

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

05 February 2023

Where is Jesus? 2-5-2023

Text: "So then after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." *Mark 16:19*

The Church is in need of new life.

Each person is in need of new life.

The hope of the church is Christ himself.

The basic question is, Where is Jesus?

The answer to this question enables us to praise Jesus "The Christ" for his position now in God's eternal plan.

Mark 16:19 states: "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

Luke 24:50-51 states: "He led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

Acts 1:9-11 describes this scene again: "When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, You men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven."

All believers need to know two things.

Where is Jesus today and what is he doing?

Jesus' ascension was his homecoming.

He was coming home to his Father in heaven.

And I will add that it is the same for each of us when our time comes.

For I heard me tell Jesus that if he wanted me to I would come home, but if it was all the same to him I wanted to stay for it was just become fun here down here.

My life was just beginning to be enjoyable.

When Jesus returned home his glory was restored to him.

The glory he possessed when he created the world.

John 17:5 says, "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."

Jesus longed to be there.

In a parable, he compared himself with a landowner who traveled to a far country and later returned to reward his servants.

He talked of being "lifted up"; he talked about preparing a place for us; and he announced, "I go to my Father."

Jesus is exalted to the Father's right hand.

Mark 16:19 says that Jesus "sat at the right hand of God."

Peter proclaimed that Jesus is "by the right hand of God exalted."

In *Philippians 2:9-11* Paul concluded, "Wherefore God also has highly exalted him."

These are powerful Scriptures.

Ephesians 1:19-23 even more fully describes where Jesus is and what that means.

He is at the Father's right hand, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every

name that is named.”

This passage describes Jesus’ victory.

His work on earth is finished.

He had done all the Father told him to do.

He triumphed over Satan, sin, the world, the flesh, and death.

Jesus’ position at the Father’s right hand demonstrates his authority and sovereignty.

He is Lord of heaven and earth, the highest authority of all.

That is where Jesus is, so what is he doing in this position?

What is His ministry today?

Jesus is drawing people to himself.

According to *John 12:32* Jesus is drawing all people to himself.

This is his saving ministry.

He is not dragging people but magnetically drawing them.

He is doing this right now in the world through his Spirit, through his love, through his Word, and through his people.

From heaven he is drawing people on earth.

Jesus is interceding for people.

He stands between us and the Father.

Roman 8:34 says, “Christ Jesus who died, more than that, who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”

First John 2:1-2 teaches that Jesus Christ is our Advocate, our heavenly lawyer, our Counselor.

He represents us before the Father.

Satan accuses us to the Father and the Father to us, but Jesus represents our case before the Father.

What hope and encouragement this is.

Jesus is directing the church.

Ephesians 1:22-23 indicates that God “hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all.”

Jesus is the head of the body.

And the head leads the body, so Christ leads the church.

He is directing the ministry of the church.

As the head, Jesus is doing two thing for the church.

He is pouring out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He is imparting spiritual gifts to believers.

We are empowered by the Spirit to exercise our spiritual gifts in relation to other members of the church, all under Christ’s direction.

Jesus is preparing believers.

He is doing something in heaven.

John 14:2 says he is preparing a place for us, a heavenly home.

When our home is ready, he will call us to heaven.

In fact, he will come and escort us to heaven.

Jesus is sharing his power with us.

His desire for us is expressed in *John 17:24*: “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”

The reality of this desire is expressed in *Ephesians 2: 5-6*, where we are glorified in his likeness.

And in *Ephesians 1:19-22*, not only does Jesus have authority, but we also are given authority.

His victory is our victory.

As he is, so are we in this world.

All that Jesus has, we share with him.

All that he does, we do with him.

His new position and ministry in heaven are our new position and ministry on earth.
Christ's position in the heavenly realms is the basis of knowing victory in our Christian life.
We are in him.
We are identified with him.
This means victory over the world and every circumstance.
In him we live above the worldly circumstances.
In him is victorious living.
Living with purpose in the heavenly realms.
Accomplishing His will on earth as it is in heaven.
In Him!