

Grace Bible Church
Pastor Teacher
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Tree of Life
Weekly Review
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Ascension and Session. The arrival of the Holy Spirit.

As we continue with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, let's look at the promises of God to those believers who desire to glorify Him. Those believers who are willing to follow the directions that are given.

1CO 14:40, But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner or let all things be done in order.

ACT 1:1-6, The first account I composed, Theophilus [Luke], about all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up [ascension] after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

To these He also presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over {a period of} forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

And gathering them together [the early church], He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," {He said,} "you heard of or from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

This is the prophecy of the coming of the Baptism of Fire that John the Baptist was to reveal to the new church.

ACT 1:6-7, And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;”

Therefore, we have a challenge from the fantastic power of God in **ACT 1:8, but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”**

The word for witness is the Greek plural noun *martures* which is where we get the English noun martyr from meaning witness, or one willing to give his life for someone or something.

The next verse says in **ACT 1:9, And after He had said these things, He was lifted up and while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.**

Notice, here is where your Ascension and Descension and Session are mentioned and supplied. The Cross is the sinner's hope, the believer's comfort, and the backslider's rebound and recovery.

The first step of Descension in Christianity follows the first turn of our eye from our Lord Jesus; the Author and Finisher of faith. A life of holiness can only spring from a life of faith. The joy of the Lord, and in the Lord, is our only true and legitimate strength.

NEH 8:10b, ...For the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

The more clear, and comprehensive, and delightful our view of the person, and offices, and work of Christ is—the more vigorously will the work of sanctification go forward.

Ascension, Descension and Session follow the Divine Commands that we are to observe as Royal Family of God.

This means that when we say in **NEH 8:10b, For the joy of the Lord is your strength,**” we really do mean it.

ACT 1:9, And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

This lifting up is a reference to our Lord's Ascension into Heaven following His resurrection as well as His position at the right hand of the Father. When He arrived in Heaven He heard those magical words; **“Sit down at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”**

This is also quoted in PSA 110:1; it is quoted in the Gospels: MAT 22:44; MAR 12:36; LUK 20:42; It is quoted in ACT 2:34-35; HEB 10:12-14.

For example, in **HEB 10:12, “But He, having offered one sacrifice as a substitute for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies were made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has brought to completion for all time those who are sanctified.”**

This is a reference to the Doctrine of the Session.

The Ascension is the doctrine of Christology that pertains to the transfer of our Lord's true humanity from planet earth to the third heaven in a resurrection body.

The Session is the doctrine of Christology that pertains to the glorification of our Lord's humanity at the right hand of the Father (These definitions presume your understanding of the Hypostatic-union).

So in ACT 1:10, And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them;

They stood there with their eyes gazing intently looking into the sky as “two angels dressed in a white apparel” were joining them looking as an angelic hosts of armies as this beautiful sight before them.

In ACT 1:11-12, and they also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

These men or angels had been sent to reveal to them the truth of what was before them?

ACT 1:13-17, And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and

Matthew, James {the son} of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas {the son} of James.

These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with {the} women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. And at this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us, and received his portion in this ministry.”

Notice that in this passage the Lord is identified as “this same Jesus” Jesus is the title of His humanity. It was the humanity of Christ which ascended into Heaven.”

So, they were standing on the Mount of Olives looking up. Jesus will be returning to the same place (see ZEC 14:4). He is coming back today, but not that day and so they might as well start learning some of the things which are necessary so that they will know how to operate during His absence.

The Church-age is the period when Christ is absent from the earth. And, everything that Jesus wants us to know we have in the Word of God.

2CO 2:16 says the Word of God is the mind of Christ. This is our instructions during His absence.

Notice that in verse 13 – “where they abode” is in the imperfect tense which means that they probably resided there. Also, there is a list of

the people present, the eleven apostles to Israel and they are appointed apostles to the Church.

They were about to make a big mistake. They thought they had the right and the power and authority to do such a thing, namely choose someone to replace Judas Iscariot.

Only God has the authority to choose who would be an; Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor-Teacher.

This was not for discussion, but this was for the ones in view with the response of the people and the reasons for doing so.

Those are the individuals God used to protect members of the human race from worshipping the wrong blessings of God and the reasons why they were not to make idols out of them are given in the following ways.

First, the Apostle is given to reveal the one in authority. The one who let's us all know what passage is divinely inspired as the ultimate authority of the Word of God.

Secondly, the Prophets were given to establish the ones who had a little less of the authority that the Apostle Paul had but not quite the same authority as an Apostle.

The Prophets were teachers until Paul didn't need them any longer.

The third ones were the Evangelists whose role was to present the Gospel to the unbeliever and the believers in such a way for all of them to understand the issue of the Gospel information.

Finally, there were the pastor-teachers who must operate in such a way that the pastor has authority over all the believers and equipped them all for the work of the ministry.

And that is why pastor-teachers should be called and identified in certain ways with certain titles.

Pastor-teachers were identified in **EPH 4:11** **And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as pastors and teachers.**

And in **1TH 5:12**, **But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction.**

2TH 3:6, **Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep aloof from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.**

2TH 3:12, **Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.**

In all these areas note some of the differences; such as **LUK 11:28**, **But He said, “On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it.”**

Actually, these and more like these are given throughout the Word of God with emphasis in different areas.

Now, this is why it is important for us to realize that the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists and Pastor-Teachers all had to be chosen by God alone and not man.

Again in **ACT 1:13** **And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew,**

James {the son} of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas {the son} of James.

So, we are told in ACT 1:14-17, These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with {the} women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. And at this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us, and received his portion in this ministry.”

Peter is mentioned first because his leadership is obvious. Thomas is mentioned, even though he totally failed 40 days before in the matter of the Resurrection. This did not keep him from being on the roster of apostles.

Now, there were supposed to be 12 Apostles. Obviously, someone had to take the place of Judas and the big question is who it would be. This is a sovereign choice of God the Holy Spirit, according to 1CO 12:11. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to appoint spiritual gifts.

The twelfth one is not even saved yet. Saul, later known as Paul will not be saved for five more years. But there is going to be an attempt to elect a replacement anyway.

In REV 21:14-15, And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them and upon the walls were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall.

So, there were to be 12 Apostles. Now, notice a few important principles. in **ACT 11:14**, **“These all continued with one accord.”**

This means they were in harmony with one another and were all in fellowship with God. There were 120 of them and they were well equipped to spend the next ten days.

According to **JOH 20:22** they were had already been given the Holy Spirit, so they are controlled by the Holy Spirit. Yet in spite of that of that they got involved in a fantastic decision because it doesn't depend upon the filling of the Spirit or their walk with the Lord, it depends upon their knowledge of doctrine.

So, there is an area of sin into which people fall through ignorance of Bible doctrine, but they can recover if they choose to.

Peter's speech was based on scripture but, when we start praying for the will of God and are ignorant of doctrine, we are going to wind up out of the will of God. And there is no substitute for knowledge of Bible doctrine because the will of God is declared through the Word of God.

So we now go back to Act 1:15 where we pick it up.

Back to **ACT 1:15**, **And at this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,**

Notice that there are one hundred and twenty people there.

ACT 1:16-17, who else but Peter makes the big mistake, he says, **“Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a**

guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us, and received his portion in this ministry.”

In verse 17, when Peter says, **“For he was numbered with us.”** This is a foreshadowing of what we have today. Now, in verse 17, Peter is assuming that certain individuals were a part of this ministry – and Peter identifies Judas to be one of those twelve. But, in reality no one knows who is saved and who is not.

Therefore, notice **ACT 1:18, (Now this man (Peter assumes this is Judas Iscariot), acquired a field with the price of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. As usual, we have one individual judging another without having all the facts.**

ACT 1:19, And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called the Field of Blood.

Why?

ACT 1:20-22, “For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his homestead be made desolate, And let no man dwell in it'; and, 'His office let another man take.' It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us - beginning with the baptism of John, until the day that He was taken up from us - one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

Notice that in verse 18 – **“Now this man purchased a field.”**

This is what happened to the money that was used for the betrayal. Judas became conscience stricken. Then he tells us how Judas died.

There are two accounts that some critics say are a contradiction. One is that he hung himself and the other that his guts burst out on the rocks.

Well, it is easily explained in that he did hang himself and as the body blotted the rope broke and his body fell to the rock below. No mystery, no contradiction.

ACT 1:23-2:4, And they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, “Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which one of these two Thou hast chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

ACT 2:5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

ACT 2:6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language.

ACT 2:7 And they were amazed and marveled, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?”

ACT 2:8-21, “And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs-- we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.” But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. “For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: 'And it shall be in the last days,' God says, 'That I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, And your young men shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams; Even upon My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit And they shall prophesy. 'And I will grant wonders in the sky above, And signs on the earth beneath, Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the great and glorious

day of the Lord shall come. And it shall be, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.