



Sermon Discussion Questions  
05-17-26

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Sermon Series: 40 Days of Easter  
Week 5: Why the Ascension Matters

1. ICE BREAKER: The message opened with a bunch of unusual holidays like National No Pants Day and Hug an Australian Day. If you could create your own completely ridiculous holiday, what would it be called and how would people celebrate it?
2. Read our Scripture for this week, Acts 1:1-11:

*<sup>1</sup>In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup>until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with<sup>[a]</sup> water, but in a few days you will be baptized with<sup>[b]</sup> the Holy Spirit."*

*<sup>6</sup>Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"*

*<sup>7</sup>He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

<sup>9</sup> After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

<sup>10</sup> They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. <sup>11</sup> "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

What stands out to you most in this passage? What questions do you have about the ascension of Jesus after reading it?

3. The sermon described Ascension Day as one of the most overlooked Christian holidays.

Before this message, how familiar were you with the ascension of Jesus? Why do you think this event is often overlooked compared to Christmas, Good Friday, or Easter?

4. The main idea of the message was: *"The ascension is about access."*

When you hear the word "access," what comes to mind? How does it change your perspective to think of Jesus giving you access to God rather than making you earn your way to Him?

5. The message taught that through Jesus we have access to the presence of God the Father. Read Hebrews 4:14, 16, *"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess...Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*

What keeps people from approaching God with confidence? What would it look like for you to more fully live like someone who already has access to God?

6. Because of the Ascension, we also have access to the prayers of Jesus. Read Hebrews 7:25, *"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them,"* and Romans 8:34, *"Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."*

How does it affect you emotionally or spiritually to think about Jesus actively interceding for you? Have you ever thought about prayer less as "sending prayers up" and more as praying *with* Jesus? How might this idea change your prayer practice?

7. Finally, the Ascension gives believers access to the power of the Holy Spirit. Read Acts 2:33, *"Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear."* The Holy Spirit empowers us to experience the love of Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did.

Which of these do you most need in your life right now? Why?

8. Pastor Trevor ended by encouraging us: *"Use your access. Don't waste your backstage pass."*

What is one area of your spiritual life where you may not be fully using the access Jesus has already given you? What practical step could you take this week to grow in that area?

9. PRACTICE: Think about the phrase, "Jesus is praying for me!" Write it down, either in your journal, on a piece of paper, or in the notes app of your phone - anywhere that you can see it.

Have someone in your group put on some prayerful music, and spend a few moments meditating on this phrase. Then, ask Jesus, "How are you praying for me?"

Jot down the first few things that come to mind.

Once everyone has finished, share at your table what you felt Jesus might have shared with you from His prayer list for you!