

Sermon Title: Jesus Ascended... and the disciples rejoiced!

- Introduction
 - Explanation of Ascension Day as the third great festival in Jesus's earthly ministry.
- The Paradox of Ascension
 - Ascension as a moment of triumph and completion but potentially perceived as an anti-climax.
- The Surprising Joy of the Disciples
 - Despite Jesus leaving, the disciples return to Jerusalem with great joy.
- Reasons for Joy
 - Confirmation of Victory in Resurrection
 - Ascension confirms Jesus's triumph over death, offering hope for the future.
 - Belief in Jesus's ascension ensures continual dwelling with him in heaven.
 - Promise of the Holy Spirit
 - Jesus assures the disciples of the coming of the Holy Spirit.
 - The Spirit's presence ensures believers are not left alone but deeply connected with Jesus.
 - Call to Responsibility
 - Ascension signifies believers' growth and responsibility to continue Jesus's work.
 - Believers are tasked with proclaiming repentance and forgiveness in Jesus's name.
- Implications for Believers Today
 - Reflect on the profound truths of God's love and grace.
 - Embrace the transformative power of trusting and serving the risen Lord.
 - Share the life-changing message of the gospel with others.
- Conclusion
 - Despite Jesus's withdrawal at the Ascension, believers rejoice in his triumph, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and their role in spreading the gospel.
 - Encouragement to ponder, reflect, and rejoice in these truths.

Questions

1. How does the Ascension of Jesus challenge our understanding of triumph and completion, especially in light of the disciples' joyful response?
2. In what ways does the Ascension signify hope for Christians today, considering the current challenges and uncertainties in the world?
3. Reflecting on the promise of the Holy Spirit, how does the presence of Jesus in the form of the Spirit impact our daily lives and our ability to navigate challenges?
4. Discuss the concept that the Ascension marks a transition for Christians from dependence on Jesus to taking responsibility for continuing his work. How does this responsibility manifest in our lives?
5. What does it mean to be a witness to the resurrection and the ascension in today's context? How can we effectively share the message of the gospel with others?
6. How can we cultivate a sense of rejoicing in the reality of Christ's triumph, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and our role in sharing the gospel message?