

The Exaltation of Jesus Christ

1 Peter 3:21–22 (NKJV)

21 . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

In this passage we have a declaration of the exaltation of Jesus Christ.

God in Jesus humbled Himself and came to earth as a 100% human.

He lived a perfectly sinless life, being subject to both man and God.

He endured temptations that we experience yet without sinning.

Finally He was betrayed by the people He came to save and was delivered maliciously over to the Gentiles where He suffered horrible and appalling torture.

Finally He was led to Calvary where they administered what was considered the worst death devised by man.

He was hung between two thieves to associate Him with the guilty.

Finally He died under the wrath of God and became sin for us.

He was laid in a tomb, where the processes of decay and corruption would normally begin until the body would be consumed.

But He did not decay. But instead God raised Him from the dead and gave Him the position at His own right hand.

What does that all mean for us, and for mankind in general.

That is what we want to discuss today.

I. His resurrection and ascension.

A. The process of it.

1. Resurrections are rare but they had happened before
 - a. Under Elijah and Elisha.
 - b. Jesus had raised several people from the dead.
 - c. Even Peter and Paul had raised people from the dead.
2. But all those people would die again at the end of a normal life.
3. The God who created life can certainly restore life.
 - a. It must be realized that to take clay and make that clay live as a human being is much more difficult than returning life to a person that has recently died.

4. But the process of the resurrection of Jesus was much more than merely bringing life into a dead body.
5. The resurrection of Jesus involved not only returning life to the body but giving him a glorified body that would never die again.
6. Our future glorified body will be like His now glorified body.
7. 1 John 3:2-3 (NKJV)
 - a. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

B. The proof of it.

1. In Sunday School class we just finished a lesson on this a couple of weeks ago.
 - a. A public execution assured His death.
 - b. A high official secured the gravesite.
 - c. In spite of guards the grave was found empty.
 - d. Later many people claimed to have seen Him alive.
 - e. The Apostles were dramatically changed.
 - f. The witnesses were willing to die for their testimony.
 - g. Jewish believers were willing to change their day of worship.
 - h. Although it was unexpected it was clearly predicted.
 - i. It was a fitting climax to a miraculous life.
 - j. It fits the experience of those who trust Him

C. The glory of it.

1. Although Satan, death, hell and the grave did all they could to stop it, it happened anyway.
2. It was a conquering of death, the great enemy of mankind.
 - a. Death had ruled since the days of Adam but now death's power was gone.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:55-56
 - (1) 55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your

victory?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

3. We often think of the glory of the birth of Jesus and it certainly was, but the glory of His resurrection is even greater.
 4. God had made all thing good.
 - a. Man was created upright but through sin death took Adam and so everyone else that was from him.
 - b. That is until Jesus Christ.
 - c. Jesus was born, He lived and He died just like all those before Him.
 - d. But on that third day the laws of nature were set aside.
 - e. The law of death was broken and destroyed.
 - f. Jesus was raised in His glorified body and still lives today.
 5. Revelation 1:13–18 (NKJV)
 - a. 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.
 6. Isaiah 40:5 (NKJV)
 - a. 5 The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”
- D. The profitableness of it for us.
1. Romans 8:10–11 (NKJV)
 - a. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

II. His exaltation

A. The meaning of it.

1. It must be first understood that Jesus humbled Himself to come to earth in obedience to the Father's will.
2. Just like in life there are various stations or positions of importance, so among those things spiritual there are various levels of significance.
3. But Peters says that God has now exalted Jesus, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

B. The magnitude of it.

1. Ephesians 1:19–23 (NKJV)

- a. 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. 22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

2. Philippians 2:8–11 (NKJV)

- a. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

III. His continuing ministry

A. Hebrews 7:23–25 (NKJV)

1. 23 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. 24 But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

B. The necessity of it.

1. Though we are made accepted in Jesus Christ we still sin and fall short in

our earthly existence.

2. 1 John 1:8 (NKJV)

a. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C. The blessing of it.

1. He is continually making intercession for us before the throne of God.

2. Every sin is covered, every fault is forgiven.

D. The effectualness of it.

1. He is able to save us to the uttermost.

2. NET So he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

3. NASB95 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

4. NLT Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf.

5. NIV Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Think of this. All this was accomplished by Him and Him alone.

Praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ who is blessed forever Amen.