

Jesus Christ's Resurrection and Ascension  
Class 7

**THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST**

J.I. Packer (“Concise Theology”), “*Christianity rests on the certainty of Jesus’ resurrection as a space-time occurrence in history. All four Gospels highlight it, focusing on the empty tomb and resurrection appearances.*”

Packer, “*Jesus’ resurrection demonstrated his victory over death (Acts 2:24; 1 Cor. 15:54-57), vindicated him as righteous (John 16:10), and indicated his divine identity (Romans 1:4). It lead to his ascension and enthronement (Acts 1:9-11; 2:34; Philippians 2:9-11) and his present heavenly reign. It guarantees the believer’s present forgiveness and justification (Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:17) and is the basis of resurrection life in Christ for the believer here and now (John 11:25-26; Romans 6; Ephesians 1:18-2:10; Colossians 2:9-15; 3:1-4).*

The Factual, Historical, and Doctrinal Nature and Character of Jesus’ Resurrection

1. The Gospel Accounts and the Resurrection of Jesus
  - 1) The resurrection accounts
  - 2) The post resurrection interviews
  - 3) The ascension
  
2. The Bible Declares Jesus Risen from the Dead.
  - 1) Jesus predicted His resurrection
  - 2) Scripture: Mark 8:31; 10:32-34; Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; Luke 9:22
  - 3) Scripture: Rebuilding the temple...John 2:19; Mark 14:58; Matthew 26:61
  
3. The Christian Doctrine of the Gospel Declares Jesus Risen from the Dead. The following four Christian ideas rest upon the physical, victorious, and redemptive resurrection of Jesus Christ:
  - 1) The veracity of the gospel concerning Christ’s saving work on the cross is at stake.

The resurrection validates and, in a way, certifies the saving work of Christ on the cross. The reason this is so is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ shows that the saving work of Christ on the cross was accepted by God the Father.
  
  - 2) The Lordship of Christ is in view.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ declares Jesus as Lord. His Lordship depends upon His victory over death in the resurrection. Without His Lordship, Jesus Christ is not the Savior that the Scripture presents Him to be. In the resurrection, the Lordship of Jesus Christ is manifested in the following ways:

    - (1) Jesus is Lord over death.
    - (2) Jesus is Lord over Satan and evil.
    - (3) Jesus is Lord over the church.
  
  - 3) Christ’s authority as the One who will bring the kingdom is in view.

Jesus’ resurrection shows that He brought, is bringing, and will bring the kingdom of God. His resurrection shows that He is the focal point of the kingdom, and it is by His saving power through the Holy Spirit that people are brought into the kingdom of God. This includes Jesus’ saving power to regenerate sinners.

- 4) The gospel promise of hope rests upon the resurrection of Christ. This includes four ideas:
  - (1) The coming of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost, forming the Church
  - (2) The transformation of lives in regeneration
  - (3) The Christian's heavenly home being prepared by Jesus
  - (4) The promise of world change and redemption

#### The Doctrinal Meaning of Jesus' Resurrection (1 Corinthians 15) (Six-fold meaning)

1. The resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of the Christian
2. The resurrection of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins
3. The resurrection of Jesus and the Christian's eternal hope
4. The resurrection of Jesus and the resurrected body
5. The resurrection of Jesus and the Christian's victory
6. The resurrection of Jesus and the daily inspiration for faithful service

All of these important ideas (fundamental ideas to the Christian experience and life) depend absolutely on Jesus Christ and His resurrection.

### **THE ASCENSION OF JESUS**

J.I. Packer ("Concise Theology"), *"Jesus foretold his ascension (John 6:62; 14:2, 12; 16:5, 10, 17, 28; 17:5; 20:17). Paul celebrated it and affirmed Christ's consequent lordship (Ephesians 1:20; 4:8-10; Philippians 2:9-11; 1 Timothy 3:16), and the writer of Hebrews applied this truth for encouragement of the fainthearted (Hebrews 1:3; 4:14; 9:24). The fact that Jesus Christ is enthroned as master of the universe should be of enormous encouragement to all believers."*

Packer, *"The ascension establishes three facts:*

1. *"Christ's personal ascendancy – Jesus went up to the place of power, pictured as a throne at the Father's right hand. To sit on such a throne...is to occupy the position of executive ruler on the monarch's behalf."*
2. *"Christ's spiritual omnipresence – In the heavenly sanctuary in heavenly Zion, Jesus is accessible to all who invoke him, and he is powerful to help them, anywhere in the world."*
3. *"Christ's heavenly ministry – The reigning Lord intercedes for his people...the essence of Christ's intercession is intervention in our interest (from his throne) rather than supplication on our behalf...In sovereignty he now lavishes upon us the benefits that his suffering won for us (Packer quotes B. F. Westcott, "He pleads for us by his presence on his Father's throne"; and also H. B. Swete, "Our Lord's life in heaven is his prayer"). From his throne he sends the Holy Spirit constantly to enrich his people and equip them for service."*

R. C. Sproul ("Essential Truths of the Christian Faith") writes in *"The significance of the Ascension is often overlooked in the modern church...It marks the moment of Christ's highest point of exaltation prior to his return. It is in the Ascension that Christ entered into his glory."*

#### The Ascension of Jesus

1. Scriptural Basis: Acts 1:9-11; 7:55-56; Luke 24:50-51; Ephesians 1:20-23
2. Six Christological Factors Identified with Christ's Ascension (note similarities with our discussion of Christ's resurrection):

- 1) The Ascension of Jesus and His Exaltation
- 2) The Ascension of Jesus as the Head of the Church
- 3) The Ascension of Jesus and His Mediation
- 4) The Ascension of Jesus and His Heavenly Preparations for His People
- 5) The Ascension of Jesus and His Victory over Evil and Death
- 6) The Ascension of Jesus and His Power to Redeem

We might think of the relationship of Christ's resurrection and ascension in the following way: Christ's glory is based on the resurrection and identified with the ascension. In other words, the ascension is the manifestation of the glory of Christ's resurrection, enabling Christ to fulfill His life and work achieved in the resurrection. This is very similar to the Second Coming of Christ; thus, Acts 1:11 connects the Ascension and the Second Coming.

#### Because Jesus is Resurrected and Ascended: A Summary

1. Jesus has all authority.
2. Jesus has all victory over sin, death, and evil.
3. Jesus is Savior of sinners who become believers applied worldwide.
4. Jesus is our eternal Hope for all that is meaningfully right, holy, loving, and joyful.
5. Jesus' resurrection, the ascension, and the Christian's union with Christ
6. Jesus' ascension and His power over Satan and evil

The Christian's union with Christ is based on Christ's victory and redemption in His resurrection and the ascension.

- 1) The ministry of the Holy Spirit is based on the resurrection and the ascension.
- 2) The doctrine of justification is based on the resurrection and the ascension.
- 3) The eternal hope of heaven for Christians is based on the resurrection and ascension.
- 4) The defeat of evil is based on the resurrection and ascension.

#### False Ideas concerning Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension

1. Spiritual resurrection in contrast to physical resurrection
2. Denial of physical resurrection
3. Failure to integrate the resurrection and ascension and its doctrinal and redemptive aspects to the gospel