

Sunday, May 25 - Memorial Day Weekend/Ascension

Call to Worship: 297 “Spirit of the Living God”

Call to Worship Scripture: Acts 4:31

Opening Hymn: 272 “Crown Him with Many Crowns”

Prayerful Response 304 Sweet, Sweet Spirit

Luke 24:50-53

Title: Reflections on the Ascension

Closing Hymn: 756 “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory”

OUTLINE:

I want to share with you about a diary entry of my grandfather with a front row view of the end of WW1. My grandfather, Daniel Smeltz, was serving on the front line in France on November 11, 1918, when Germany surrendered and ended World War. He wrote in his diary about "The biggest day of my life." His story is fitting when reflecting on how the Lord departed and was carried up to heaven.

Reflections on the Ascension are in the final paragraph of Luke 24:50-53. This is the brief account of the Ascension of Christ before entering heaven. This is as He completed His ministry on earth. It's a significant event. It's far more _____ (**significant**) than what we give credit for. We should celebrate the death day of significant people which marks their accomplishments.

Jesus had His accomplishments written before He lived them. Nobody else can say that. We need to reflect on His Ascension and how He ended His earthly ministry transporting Himself to heaven in view of His followers.

Heaven _____ (**affirmed**) everything Jesus came to do. Luke began with His arrival and ended with His departure. These are bookends to His life and ministry. In between is His history written by Luke and the other Gospel writers. However, Luke only records the Ascension. He tells us about it at the end of Luke and in the beginning of Acts. There is a sequence to the writing of the Bible.

It's a massive miracle. Consider three things:

- 1) _____ (**The Event**).
- 2) _____ (**The Response**).
- 3) _____ (**It's Significance**).

What are the details of the Ascension? He led them out of Bethany. He blessed them. And He departed from them into heaven. Is it beyond comprehension? How do we explain and describe the Ascension? What's the context? This Ascension follows the Resurrection. He proved that He was alive from the dead previously.

Luke explains that the Lord did two things. In Acts 1:1 Luke fills in the details. So many things happened prior to the Ascension. A lot happened over forty days in Jerusalem. The Disciples had many _____ (**questions**) and wanted to know when. Luke gives us more information between the Resurrection of Jesus and until the Ascension. In explaining this miracle they were in Jerusalem (vs. 49). Bethany is a suburb of Jerusalem and south to Bethany on the back slope on the Mt of Olives (Acts 1:12). What happened at the Mt of Olives? So many events, situations, and fulfillments of Scripture.

The _____ (**blessing**) from Jesus on the people points them to heaven. What does it mean? He pledged to them blessings of grace, mercy, salvation, comfort and peace. Promises of Jesus are fulfilled. Jesus calmed all their fears and doubts. This is where the disciples finally get it. They finally understand all things about Scripture from Jesus. Joy filled their hearts. While Jesus blessed them, it took time, Jesus parted from them as He was carried up to heaven. Who else went to heaven without dying? _____ and _____.

When Jesus departs to heaven they watch (Acts 1:8 and 9). This is the last part of Jesus' blessing to charge them with a commission. Acts 1:10 is significant. What question? Why look into the sky? Who stood next to them? Why are you looking longingly as if you are losing someone?

Jesus _____ (**secured**) the complete faith and understanding of His followers to proclaim the message. Jesus went to the right hand of God to sit. His work is completed.

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