

Christ Interceding for Us

by John Powys

The sermon emphasizes the significance of Jesus' ascension, His intercession for believers, and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Duration: 55:18

Scripture: Acts 1:1-7

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Christian Witness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of looking to Jesus and not focusing on our own weaknesses or making excuses. He encourages listeners to come to God through Jesus Christ, who can completely change their lives. The preacher highlights the power of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of Jesus on behalf of believers. He urges people to believe in the gospel and become witnesses of the transformative work of Jesus in their lives. The sermon also addresses the unbelief prevalent in society and explains why Jesus had to go and send the Holy Spirit. The preacher shares examples of immediate and life-changing conversions, emphasizing the need for people to repent and fully surrender to God. The sermon concludes with a call to sort out one's life and be filled with the power and joy of the Holy Spirit every day.

Transcript

Lord, we thank you that we can gather together on such a great and a special day as this. Thank you, Lord, that we can come and remember and rejoice over that which happened on this day so many years ago. Thank you for the strength that you've given each one to be here this morning.

And we pray that you'll give us each one an ear that can hear what your spirit says. We ask you to bless the service, everything that is done, everything that is said, and even the singing as well, so that you will be glorified. Amen.

Amen. So nice to see that there are still people who rather honor this day than just carry on with their daily work. And I hope this morning that through the word of God we can understand why this day is so very, very important.

And then we can also realize why godless people have removed this day from the calendar. Shall we just pray once again? Lord, we ask you now that you would bless your word. Break the bread of life to us for your name's sake.

Amen. We're going to read Acts chapter 1, a very well-known portion. From the first verse, the former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up after he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom he had chosen.

To whom he also presented himself alive after his suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during 40 days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which he said, You have heard from me. For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked him saying, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? 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 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 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. Just so far, I'll still refer to quite a few other passages in the Bible.

But I think this is a well known portion that we've read. But as I read it again, I realized what a great day this was. Remember, Jesus came from heaven.

He left the glory of his Father, the glory of heaven, the streets of gold, a place without sin, no sorrow, a perfect place in the presence of his Father. He left the angels and the whole company of heaven. Those who loved him, those who loved his presence, and he came to this world.

The Bible says his own did not receive him. He came to sinful men, people who hated him, despised him, scourged him and mocked him, and finally crucified him. And now 40 days after his resurrection, he has this great day.

When he returns to heaven, back to glory, the Bible says in Psalm 47 verse 5, God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the trumpet. Well, it looks like the apostles didn't hear it. But heaven rejoiced when Jesus ascended.

There was a shout in heaven. The trumpet sounded in heaven because the king returned back to his place. It was a day of good tidings in heaven.

It was a day of great rejoicing. And interesting, the Bible says as he went, so he will return. And if you read in Thessalonians chapter 4, it says he will return with a shout and with the sound of the trumpet.

Just as he went, so he will return. It's a wonderful day. No wonder it was a public holiday.

It's one of the greatest days in the Christian calendar. But let's look back a bit. What's amazing to me, after his resurrection, the Bible says, he stayed with the disciples.

He remained with them 40 days. He was assembled together with them. Those must have been 40 wonderful days.

From his resurrection, he spoke to them pertaining the kingdom of God. He must have, it must have been a wonderful time. Nothing is revealed to us about those 40 days.

But he was with them. He hadn't finished his work at the resurrection. He still had work to do to strengthen the faith of the disciples.

And he remained with them these 40 days. And that's why ascension day is 40 days from resurrection day. He gave them commandments, the Bible says.

He gave them instructions. Many of those I'm sure are what we've got in the New Testament. In the letters written to us by Peter and James and others.

Those weren't things that they just cooked up in their own minds. Those were things that were revealed to them in that place where they assembled. A precious time with the disciples.

And then the Bible tells us how he was taken up. Jesus said in John chapter 16, when he told the disciples that he's going to leave, he said to them, it's to your advantage that I go. Now can you imagine after Jesus had spent 40 days with them, it must have been hard for them to grasp, to accept that Jesus should leave them now.

Because they'd had this close fellowship with him. But he says it is to your advantage that I go, that I leave you, and that you won't see me again until I return in the same manner. Then he said, because when I go, I will send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

And he also said to them that I go to prepare a place for you. There were many reasons why he had to go. But put yourself in the shoes of the disciples at that time.

They didn't know what we know today. But I wonder friends whether we really know and whether we really grasp what actually happened, why Jesus went, what it means to us. Because many people are filled with unbelief in this day and age in which we live.

People say yes, but if Jesus revealed himself to me, if I could see him, I would believe. You won't believe. If you don't believe now through the Holy Spirit that is here with us, how will you believe if Jesus revealed himself to you? Because he said it is to your advantage that I go.

I will send the Comforter. I will send the Holy Spirit. And we can speak for hours about what he said about that.

But let's look at it a bit more practical. The most important yes is he sent the Holy Spirit. Ten days after Ascension Day is Pentecost.

So in those ten days they gathered together and they prayed. They were of one mind until Pentecost and the Holy Spirit came. A very important day in the church calendar as well.

Something we should never overlook. Because he said when the Holy Spirit comes, you will receive power to be my witnesses throughout the whole world. Without that power, you cannot be his witness.

The Holy Spirit came for each one of us, you and I. Without him, we are useless. Without him, we will be depressed. We will be down.

We will be weak. But Jesus said I send him. And when he comes, you will receive power.

We know it happened. Jesus is true to his word. But many things came with that great blessing.

In Ephesians 4, the Bible says Jesus ascended. He led captivity captive. And he gave gifts to men.

What gifts did he give to men? When he ascended to heaven, he gave gifts, the Bible says. And these are the gifts. Chapter 4, verse 11, Ephesians.

He himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. Those are gifts to the church. Those are gifts to mankind.

To tell the good news. And it carries on in verse 12. He gave those gifts for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we should no longer be children tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting. This speaks of the church, the equipping of the saints, edifying the body of Christ.

That's why he ascended. He gave gifts. He gave his Holy Spirit.

But he gave men and women who God sent, he gave us as gifts. With different ministries to build up the church. To bring us to a point where we are mature in Christ.

Till we all come to the unity of the faith. That's why he gave these gifts. Because friends we need to be built up, we need to grow spiritually.

So that we are not like children anymore. But that we can be men and grown up in the Lord. That we are not tossed around by all kinds of things.

That's why Christ ascended. To give gifts to men. You know this is the Bible.

It sounds like I'm speaking to grade 1 children. This is the word of God. Maybe you say to, maybe you pray, maybe you say to people, if only God would speak to me.

That's God's word. That's God speaking to you. He's not going to speak to you in another way.

If you don't believe God's word, then God cannot speak to you in another way. That's God's word. It's from God.

It's on black and white. You cannot doubt it. If he spoke to you out of heaven this afternoon, and you heard a voice by tonight, you'll doubt whether that voice was God or not.

If God speaks to you through a dream, tomorrow morning, the devil will be there. He'll say to you, didn't you eat too much meat? Wasn't that just from eating too much meat? And then you can doubt. But friends, this is God's word.

I don't know why we don't believe it. Because many Christians don't believe it. If we believe this, our lives would be radically different.

If you young people here truly believe that this is God's word, you would have no love for the world. You'll have no love for the fashions of this world. Your life would be completely changed.

But I tell you, you don't believe it. You don't believe it's the word of God. It's just a good book.

Jesus was a good teacher. But you don't believe this book. The Bible says when Jesus ascended, he ascended to the right hand of the father.

Why? The Bible says for us, for you, for me. That's why he ascended, with a purpose. And I'd like us to read that in Hebrews chapter 7. Well, let's read 9 verse 24 first and then chapter 7 verse 25.

9 verse 24. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Verse 24.

For us. Did you know that? He gave his Holy Spirit. And he didn't leave it there.

He didn't say that's enough. No, the Bible says he went into heaven. To the holy of holies.

To appear there for you and for me. What does he do there? Chapter 7 verse 25. Therefore, he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Verse 25. To make intercession for them. For who? For those who come to him.

Friends, have you ever thought of that? That Jesus Christ intercedes for you. That's why he ascended to the father. That's why he's at the right hand of the father today.

He sent his Holy Spirit. To dwell in us. To give us power.

But that's not all. He intercedes for you and for me. He appears for you and for me at the right hand of the father.

How can I tell you why I say we don't believe? Because we make excuses time and again for our failures. We say, oh, I'm weak. Oh, I can't.

It's not possible. I've tried. No, no, brother, sister.

The problem is you don't believe. Do you want to tell me that the prayers of Jesus Christ mean nothing, avail nothing, have no power? He prays for you. He intercedes for you.

Remember when Peter sinned. Before Peter sinned. Jesus said to Peter.

Simon Peter. The devil has desired to sift you like wheat. He says, but I have prayed for you that your faith will not fail.

And his prayer was heard. Yes, Peter stumbled. But Jesus prayed for him.

And Peter got straight up. When his eyes met Jesus, when he realized what he had done, when the cock crowed. He wept bitterly.

And he stood up. And he served the Lord right to his death. Why? Because Jesus prayed for him.

Yes, he stumbled. Yes, brother, sister, you can also stumble. I can stumble.

But when Jesus prays for you. You will not fall and stay in your sin. Because he prays for you.

And his prayer is effective. This is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, he is able to save you to the uttermost.

What a wonderful word. To the uttermost. Not halfway.

Not 99%. He is able to save you to the uttermost. It does not matter if your problem is lust, or anger, or jealousy, or gossip.

To the uttermost. You know what that means? Completely. He can change you completely.

He can set you free completely. To the uttermost means completely and forever. Not for a short time.

Not for six months. Not for six years. To the end.

He is able to save. He is able. He who today is at the right hand of the Father.

Praying for you. Interceding for you. If you come to him.

He is able to save those who come to God through him. There is no distinction made. There is nobody chosen who is not allowed to come.

Those who come. Them he will save. Those who come to God.

With their sin. With their problems. With their weakness.

With all of their confusions. He is able to save. To the uttermost.

That is what our ascended Jesus does for us. Because he always intercedes for them. Friends, do we know this Jesus? Do we believe him? Do you believe him? Do you know, do you believe that Jesus intercedes for you today at the right hand of the Father? If you do.

And you look at your life. And you look at your spiritual state. Then, do you really believe? Or maybe you don't believe.

Just look at this. He'll give us the Holy Spirit. And when he comes.

You will receive power. That's only one side. Great is what it is.

Without it we cannot live. The Holy Spirit with us. The power of the Holy Spirit upon us.

Dwelling in us. In our bodies. His temple.

The Holy Spirit of God. And at the same time. The Son of God.

Interceding for you and for me. That's a double blessing. That's double the power that we thought.

Now what kind of people should we be? If this is true. Or isn't it? Maybe it's not true. Maybe we're believing a lie.

But friends if it is true. What kind of people should we be? There's no excuse. There's no excuse to say oh I'm weak.

To be weak is an advantage. Don't you remember Paul? When he cried to the Lord. He had a thorn in the flesh.

He said oh God deliver me. I don't know what that thorn in the flesh was. The Afrikaans Bible says.

It was a messenger of Satan. Sent to beat him up with his fists. That's how the Afrikaans Bible says it.

So it was something difficult. And Paul cried out to the Lord three times. And the Lord said to him.

My grace is sufficient for you. Because my strength is made perfect. In your weakness.

You know what Paul did? He didn't go and sit in a corner. He didn't go and tell all the disciples how tough life is. He didn't say oh well I'm weak and God said I'm weak.

He didn't use his weakness as an excuse to sin. You know what Paul did? He says I rejoice in my weakness. He says I'd rather be weak.

Because then the power of God can be manifest through me. So weakness is no excuse for sin. Weakness is an opportunity for God's power.

There's no excuse. What excuses have we got? Christian what excuse have you got not to live for the Lord with all your heart? What excuse do you make for your sin? For your anger? For your irritability? For your unfriendliness and unkindness? For your bitterness? For your grudges that you've got? Are we full of excuses? We say this and this is the reason why I am like I am. Oh it's my past.

Oh the way my parents treated me. Ah it's apartheid. And it's this.

And it's the Germans. And we suffered. Nonsense.

Those are useless excuses. Unless you're an unbeliever then it's a good excuse. But if you believe.

As the scripture says. Friend you should be a bright and a shining light. If Jesus rose from the dead.

If he ascended to the Father. If he sent the Holy Spirit. If he intercedes for you and me.

My goodness we should be different. The church should be a mighty army. He gave gifts to the church.

To equip the church. We should be a mighty force in this world. But oh we look at the church.

Weak. No power. Living in sin.

Full of worldliness. No power from God. Why? We don't believe.

As the scripture says. Now brethren do we believe what the bible says? Do you believe this morning? Do you believe that Jesus sent the comforter? Do you believe that he sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost? Do you believe it? Then I ask you the next question. Do you have the Holy Spirit? Do you have the power of

the Holy Spirit? Answer the question to God.

And if you say no. Then dear friend you're in trouble. Why not? What hinders you? Oh you say you know there's still things in my life.

You'll die with those things in your life. Jesus will return. One day.

And dear friend if he finds you with those things in your life. You're damned. You lost.

Today is the day. Paul says don't receive the grace of God in vain. He says today is the day of salvation.

Not tomorrow. Deal with those things. How can you continue to live like this? Do you think God's going to do something special? After what he's done? After what he's doing today in heaven? Do you believe? That the Holy Spirit came? Then dear friend can you say he's mine? I experience his power.

That's why I'm a witness. I can tell people. I can tell people look what he's done.

I was once a pervert. I was once a wicked man. But look what he's done.

I was once bound. But now I'm free. Because of the power of the Holy Spirit.

I was once a liar and a thief. Look what he's done. I was once a nasty angry man.

My family couldn't live with me. But look what he's done. I'm a witness.

Of what Jesus Christ has done. Have you got that? If not. Then you must ask yourself why not? Because the promise is to you.

And to your children the Bible says. And to as many as are of far off generations. But it's not for the chosen few.

It's for those who come to God. Through Jesus Christ. Have you come? Have you come to God? Friends that's a very real question.

I don't ask if you've come to church. I can see you're in church. Have you come to God? The most high.

The one whom you offended. The one against whom you've rebelled. Have you come to God? Through Jesus Christ.

Because there's no other way. You cannot slaughter goats. You cannot come to him in any other way.

You cannot pay for him. No you've got to come to him. Through the death and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And if you come. Just look how simple the gospel is. There's nothing complicated.

You just have to come. That's all. Just like that.

Say oh no I want to do something else. Why don't you just come? But come to God. Come in truth.

Come with all your heart. Don't come to bluff people. Don't come to fool others.

To God. The living God. All you need to do is to come.

He's not going to ask you to pay something. He's not going to rob you of something. The word says he'll save you to the uttermost.

The uttermost. To the end. In Jude.

The Bible says. And to him who is able to keep you from falling. And to present you faultless.

Before his presence with exceeding great joy. I said in the beginning that. There's great rejoicing in heaven when Jesus came back.

And so it should be. And so it is. When every child of God.

Goes to be with the Lord. Our arrival in heaven. Will be with exceeding great joy.

Because Jesus Christ. Our Lord and our Savior. He is able to save us.

We will be his trophies. That which he died for. That what he suffered for.

And when we arrive in heaven. There will be exceeding great joy. Some of us think.

You know I'm just going to make it. Some of us live a life where we say. Will I make it? Won't I make it? Am I going to be saved or not? Will I ever be faithful to the end? You don't believe the scriptures.

The Bible says. He is able. You are not able.

And I am not able. That means we'll never get there. But if we trust in this God.

If we trust in this Jesus. Who intercedes for us. Who promises.

To save us to the uttermost. Then we'll enter there. With exceeding great joy.

And then death to a Christian. Shouldn't be a terrifying thing. If you read the New Testament.

You read Paul's writings and Peter's. And the other apostles. They looked forward to the coming of Jesus.

They lived for it. That was their hope. That great day.

When there will be a shout. When the trumpet will sound. When they will be saved to the uttermost.

When they will enter that place. With exceeding great joy. They lived for that.

It gave them joy. When they were in prison. They never got depressed.

They weren't down. Nothing got them down. Because they looked for that great day.

When they would be saved to the uttermost. They knew this Jesus. Oh it's a wonderful gospel.

This is a great day. But oh. Friend.

You can go out of this hall. As miserable as you came in. You might have come in here a rebel.

And you'll go out a worse rebel here. You could have come in here depressed because of your sin. And you can go out the same.

A misery. A problem to people. And nuisance to the church.
Or you can believe. And you can come to God through Jesus. Jesus Christ.
And you can leave this place. A new creation. Completely changed.
Not half. You know we don't believe. In the time of George Whitefield.
Great man of God. They say when he preached. Sometimes he would preach in the open air.
He would go and preach. At the royal show. Just to give you an example.
At the royal show. While the royal show is on. He preached right there.
And they say the people repented. Those who owned the beer gardens. They repented right there.
They closed the beer garden. They got rid of all the alcohol. They turned the beer garden into a church.
In one day. Not one year. They didn't repent gradually.
When they believed. Friends it was a life changing experience. Prostitutes got converted.
Never to go back. Their lives changed in one day. This morning they were whoring around.
And this afternoon they were saints in the church. We don't believe that do we? No. Those are just stories in books.
No we say give it time. Give me time I'm busy with my life. You're fooling around with God.
That's what you're doing. You're not busy sorting out your life. Sort it out and get over with it.
That you can be filled with this power. With this life. With joy.
Joy unspeakable. Seven days a week. To the end.
That's the gospel. Anything less than that. I don't want.
Now may God help us. That we'll look to Jesus. Don't look at yourself.
Don't look at your weaknesses. Don't make excuses. Come to God.
Through Jesus Christ. And he'll change your life completely. Oh if we'd only believe it.
May God help us. Let's pray. Lord Jesus we marvel at so great a gospel.
Oh Lord thank you. Thank you for so great a salvation. Thank you for what you've done for us.
Thank you for your Holy Spirit. For the power that you give us. To be your witnesses.
Thank you Lord Jesus that you entered. The holy place on our behalf. Today you are at the right hand of the father.
Thank you that you intercede for us. Thank you Lord that you intercede for everyone who comes to you.
All we have to do is to come.

Without money. Without goats. Without cows.

Without chickens. We don't need anything. We just need to come.

Oh thank you Jesus for so great a salvation. You know us Lord. Everyone that is here.

Won't you work. Through your Holy Spirit. Lord where there are people who have unbelief.

Won't you destroy that unbelief. Because it's a work of the devil. Oh Lord we need you.

We are your church. You gave us all these gifts. So that the church can grow.

So that it can be equipped to be a mighty force in this world. To win the Muslims. To win the atheists.

To be a witness in this world. Oh Lord work in our midst. Glorify your great name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3999.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-powys/christ-interceding-for-us/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net