



Email: manseltonurc@gmail.com.

Tel no. 01792 415222

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Luke 24.44-53

The Ascension of Christ



This short passage is really worth reading carefully and, yes reading it again! Why, well, it's a fabulous summary (though not a complete one! of what Christians, right from day one, sought to do, that is, being a faithful disciple of Christ.

Firstly, to understand why Christ came into this world, it is essential that disciples see that Jesus fulfils all that has been expressed in the Old Testament. Here Jesus opens their mind so that his disciples might understand the scriptures. Jesus mentions the Law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms. Why focus on the Law, the prophets and the psalms? To help disciples (you) to understand why Christ suffered, died and rose again. We all have such a lot to discover about these three hugely significant aspects of Christ's life.

Secondly, to you who preach, focus on repentance, and forgiveness, and so right from the beginning this became the core of the disciples preaching ("Kerygma").

Thirdly, know that you also have received the power of the Holy Spirit, "You are clothed with power from on high" (v.49) for this will enable you to bear witness to Jesus by your word and deeds. That is, Jesus had taught them that to be a follower of Christ you need to know that being a disciple will entail struggles and suffering, but above all learn to let God have his way, and show through this life that it is a real delight to turn to God.

This is what Jesus reminded the disciples before he ascended, and because they followed his example and teaching the faith spread quickly, despite persecution to every part of society. Nothing has changed!

Stephen

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

(Lectionary Readings: Acts 1.1-11: Psalm 47 or Psalm 93: Ephesians 1.15-23: Luke 24.44-53)

*Lord, thank you for your Word in the Bible.
Thank you for the beautiful words
that you have spoken to countless generations of people,
introducing, shaping and encouraging those of faith.
Lord Jesus, open our minds to understand the scriptures.*

*Sometimes as we read your Word,
we struggle with what we see.
There are complicated histories, unfamiliar contexts
and events that make us uncomfortable.
Lord Jesus, open our minds to understand the scriptures.*

*Now, in this moment, we turn to your Word,
in expectation that you will reveal yourself to us.
By your Holy Spirit, speak into our lives and hearts,
remind us of your grace, correct and expand our thinking,
Lord Jesus, open our minds to understand the scriptures.*

*Lord we pray that your Word will be fulfilled,
that we won't only hear of your truth,
but, by your power at work within us,
see your truth, love and justice in the world.
Lord Jesus, open our minds to understand the scriptures.*

Paul Robinson (URC Prayer Handbook 2026)

