

What Is He Doing Up There?

1. **Sending Us His Spirit**
2. **Giving Us Hope for Our Inheritance**
3. **Ruling All Things for Our Good**

Introduction

- What doing? What up to? Ascension: celebrate how 40 days after res, after finished work, went back up. But wonder: better if stayed? Have him: preach, teach; we could touch, hold, hug, come to him with problems, ask for help, confess directly to him; actually see Savior. Know we'll see again when returns or raises us. But sometimes wonder: better if stayed. But didn't; ascended back into heaven. Leads me to ask: what doing?

Sending Us His Spirit

- Find answer in 2nd lesson, from Eph 1. Words written by Paul to Christians just like us, living between ascension and return on Last Day, wondering same thing we are: what doing?
- First, sending us his Spirit. **Vs. 17.** Says Father sends Spirit. Remember Jesus & Father are one. **"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9). "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" (Jn 14:11). "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30).** Jesus is one with God the Father. So, when **vs. 17,** means Jesus in heaven is also sending us his Spirit, so that we may know God better. Jesus promised to send Holy Spirit: **"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me" (Jn 15:26).** What doing? First, sending us his Holy Spirit so that we can know God better.
- One awesome example: Pentecost, 50 days (following Sunday). Remember: loud rushing sound of wind, tongues of fire, languages, many believers came to know God better. Pentecost awesome example of Jesus sending Spirit.
- Today, still, maybe not in ways so dramatic. Jesus has quiet, consistent ways of sending Spirit today. Through Word (school newsletter, Bible reading challenge); worship (church!); through Sacraments; baptism (**"He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" Titus 3:5**) (baby, any person); Lord's Supper (communion unity with Jesus and one another).
- That's how sends Spirit! This is what Jesus is doing up there.

Giving Us Hope for Our Inheritance

- **Vs. 18 ("eyes of heart").** So, rich & glorious inheritance we look forward to. Inheritance – things receive when person dies (Grandpa's hunting knife). When Jesus died, left inheritance: eternal life with Jesus in heaven. Hope – not just yet; for future. Not wishy-washy hope; sure & certain hope: rise to life in res and live with Jesus in heaven! This is our inheritance that we hope for: heaven!
- Why ascended: give hope in inheritance; what he's doing up there right now. John 14: **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."** Want to know what doing? This! Getting heaven ready for you! Prepping place for you to spend eternity with him. Just this morning, Cat class, what heaven like: not sit on cloud, choir practice all day. Perfect place so far beyond our comprehension that God doesn't give all details of what heaven will be like. Just says we'll be with Jesus. That's inheritance we hope for. Right now in heaven, Jesus is filling us with hope for that inheritance.

Ruling All Things for Our Good

- “[God] raised Christ...heavenly realms,” (seated as king on throne in heaven), “far above all...one to come,” (no one/person/name/anything can rise above or equate to Christ). **Vs. 22a**, (Jesus in charge of all things, everywhere). Pretty royal, regal words for Jesus! Language: coronation language. Know what a coronation is? Bet you do. Smile if seen Frozen. Remember time Else got all dressed up, went to hall with choir, had guy hand her staff and ball thing. Coronation – crowned queen. So you know what coronation is: special ceremony or event when someone crowned king or queen.
- Jesus’ ascension is like his coronation ceremony, when returns to heaven, sits on throne, and God crowns him King. That’s why we make a big deal out of Ascension: Jesus returns to throne as king. And as king, he’s ruling all things for our good. **Vs. 22b**. And we are “church” – all Christians are. So means: Jesus is ruling all things for our good. No matter what happens: tears joy/sadness; heart happiness/broken; celebrating new life/mourning death; crushed with guilt/peace of forgiveness; life easy/hard – no matter what happens to you in your life, your King Jesus is ruling all things for your good and good of his church. **Vs. 22b**. “**If God is for us...**” (**Rom 8:31**). “**We know that in all things...**” (**Rom 8:28**). “**For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able...Christ Jesus our Lord**” (**Rom 8:38-39**), who ascended into heaven 40 days after rising from dead, and who now rules all things (big/little/all) for our good!

Conclusion

- Want to know why make big deal out of Ascension; why worship on this special Thursday evening? Want to know why left this earth to return to heaven; what he’s doing up there? Here’s what: sending us his Spirit; giving us hope for our inheritance; ruling all things for our good.
- Heard it said: when Jesus came to earth at birth, never really left heaven; when returned to heaven at Ascension, never really left earth. Fancy way of saying Jesus is always everywhere. “**Surely I am with you...**” Jesus is always with us, even if no longer walks the planet. So on this festival of Asc, as you see Jesus rise above clouds, I want you to realize: it’s okay he’s up there. He’s getting you ready for you to be up there, too.

Ephesians 1:16-23 (NIV)

¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.