**The Ascension is Cause for Joy**

*And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.* ***51*** *While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.* ***52*** *And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,* ***53*** *and were continually in the temple blessing God. (Luke 24:50-53, ESV)*

 Jesus’ Ascension is a cause for joy for every believer. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters as we bring up today the meaning of the Ascension event for us believers. Usually, we find that the same level of importance has not been given to Jesus rising up to heaven as, for example, the Lord’s crucifixion or resurrection. Today, however, we’re going to take a few moments to reflect on this indispensable event in Jesus’ life and Church history. Needless to say, Jesus’ Ascension has deep meaning both in the development and also the advance of the Church’s mission. Therefore, we’re going to talk today about why the Ascension is important.

 The Ascension of Christ, and the accompanying joy of His victory in His apostles, is a reason for our mission to be done joyfully. The Apostles perhaps would have been sad if the Lord had not promised them that the Spirit would come from heaven. But, praise the Lord, the Lord’s Promise was going to come already. On the contrary, they had a correct response to Jesus being separated from them and going up to heaven – they worshipped Him, believing in the truth that His Promise would be coming soon – in 10 days. They continued their faith-walk with hope and joy. Why? First, because they knew that the Lord’s Promise, who was the Holy Spirit, was going to be with them on their journey. They knew that He would be helping them to be ambassadors of Christ. Second, they were joyful because their Teacher and Lord had finally sat down on His Royal Throne as a victorious King, and that meant a victory for every believer over the Evil One, sin, and death. In a word, Ascension was an occasion for the apostles to rejoice in the Lord’s victory, to be strengthened with the Spirit, and to work with Him in their respective mission fields.

 Once, when an important legal hall was being built in England (called Temple Hall), the heads of the establishment wanted a clock with a motto to be put there. The mechanic in charge of that task had been waiting for several days, but becoming impatient, went to their specific area and pressured them to give him the right words to put on the clock. One of them got very angry with him and told him, “Go about your business.” The mechanic thought that those words were the motto, and put them on the clock, and it was allowed to remain there afterwards. If Christians would have for their motto, “Go about your Father’s business,” what great works would have been accomplished by now…

 The Apostles did not begin their Father’s work until after Jesus’ Ascension. Today it is a great joy for us that Jesus’ ascended to heaven, not only because it shows His victory, but also because His victory means our victory. Jesus sitting on His rightful throne means the establishment of His Kingdom (which is also ours) and its safety, since we are His adopted children thru faith. It now remains for us to praise the Lord like the Apostles did and to work with the Spirit as he nudges us, fills us, inspires us, and speaks and prays through us. Now that Jesus is sitting in glory, it is we that must continue His work by the help of the Spirit, wherever we find ourselves, whatever circles we are in, whomever our family members may be.

 Today, it may be that your circles are not open to hear about what Jesus has done. However, as long as you are doing the work of you King Jesus with the help of the Spirit, remember that you are doing a work for your already-victorious King. Remember that it is to Him that every human being is going to give an answer about their faith and the resulting works. Just stay faithful to spread the victorious invitation of Jesus to every person in your circle. Let them know that Jesus defeated both the power of sin and death, and that He rules joyfully from heaven. Let them know that even the devil himself can only succeed through deceitful means, because he lost all his legal grounds to oppress and rule over humanity because of Christ.

 Jesus has entered His joy. Today He is calling us to have that same joy and pass it on to others.

 We have all the above because Jesus ascended to heaven.

 Therefore, remember that: The Ascension of Christ, and the accompanying joy of His victory in His apostles, is a reason for our mission to be done joyfully. Jesus’ Ascension is a cause for joy for every believer. May the Lord give us the joy of the Ascension, so we are able to pass on that same victory to those around us. May the Lord bless you all. Amen.