know whether it was the last service that I spoke on the theme of the parents of Samson. Where the father had made a sacrifice on a certain rock and at that place as the smoke ascended, the angel of the Lord entered into that fire and ascended.

It was the Lord Jesus Christ. Like you see a paper going up in the fire as it ascends, so too he went up. But today we remember how the Lord Jesus went bodily up in front of his disciples into heaven.

And there are a few words I would like us to read now. In the book of Acts, chapter 1 from verse 7. And he said to them, it is not for you to know times or seasons which the father has put in his own authority, but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the end of the earth.

Now when he had spoken these things, while they watched, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, and as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. Who also said, men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven.

I would like to look at his ascending and then also regarding his second coming as it was said that he will come back in like manner. Let's also read from the letter to the Philipians. You'll excuse me reading quite a few verses.

Chapter 2 verse 8. And being found in appearance of a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God has also highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name. Remember that phrase, has highly exalted him.

So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And then we read from Revelations.

I don't have time to look at Zachariah but when you get home look at Zachariah chapter 12. From verse 10. Now Revelations chapter 1. Verse 7. Verse 8. Now let's ponder upon this.

Now Joel had asked me about taking the service and had said even if it is just 20 minutes or a half an hour it's fine. Now let's look at this matter shortly, just briefly. I read from verse 7. He said to them it is not for you to know times or seasons.

You see many people are inquisitive and are anxious to know when the Lord is going to return and even Christians fall into that trap. The Lord said he would come like a thief at the time when men least expect him. The Lord said he would come like a thief at the time when men least expect him.

But he says in verse 8. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. You have heard now in the introduction about those young people, those girls and boys just 13 years old or so.

Who have that authority to go to that degenerate school, the one that is feared by adults where they don't want any Christianity but they, empowered, have gone to it to witness. And the Lord said you will receive power, the power of the Holy Spirit so that you will be my witnesses. A person who has received the Holy Spirit shows and evidences the boldness and authority that he has from the Holy Spirit.

To witness the Gospel, even if it means going to the tree as we had said earlier on, that person will not fear it. This morning as I was As I was preparing I thought of preaching a completely different sermon, speaking only about this authority and this boldness to stand for the truth. Have you received the Holy Spirit that gives you that boldness or are you cowardly, afraid and saying I can't go there, I can't do this, I'm too scared.

And he said you will be my witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. Is that the fire that drives you or do you have something that just causes you to withdraw and be alone? And Jesus having said this ascended while they watched and he went up in front of them, up out of their sight. And a cloud received him into heaven.

A very famous bishop in our country is on record as having been asked what do you think of the ascension, did it literally happen? And he said well of course not, I'm a thinking man, you don't think that a physical person can arise and just go up like that. But I'd like to be there on the day of judgement when he's called to account to explain that which he said. He ascended in front of them and the cloud received him out of their sight.

A cloud unlike the clouds we have. In the Old Testament they spoke of the tabernacle. There was always the cloud upon it.

And that cloud was significant. And when Jesus was on the mount of transfiguration there was also a cloud of glory there. And that cloud symbolized the presence of God that he himself was there.

That cloud also symbolizes the glory of God. That cloud also describes the acceptance by God. So God received and took him.

And as we've read in our Philippians text, God then has highly exalted him. The Lord having humbled himself and been obedient to the death, God highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every other name. God seated him at the right hand of his authority above every other power.

That every knee should bow and that everyone should confess that he is Lord. And you need to realize how accountable you are before God with your vote. If you vote for a godless government and put them into power, those who deny the name of the Lord, you are accountable.

One day even you in hell will be forced to bow the knee before Jesus and confess that Jesus is Lord even when you don't feel like doing it. You see this day calls out and is shouting out the victory of Christ. Now that person is grieving already, but the one who mourns and grieves when they see Christ and what they've done to Him will grieve far more than this person about his family.

For then they will realize that they have sinned and caused His suffering, and if they haven't repented, even their bowing before Him is not a redemptive bowing, it is too late. They cannot be saved by being forced to bow in hell, even though they will bow and admit that Jesus Christ is Lord, but they'll have to grudgingly admit and it'll be too late for them. Rather bow, not just knee and tongue now to Him, but bow your heart to Him.

And our text in Revelation says, Behold, He is coming, that one who has been highly exalted and whose name, He has been given the name that is above every other name. So that every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess. You find though that people will rather say and authorities say, no we cannot have this in schools and in our schools in the country, we cannot have the possibility of offending someone who might be of another religion, they might be a Muslim child or a Hindu child, and therefore we can't expect them to bow before Jesus, but we are told that every knee will bow.

Behold, He is coming with the clouds and every eye, our text says, will see Him, every eye, the Muslim, the Hindu, whoever, will see Him. And those who pierced Him, who in our midst have pierced Him, all those who have not yet bowed the knee before Him in submission, saying, Lord, You are indeed the Lord over all, that You are willing to deny everything and give Him the mastery over all, let Him be Lord over all of your life. The word says, even if the one who loves father, mother, wife, children, self more than me is not worthy of me, indeed it is so, for He is the greatest one.

Have you ever seen Jesus? Have you seen His wounds? And as you beheld His wounds and asked what they were caused by, did He say to you, it was your sins, it is your stubbornness, you're refusing to bow the knee, and then that you bow thoroughly and completely, confessing your sin, not just a general confession that you're a sinner in some way, but that you specifically and accurately point out your sin, those sins which wounded Him. And if you are one who bows before Him and confessing that He is Lord, you will confess every sin, unless, of course, you are one of those on the way to hell. Amen.

All the tribes of the earth, whether you are Indian, or colored, or white, or whatever background you might be, all of you, and you specifically as an individual, that you say to them, Lord, when I stole, when I was messing around with the opposite sex, it was me, I was the one who was wounding you. Is the half hour up? Well, it's quarter past 12, and remember there was also a lot of the brass band, and I've spoken half an hour, and he too, my translator, has also spoken half an hour, so it's finished. May you see the Lord Jesus, see His wounds, and realize it was for you, and it was because of you.

It won't be easy to just persist in sinning. You cannot easily continue to sin if you've seen His wounds. But woe to the one who, having seen His wounds, still persists in his sins.

May this day be your day of repentance, turning away from that. And remember that the ascension of the Lord, with it, He said, I will send the Holy Spirit to give you authority to be my witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. Is that what you have? Are you busy with that? And does your gospel, the gospel you believe in, reach the uttermost parts of the earth? If that gospel hasn't caused you to be one of those bringing the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, then woe to you, because the words of the Lord are in vain for you.

They're not true in your life. It means that His ascension doesn't mean anything to you. You, maybe you come here to see Zabantu and you secretly do your things, going and buying your alcohol or your tobacco outside of the gates and you live a secretive life, woe to you on that day.

Or you flirt around even here. God will sort you out in His way rather than mourn today, rather confess that He is Lord today and mourn and grieve because of Him today. So that you say, Lord, I have caused you that pain.

It is my sins, my disobedience to your word that has caused your stripes, your wounds and your suffering. Let's stand to our feet and we pray. Lord, we've heard how important, how great this day is of your ascension and how you've been highly exalted and have entered into heaven.

Lord, you weren't like Philip, who before the eunuch's eyes was suddenly raptured and taken somewhere else to another part of this world. But you, Lord, when you ascended, you were taken up and accepted into heaven. And you will return and every tribe will see you.

And those who pierced you will behold you. And will mourn like a person mourns for their only child. Grieving for the loss of their son with great grief.

Lord, work by your Holy Spirit that there would be that repentance in our midst. Amen.

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