
Sermon Notes

October 22, 2023

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Ascended and Seated Romans 8:31-39

Overlooked and Neglected

- ❖ It is likely that no part of Christ's ministry is more overlooked and neglected than His ascension from earth to heaven
 - we gloss over the immense blessings and benefits God gives us as Jesus consummates His redemptive work
 - there is monumental importance, implication and relevance to the words of the Apostles' Creed that say: **"He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty."**
- ❖ A "hinge-point" in the Creed
 - at the moment of Christ's exaltation, as the Father welcomes Him back to His throne of glory, we move from past history to present reality
 - the culmination of NT history and the focal point of much OT prophecy
 - the reality that Jesus is seated in heaven directly impacts our daily lives
 - it effects my view of life
 - it connects heaven and earth, time and eternity, past history with the present moment

King and Judge

- ❖ The kingdom of God comes to its fullest realization yet as Jesus returns to heaven and is coronated as the eternal Messiah-King
- ❖ Without His ascension and this moment of His coronation, Jesus could not be King
- ❖ The seating of Christ at the right hand of God highlights the reality of Christ's present reign and His continuing work on behalf of believers
 - Jesus' physical absence is necessary if even better blessings than His followers have already received are to come (John 16:7)
 - according to Jesus, the quality of fellowship you can enjoy with Him today is even better than the privilege enjoyed by the face-to-face fellowship He shared with His original disciples
- ❖ Jesus' is seated ("in session")
 - Jesus' priestly work is finished (Hebrews 10:11-12)
 - taking His rightful seat points to the authority Jesus possesses as King of kings and Lord of lords
 - God the Father confirms Christ's sacrifice and subjects the universe to His rule
 - any human authority (government) is delegated authority from heaven to earth
 - for Christ's sake, His followers submit to earthly rulers and governments in so far as they do not forbid them from doing what God commands or command them to do what God forbids

- ❖ The right hand of God is the seat of ultimate authority, a place of royal and judicial position

Mediator

- ❖ The One who is our Judge is **also** our Mediator, our defense attorney!
 - Jesus prays continually for those who are united to Him in faith
 - like a defense attorney, Jesus stands and steps forward as sentence is passed on Stephen, the church's first martyr (Acts 7:54-56)
- ❖ Jesus makes perpetual intercession on behalf of all whom God adopts into His family through their faith in Him
 - a source of comfort for the believer
 - whatever you face, you are not alone
 - all day, every day, if you are in Christ, His prayers for you never stop!
- ❖ All the incredible promises of Romans 8:31-39 belong to every single one of God's adopted children because of the ongoing work of the ascended Lord on their behalves
 - Jesus' ministry to Peter on the night before His own crucifixion
 - ***I have prayed for you*** (Luke 22:31-32)
 - because of Jesus' prayer, Peter is able to strengthen others despite his monumental sin and tragic failure
- ❖ If you belong to Him, the risen, ascended, exalted Christ ***always lives to make intercession*** for you! (Hebrews 7:25)
 - Christ is where you need Him most when trouble and difficult circumstances enter your life

- Jesus' prayer in John 17 shows what's on Jesus' prayer list for all His followers throughout history
- such prayers of Christ are bedrock for your
 - growing in grace
 - renewing your mind
 - being changed from one degree of glory to another

There's More!

- ❖ Jesus' ascension and session are necessary prerequisites before the outpouring of Holy Spirit can occur on Pentecost
 - Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as ***another Helper*** (John 14:16)
 - the Holy Spirit is not someone totally new and different, He is like Jesus and He continues to build on the relationship and work Jesus begins
- ❖ At Pentecost, a new era begins in which every Christ follower is uniquely empowered and equipped **BY** Christ to fulfill the missionary task He commands them to engage in as they seek to make disciples of all nations and teach all such disciples to faithfully and obediently submit to all Jesus commands
 - Acts 1:8 are words that contain both a promise and an assignment
 - faith and action unite in our lives because of the Holy Spirit's presence and power
 - the ascended Jesus promises that He will come again and bring us to a place of eternal fellowship and communion with Himself and His Father (John 14:3)