

The Blessings of the Ascension

Ephesians 1:15-23

Ascension Sunday

May 4, 2008

I. The Forgotten Feast – Acts 1:9-11

- A. The Common Confession of the Ancient Church – 1 Timothy 3:16
- B. The OT passage most frequently quoted in the NT: Psalm 110
 - Not being gripped by this reality leaves us standing around asking, “What now?”
 - Believing this reality transforms our worldview and purges our imagination, leading us into faith, hope, and love.

II. The Benjamin Principle – Genesis 35:16-19

- The “Son of my sorrow” to “Son of my right hand”

III. The Blessings of the Greater Benjamin – Ephesians 1:20-23

- A. Christ’s Rule over all Powers (Matthew 28:18-20; Eph. 1:20-21)
 - 1. Powers and Princes (“All things visible and invisible”)
 - Whether angelic, demonic, or human, Christ rules over the powers.
 - “Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise him all creatures here below; praise him above ye heavenly hosts ...”
 - 2. A demon-infested darkness overthrown by the Light
 - “Come, rejoice in the light that cannot be overwhelmed by the darkness and death” – Orthodox Easter liturgy
 - John 1:1-5
 - 3. Divisions of the opposition
 - a. Rule
 - b. Authority
 - c. Power
 - d. Dominion
 - Colossians 1:15-16; these were made by and for Christ and will serve his ends. Ignorant, rogue powers do not haunt our existence. The light has come, and the darkness flees.
In Hoc Signo Vincas! Col. 2:15
- B. Christ’s Headship in Creation – Ephesians 1:22
 - “Not one square inch of creation over which Christ the King does not exclaim, ‘Mine!’” – Abraham Kuyper
 - The death of Dualism and the repudiation of Gnosticism
- C. Christ’s (completely) Saving Grace – Ephesians 2:4-6
- D. Christ’s Headship in the Church - Ephesians 1:22-23
 - 1. Advocate – 1 John 2:1
 - 2. Intercessor – Hebrews 7:24-25
 - 3. Lord Protector - Revelation 1:17-18

“Who shall ascend the mountain of the Lord?” asks the Psalmist. Who indeed! There is One who has climbed that mighty ascent, and – grace upon grace! – he goes as our forerunner. Because he has ascended, we are seated with him now in heavenly places, and shall be with him to reign forever.