

# Ascension Sunday 2019

In the course of church history, Calvary Chapel is still a very young movement. We were founded in the charismatic fire of the Jesus movement and we continue to press forward with the same ideals of the Jesus movement that made us distinctive as a church movement.

We realize our distinctiveness somewhat separates us from our older brother and sister churches who over the centuries have built a strong liturgical calendar.

We tend to keep to two liturgical dates in our church calendar: Christmas and Easter, but today is another date in the church calendar that exhorts us to stop and ponder a great event in our history: The Ascension of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Acts gives us the calendar date of our celebration.

According to Acts 1:3 Jesus appeared to His followers for forty days after His resurrection: Therefore this Thursday was 40 days from our Resurrection Sunday.

So its my heart and desire to share with you the meaning and importance of the event of Jesus' Ascension into heaven and what it means for today's church.

Acts is usually called in your bible the acts of the apostles, better understood to be the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

It is the historical record of the Holy Spirit BIRTHING the church for the first 30 years.

Oftentimes called the "5th Gospel" because of its continuation of all four Gospels in Scripture even to today.

Matthew ends with His Resurrection (Acts1)

Mark ends with His Ascension (Acts1)

Luke ends with His Promised Holy Spirit (Acts1)

John ends with His promised Second coming (Acts1:11)

**Acts is the Tonic for the realm of the Holy Spirit in our lives. - MLJ.**

I want the Holy Spirit to revitalise my relationship with Him, same with this church.

This is why the Ascension is important for these reasons:

1. The Ascension cements Christ's Resurrection
2. Jesus Ascension is better because of the promised Holy Spirit
3. Jesus' Ascension was a revealer of His Kingdom
4. Jesus Ascension reveals His present work today

**Acts 1:1-3 (ESV): In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3 He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.**

V.1 All that Jesus BEGAN to do and teach. His ministry to His people is not done! He is not finished with His church.

The wording here expresses that the works of the Holy Spirit in the books of Acts was a continuation of the works of Jesus through HIS Bride the church, because of the Active ministry of the Holy Spirit in them.

Application: The same Holy Spirit is in us! Calvary Chapel in Santa Maria CA has a purpose and a place in the redemptive history of God, and its

through the work of the Holy Spirit in us and through us!

All of this stems from Jesus proving to those witnesses that He was indeed alive. His resurrection was the complete work of salvation on the cross. Meaning DEATH was DEFEATED.

This is why we believe that the Ascension CEMENTED His resurrection. He ascended into heaven, He did not continue living on earth to die again later on. This is the difference between Jesus' coming back to life and Lazarus' coming back to life.

Also notice, what was His post-resurrection message: the Kingdom of God, we will come back to this in a bit.

**Acts 1:4-5 (ESV): And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."**

Here we come to the 2nd reason the Ascension of Jesus was important: It was necessary in order for the Holy Spirit to come.

We don't want to get it twisted that When Jesus is doing something, the Father and the Holy Spirit are not:

Rather we see the Trinity participating together in the birth of the church all according to the promised plan of God the Father:

The Father promised it

The Son secured it

The Holy Spirit birthed it.

It was better that Jesus go, because of the Holy Spirit dwelling in believers, building the bride of Christ, His church:

**John 16:4-11 (ESV): "I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with**

**you. 5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.**

Luke in His gospel gives the same promise with different wording:

**Luke 24:46-49 (ESV): and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."**

Notice the two words that He uses for the coming Holy Spirit:

1. Baptism (Acts)
2. Clothing (Luke)

Both are words that visualize:

Covering: With the Holy Spirit, no part of you would be disconnected from the loving relationship of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism: immersion, rather more specifically it is immersion that brings a change: Funny sounding a bit, but there is the idea of being pickled. You put a cucumber into a brine, you pull it out and its a pickle.

Through the immersion of the Holy Spirit there is the promise that the Holy Spirit would never leave you or forsake you.

What is demanded of the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit? WAIT and SEEK. The last thing we as a culture want to do today.

**Acts 1:6-7 (ESV): So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.**

I Corinthians 15 tells us that during these 40 days Jesus was seen by over 500 people, and the forefront of His mouth was wait for the promised Holy Spirit.

However these people were focused on an earthly kingdom.

Notice the language: "restore" meaning to bring something back to the way it was. These Jews were remembering the kingdom of David and Solomon, they were remembering the Hasmonean dynasty of the Maccabees, conquering over the tyranny of the Greeks, WILL JESUS NOW CONQUER THE TYRANNY OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE?

Jesus' proclamation to them was that through the Holy Spirit, He was going to create something so much greater than a physical, political kingdom, but rather a Kingdom of ETERNAL POWER, that can only come from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

When we talk about the Kingdom of God, we are not talking about a political party. Politics are important, but one day politics will cease, and we will be under one government alone, and there will never be a need to debate who is going to rule.

The disciples view of the kingdom was too shallow.

Application: In the age of facebook and social media, can I ask you a self-evaluating question? What are you MOST known for? Are you known more for what you are against? Or what you are for? Does your activity reveal a nature more akin to a political party or more akin to your citizenship in heaven?

Are you winning the argument of political discourse while losing your opponents soul to eternity? "Well at least we won the argument."

Does your profile reveal your greatest affection? Does Jesus rule your activity?

I'm not talking about, the do you love Jesus? Retweet to show that you do? What a bunch of junk.

**John Piper: "One of the great uses of Twitter and Facebook will be to prove at the Last Day that prayerlessness was not from lack of time."**

Let us CCSM be known for our allegiance to the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Christ's kingdom is not a restoration of the good ol days, but of the best days we have never seen before!

His kingdom rests and reigns in the hearts of believers.

**John Stott: "The Kingdom of God is set up in the ruling of His peoples' lives. His testimony is spread by witnesses, not soldiers, He brings a Gospel of peace, not war, His is the work of the Holy Spirit, not a force of arms.**

**Acts 1:8-11 (ESV): But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." 9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, 11 and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken**

**up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."**

Jesus' usage of words were not assumptions or if's, but rather WHEN the Holy Spirit come YOU WILL receive power.

It's a guarantee to those who belong to Christ's Kingdom. If you are part of this church then the Holy Spirit is accessible to you?

I Corinthians 14 says we are to pursue love and eagerly desire the spiritual gifts that come from the Holy Spirit.

Not "I'm open to the Holy Spirit if He wants to empower me." Illustrate: "I'm open to loving my wife. If thats the case brother you ain't getting no love later."

PURSUE: HUNT DOWN!  
EAGERLY DESIRE: WAITING ON HIM UNTIL HE SPEAKS,  
UNTIL HE EMPOWERS!

These were Jesus' last words of encouragement to His people!

V.9 He proclaimed His kingdom and promise His Spirit. His work was complete.

Question to ask: Well what happened with Jesus after He disappeared into the clouds?

Daniel 7 is a prophetic vision of Jesus entering into His kingdom.

Daniel 7:13-14 (ESV): I saw in the night visions,  
and behold, with the clouds of heaven  
there came one like a son of man,  
and he came to the Ancient of Days  
and was presented before him.

14 And to him was given dominion  
and glory and a kingdom,  
that all peoples, nations, and languages  
should serve him;  
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

which shall not pass away,  
and his kingdom one  
that shall not be destroyed.

Bid the gates raise their lintels to receive Him whose stature is now exalted by virtue of His passion. To those who are now in doubt because He bears in His ascension a body and tokens of His passions, which He had not when He came down, and therefore enquire, Who is this King of Glory? Reply that it is the Lord, Strong and mighty. - Gregory of Nazianus

Jesus now sits on the throne of God, God - Man. Humanity and Diety in perfection through His work making the throne of God a throne of grace and not of Judgment. He sits in victory making intercession for the citizens of His kingdom to God the Father.

**Hebrews 7:25-26 (ESV): 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.**

**26 For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.**

Jesus' Ascension means so much more than we think!