

Acts of Jesus – part 2

--We started a series last time on the book of Acts and we saw that the key word to Acts is the word "**began**" **Acts 1:1**

--This book is a taste for today's church, a standard of operation for us, an encouragement, a trailer and not the whole movie, as well as an indictment to how we are operating

If I were picking a religion today, I would want one that spoke with clarity and authority about life beyond the grave.

--A fairly brief study of other religions reveals that the histories of their founders stop abruptly with their deaths.

--What is Confucius or Mohamed or Hare Krishna doing today? No one knows not even their most devoted followers.

--The Christian faith is vastly different: Our founder, Jesus Christ, was crucified and resurrected on the third day and ascended to His former glory in Heaven. All these took place exactly as they had been predicted and written down hundreds of years before.

--Our leader is alive and well. -- What is Jesus doing today?

A bank in Binghamton, New York sent a floral arrangement to a business that had recently moved into a new building. There was a mix up at the florist, and the card sent with the arrangement read, "**With our deepest sympathy**." The florist apologized, but became even more embarrassed when he learned that the floral arrangement sent to a funeral home read, "**Congratulations on your new location**."

--This is what happened to Jesus: after His resurrection, Jesus relocated.

1. We're going to take a look at Jesus' ascension and its relevance for our lives:

Acts 1:1-11

--The Ascension raises some big questions-- probably the biggest is "**WHY?**"

--What if He had stayed? Think of it -- Jesus in the flesh going before us!

--Sounds great -- would have been great for the church.

--Wouldn't have had to follow any man,

--See Jesus face to face, Hear Him preach

--Why leave?

--As beneficial as His staying would have been it was even more beneficial that He go.

John 16:7

2. First, let's considered what His ascension meant to Heaven.

--We always think subjectively about our salvation and our Savior, but there is so much more going on.

--We get a hint from something Jesus says in His prayer in **John 17:4-5**

--Jesus is eternal—never created---existed for all eternity past with the glory of the Father. He laid all that aside to come here and would be going back to receive what was always His.

--David predicted His reception into Heaven hundreds of years before: **Psalms 24:7-10**

--Myriads of angels fell on their faces-- a huge worship service. An unimaginable sight.

--Not only His reception but who He brought with Him was spectacular as well: **Eph. 4:8;**

Matthew 27:51-52

--The Bible described the end of that reception this way: **Eph. 1:19-23**

--**He had to ascend to take His place as undisputed Lord.**

3. Let's consider what His ascension meant for us here on earth.

1. First of all it meant His ministry expanded on earth and became more powerful.

--During His 3-year earthly ministry He was limited geographically – (in order to minister over there He had to go over there)

--But when He regained the glory and authority and dimensionality that he had always had with the Father His ministry took on the same glory and authority and dimensionality.

--This is why He could say: **Acts 1:8** --how much power? **Eph. 1:19-23**. This is why He could also say **Jn. 14:12**

--Jesus is everywhere His people are.

--What a blessing to this world we are supposed to be! “I’m bringing Jesus to these people, this circumstance, this job, this community” What a blessing!

2. Second, it meant we have an ever faithful and effect prayer partner. **Rom. 8:34**

3. Third, it meant we have an Advocate in Heaven. **I John 2:1-2**, **Heb. 7:25**

4. Fourth, it meant we have a Helper, Comforter, and Counselor permanently present with us **John. 16:5,7**,

5. We have God closer to us than He was to any of His disciples while He walked this earth: **Jn. 14:17**

6. Finally, He’s preparing a place in Heaven for us. **Jn. 14:1-2**

Unlike all other religions and religious leaders, Jesus isn’t dead, Jesus is alive and well and active on our behalf