

John 14; Lord's Day 18
I BELIEVE IN JESUS' ASCENSION

- I. The history.
 - A. Jesus' ascension anticipated: Heb. 9:11,12, prophesied (Ps. 68:18), foretold by Jesus (John 20:17).
 - B. When Jesus ascended a cloud actively received Him out of the disciples' sight (Acts 1:9).
 - C. This change of the location of His human nature marks progress in Jesus' exaltation.
 - 1. He ascended because He finished the work He came to do on earth (John 17:4; Heb. 1:3).
 - 2. Jesus said, "I go to My Father" (John 14:2,3,12; 16:10,28); and the heart of heaven is that it is where God reveals Himself most clearly: His throne and glory (Heb. 9:24).
 - D. The ascension marks Jesus as the High Priest presenting His perfect sacrifice to the Father (Heb. 10:11,12).
- II. Jesus' activity in heaven shows that it was "expedient" (John 16:7), i.e., for the advantage and good of His people.
 - A. First, His priestly work is to serve as our advocate before the Father (I John 2:1).
 - B. Second, He is our intercessor, constantly praying for blessings to be given to us for our sanctification (Heb. 7:25).
 - C. Third, He is able to be with us in a much close sense.
- III. His ascension brings spiritual benefits to us.
 - A. He ascended as the Bridegroom (John 14:2) and so He could send the Holy Spirit, Comforter (John 7:39; 16:7).
 - B. It is a cause of great joy (though the disciples were initially saddened).
 - C. In essence the church ascended with Him (our Head) and sits with Him in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6).
 - D. Practical benefits for us.
 - 1. Our human nature (exalted in Christ) is as a magnet drawing us there (Heb. 6:19,20).
 - 2. As Jesus was other-worldly, so now those who believe in Christ are in this world, but are not of it.