

The Ascension



The Ascension shouts “Jesus is Alive!” The ascension is the most overlooked aspect of the gospel but is vital to our faith. After His death and resurrection, Jesus took His rightful place at the right hand of God. As the Exalted One, Jesus continues to uphold and fulfill every aspect of His atoning work. Jesus is alive and actively completing the work that redeems God’s people as His own possession. We need to remember and meditate on the living Christ in heaven.

There are two amazing truths that I want to focus on in this devotion.

First, Jesus intercedes for us.

“Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25

Jesus saves to the uttermost! Uttermost means to the highest degree. Jesus’ mercy and grace and forgiveness are to the highest degree. It’s not that we are just barely saved or that there is just enough grace to cover our sin. Jesus’ sacrifice and on-going application of His grace is to the highest degree, more than enough to save us! Jesus’ death on the cross took our punishment and removed the wrath of God from all who put their faith and hope in Him. But He also continues His work as our Savior and Lord. He **always lives to make intercession** for us. Jesus prays for us. Jesus pleads to God the Father on our behalf as our Savior and Lord. Dane Ortlund says, “Intercession is the constant hitting ‘refresh’ of our justification in the court of heaven”. This is the on-going work of applying the saving grace He provided on the cross. He is continually applying the grace we need moment to moment as He talks to the Father on our behalf. He **always** is praying for us.

How does this apply to your daily interactions?

- How does this change your thinking in the difficult moments of the day for you?
- How might it change the way you think and feel about a disappointing conversation or a difficult moment with your spouse, child, boss, or friend?
- How might you respond differently when you are tempted to be angry or anxious?
- How does this encourage you when you are alone?

Second, Jesus is our advocate.

“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1

Jesus not only prays for us all the time, but when we sin, He is also our advocate. Where an intercessor stands between two parties, an advocate takes one party's side and they approach the other together. An advocate is someone who speaks in favor of you or recommends you publicly. Jesus continues the on-going work of salvation every single time we sin. It's not that God the Father continues to need His wrath removed from His children, but the heart of Christ (and God the Father) is so for His children that He continues to work on our behalf. Jesus continues to extend the mercy and grace we need actively throughout our lives. When we sin, Jesus is right there speaking in favor of us as His own. We are encouraged to grow in our holiness at the beginning of 1 John 2:1. “I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.” But God wants us to truly know His heart for us. God continues to rescue and move toward us even in our sin. God the Father continues to provide for us. When we sin, **“we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous.”** If you are in Christ, you are covered by the Righteous One and He speaks on your behalf.

How does this apply to your everyday life?

- When you sin, do you realize Jesus is your advocate, right then and there?
- Are you tempted to try to hide sin and not run to His throne for grace and mercy?
- How does this encourage you to repent quickly when you sin and to work to put off that nagging sin in your life?
- How might this change your response when your spouse, child, boss, or co-worker sins against you?

Jesus always lives to make intercession for you. And when you sin, Jesus is your advocate. Celebrate how much Jesus loves you and the way He saves you to the uttermost because He is alive today and forever!