

HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN

THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 4

Ben Rudolph

Good morning Life Fellowship. It is good to see you here this morning. Let's turn in our Bibles to Acts Chapter 2 where we are going to be a little bit this morning. Then we are actually going to be in a lot of other places in the Bible as well. We are excited to be continuing this series on the Apostles Creed.

And what we are going to be talking about this morning in the Apostles Creed is this statement: *'That He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.'* Now I don't know if you have ever thought much about this idea of Jesus ascending into heaven and being seated at the right hand of God or not, but when we think about the core doctrines of the Christian faith, when we think about what we would say to explain something, this is what we have to believe about Jesus. And I honestly believe there are a lot of things that we would say about Jesus in these statements of faith and in the Apostles Creed that we would say is mandatory, such as the Virgin birth, right? And that He died on the cross, that He arose again, and we would even say that He is coming back again.

But most of us would leave this phrase, *'that He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,'* out if we were saying, *'You have to believe this about Jesus.'* And that made me wonder why this is in here. The first time I really started thinking about the ascension of Jesus in kind of an interesting way was back in 2009. My wife and I were on one of our anniversary trips and we had wanted to celebrate something big for our ten year anniversary. Now our ten year anniversary was in 2008 but we didn't have any money then to do anything that year so we just pushed it off a year and in 2009 we planned a trip to Germany.

So we got a great deal on tickets, and we spent some time just touring around the country. We started in Frankfurt and went all the way around the country, and then at the end of our time there we came back to Frankfurt for a couple of days. So we hit all the main sites in Frankfurt which was not a huge tourist city, but we enjoyed it. The final day in Germany we left our hotel room early in the morning just to see more of the city, and there was absolutely no one outside the hotel. I mean there wasn't any one, even the homeless people were gone, and we don't know what was going on.

I looked at my wife and said, *'This feels like the zombie apocalypse has just happened.'* We were walking around and there wasn't anything open. Cafes weren't open and people weren't walking on the streets, and it was just the most eerie thing that we had ever experienced. We thought that everyone must know something that we didn't know. Finally we walked around until we found a Starbucks that was open. It seemed like this Starbucks was the only thing open in this entire city. And there were only about five people in there. So we go in there and we asked what was going on in this city today. And one of the people said, *'Oh it is Christ's ascension day and it is a national holiday. Forty days after Easter Christ's ascension is celebrated.'*

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It was just like we would celebrate Labor Day or Memorial Day here, they celebrate Christ's ascension forty days after Easter and it is a national holiday for the country of Germany. And everyone has the day off, so apparently everyone had slept in that day. It was one of those eerie things that made me stop and think, *'Well, I'm a Christian, I'm a pastor, and I have never celebrated Christ's ascension. Is this a Catholic thing?'* It really got my mind thinking about why this was such a significant belief, why this was such a significant idea that Christians had been celebrating this for thousands of years. Why was this such a big deal?

I want to read for you a couple of passages of Scripture before we dig deeply into Acts Chapter 2. Jason mentioned this morning the idea about Christ ascending and sitting at the right hand of God the Father and that should be something very significant for us today. And we need to discover why this is. Listen to this in Matthew Chapter 26 where Jesus is being questioned by the high priest before He is condemned to die. In verse 64 it says this: ***"Jesus said to him, "You have said so." This was after Caiaphas asked Him if He was the Son of God. "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven."***

Jesus said this to Caiaphas and it is interesting that He doesn't say, *'I am going to rise again from the dead,'* because He had already said that previously when He was in the temple earlier that week. But Jesus tells Caiaphas this when he asks Him if He is the Christ. Jesus answers, *'I am, and you will see me seated at the right hand of Power on high.'* At that moment Caiaphas tears his robes and he is furious. And he says, *'This man has committed blasphemy and deserves to die.'* What had Jesus said that was so significant to cause this reaction?

Later on in Acts Chapter 2 in Peter's first sermon after Jesus has ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit is coming, and in verses 32 and 33 Peter says this: ***"This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."*** Again Christ has risen and He is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Turn to Acts Chapter 5 where Peter is giving I think it is his third sermon. And in verses 30 and 31 this is Peter before the Sanhedrin. This would have been the same group of people that had condemned Jesus to die. They hated Jesus because He had said they would see Him seated at the right hand of Power. And this is what Peter says in his sermon to them. ***"The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging Him on a tree. God exalted Him at His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."*** And as that moment they became enraged and wanted to kill Peter.

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What is going on here? What is it about Jesus being seated at the right hand of the Father that not only makes people want to kill Jesus, but they also want to kill His followers? There is something about this idea of Jesus being seated at the right hand of the Father that is entirely confrontational and it is something that is giving boldness to the disciples. And this is what we have to ask ourselves – why is this significant for us today? What is going on here?

I want us to read a little bit more of Peter's sermon in Acts Chapter 2. Let's look at verses 28 through 38 where Peter is explaining to the crowd who Jesus is. What is the significance of Jesus? And I want you to listen to this portion of Peter's sermon because there are some clues as to why this 'right hand of the Father seated on high' is so important. Why was that so significant to them and why is it significant for us today.

Look at verse 28 where it says: ***“You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”*** This is Peter quoting Psalms 16. Verse 29: ***“Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that He would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.”***

“This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.’” That is quoting Psalms 110 if you want to write that down in your Bibles.

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified. Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” “And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Now there were some clues in this passage of why this is so significant. There is an Old Testament person that was mentioned twice. Do you remember who that person was? It was David. Now what is David's significance in this moment? The significance of Peter mentioning David was this – David was the king of Israel a thousand years before. David was the one who God had anointed to lead His people and David was in some ways the greatest king. He was the king that God said was 'after His own heart.' David had written much Scripture.

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But there was something significant that happened to David and God promised something to him. In II Samuel Chapter 7 God goes to David and tells him that He is going to bless him and He was going to make one of David's descendants to sit on David's throne and his kingship, his kingdom and his glory would never end. It was a promise that there would one day be a Messiah King, this Christ figure that would sit on a throne and rule not just Israel but the world. It is what is called the Davidic Covenant in II Samuel Chapter 7. This is what Peter was saying, and this is why the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the high priest were so furious with Jesus and with Peter. And that was because Peter was telling them that Jesus is the king of David's lineage. He has brought the throne of heaven and the throne of earth together in one union. He is now sitting at the right hand of the Father, and Jesus not only has the heavenly kingship but He has inherited this earthly kingship, and they are united.

And the kingdom of God has now been established. Think about that. Before when Jesus was teaching and preaching while He was on the earth, He said, '***The kingdom of God is at hand. Now the kingdom of God is here.***' Amen? This is significant because we live in a world of kingdoms. We live in a world where there are people always claiming authority over our lives, people who say, '*I am the greatest. I have the greatest power. I have the greatest authority. I am the one you are to look to help solve your problems. I am the one who is going to lead us to greatness.*'

When we think about a kingdom and a king, it is about leveraging who they are to have a greater impact in the world. And these kingdoms look a lot of different ways. But here is what we need to understand, as followers of Jesus we do not claim Him as just our Savior; we claim Him as our Savior and our Lord. Jesus is not just our Savior, He is our King, and we cannot be a follower of Jesus, we cannot be a Christian if we do not believe that Jesus is not just a Savior of our soul but He is also the King of this world. And that is significant. That is why this is so important. And that is why so many of us want to believe in Jesus taking away our sins so we can be in heaven with Him one day, but there is something confrontational about accepting Jesus as our King. And that is what we need to be confronted with this morning, this idea of Jesus being seated at the right hand of the throne of God the Father.

I want to go back to what Jesus said. He told Caiaphas this, and it is recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. "***You will see me seated on the throne of Power.***" When Jesus is sitting on His throne it is a position of power. And this is what Jesus promises us today which is so exciting, and that is the power that Jesus earned and won is now our power. Think about that. The power that Jesus earned overcoming the grave, all the power that He had accomplished is now going to be shared with us. Listen, here is the main idea, and if you don't remember anything else today, remember this – Jesus' power is now ours. We now have access to this power. His authority, His kingdom, that He is now expanding, all creation is now ours to be enjoyed, to be used, and this is the power that He is offering us this morning.

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When we think about Jesus and Him dying on the cross for our sins, when we think about Him rising from the dead, most of us when we think about the application of Jesus' work in our lives we usually think about some kind of future event of something that is going to happen to us when we die, and that the fullness of Jesus' work is really something we have to wait around for. *'Yes, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior and now I am just waiting around until I die.'* In the meantime we go to church every week to remind us. Is that it?

No! It is not just okay that we have our salvation and now we are just waiting around until we die for the fullness of the work of Christ to be manifested in our lives. No! The fullness of the work of Christ in our lives is happening now. It is happening now in our lives when we come to Him as our Lord and Savior because He is seated on the throne with His active ongoing presence, and God the Son is now working in our lives every day in every place. Jesus is reigning and He is working now. The power is now to be experienced through Him to us.

I want us to look at several places in the New Testament to understand the reality of Jesus' power that is now ours. There are three kinds of power we are going to look at: the power of completion, the power of authority and the power of intercession. We are not going to spend a lot of time digging into the meat of this but I want you to see this power that we now have that we have access to.

The first is the power of completion. I want you to see this in Hebrews Chapter 10 and verses 11 through 13. This is talking about Christ being the greater high priest, the greater sacrifice. Listen to what it says in Hebrews Chapter 10 beginning in verse 11: ***"And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins."*** He is referring to the temple system and the sacrifices we see in the Old Testament in the first five books of Bible. The book of Leviticus tells all the sacrifices that needed to be made. It gives a list of rules they were to do, and the high priest was there to offer the sacrifices for sin day after day after day. It was a picture of the Messiah coming to take away our sins.

And here is what it says in verse 12: ***"But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God."*** Once Jesus had paid the penalty for our sins at that moment His work was finished. ***"Waiting from that time until His enemies should be made a footstool for His feet."*** What that means is the work of Jesus on the cross is enough and He doesn't need to do anything else. There is nothing more that we need from Jesus. ***"For by a single offering He has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."*** One sacrifice for all time took care of our sins past, present and future, sins we haven't even committed yet, and sins we haven't even thought of yet, are covered under the blood of Jesus Christ. That is the power of Jesus, His work was completed when He sacrificed His life and rose again, and then He sat down.

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Saturdays are like work days around our house. I am not sure if they are like that for you or not, but they are for us. Usually my wife and I have some work projects we need to do. My wife is big into gardening and I try to help her out with some of it. There are things we want to accomplish around our yard and there are some projects I am always trying to do on my days off to get things down around the house. When I was younger I hated work days. My dad would put on his work jeans and we would be like like, ‘*Oh no.*’ I hated those work jeans. But now I have work jeans. And when I wake up on Saturday mornings I am ready to get some stuff done.

When I was a kid I wanted to start my Saturdays with cartoons. I am 45 years old now but when I was a kid we could only watch cartoons one time a week and that was on Saturday mornings. It was a precious time, a time that I and my brothers savored. There were Bugs Bunny cartoons and Tom and Jerry cartoons and many others. There might have been some cartoons during the week in the afternoon but we usually had practice or homework. We just had one television in our house and my parents didn’t allow us to watch television much so Saturday mornings were our sacred time for entertainment. The cartoons were only on from about 7a to 12noon.

Now this was before VCRs and before cable. We had one time a week to watch cartoons so do you understand what life was like in America back then? (*Laughter.*) So when my dad would put on his work jeans it was like, ‘*Oh no, I am not going to get to watch cartoons this morning.*’ But now I understand the joy of work, the joy of completing something. We do tasks, we do plantings and mulching, or whatever it is we are doing, and when we are finished we can finally sit on our back patio and just enjoy being able to sit down.

Listen, the work of completion is wonderful and God has inviting us to enjoy His work of completion. We are not the one who did it, Jesus did it. He did it all and He invites us into that back patio moment to enjoy what He has done. We can look at how He covers our sins, how He overcame the pain and the death that we are owed, because His blood has covered it all. It is done, it is finished. That is the power of completion.

We also have the power of authority. In Matthew Chapter 28 and verses 18 and 19 Jesus says this as He is about to ascend into heaven. Most of us when we think of Matthew 28 we think of the Great Commission. Verse 18 says this: ***“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*** Verse 19: ***“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*** Now most of us we really love to start with verse 19 and we love to tell people all the time to go make disciples. So we preach on go make disciples, and there are placards all over the church telling us to go make disciples, and when we go to mission conferences we hear we are to go make disciples.

But listen we need to remember verse 18 or there is no reason to go. It says, ***“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*** Jesus is saying, ‘*Listen, this is*

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now done. This has now been accomplished. I now have all the authority so no matter what man may say to you, no matter if they say you cannot do this, you cannot go to this place, you cannot meet in this place to proclaim my name, you don't have to listen to them.' There is an authority that is greater than any earthly authority on the face of this planet and it is Jesus. And if we live under His authority we don't have to fear man.

There is something more than the power of authority over earthly authority. I want you to see this other passage in Ephesians Chapter 1 and verses 19 through 21. Paul is talking about the power, the hope that is working in us, the application of salvation through Jesus into our lives. Listen to what Paul says about the seating of Jesus in this passage. ***“And what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.”*** Again there is this power of authority; this power that raised Jesus from the dead is now working inside of those who are His followers. And this power is so great.

Listen to verse 21: ***“Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”*** When we see ***“all rule and authority and power and dominion,”*** do you know what that means? That is a direct reference to the spiritual powers of this world. Jesus is not just an authority over the earthly powers that we see today; He is an authority over every spiritual demonic force on this planet. We are in a war, we are in a battle. We did an entire series on spiritual warfare back in the fall, and we can never forget that the kingdom of God is an affront against the kingdom of darkness. And there is a tension that is going on day after day. You are in this battle whether you want to acknowledge it or not. The enemy wants to steal, kill and destroy you, your family and the work of Jesus.

So you might be feeling under attack, your marriage may be under attack, your kids may be under attack, you may be under attack emotionally. I don't know what the attack is but I will tell you that there is not a day that goes by that a follower of Jesus is not under attack of the enemy. It happens all the time and we have to acknowledge it. The reason why we need to acknowledge it is not just to make us afraid but to help us understand that we live in a world where there is a clash of kingdoms going on at all times. And the kingdom of darkness wants to overcome the kingdom of light. And Jesus says, *‘No, I have the authority. I have the power.’* Jesus now has the power of authority and we don't have to be afraid of the attacks, because there is someone greater working in us than he that is in the world.

I love what Jesus says before the high priest. Jesus is asked if He is the Messiah, if He is the Christ and He responds, ***“You will see me seated at the right hand of Power.”*** Now what does that mean? Does that mean that Caiaphas, the high priest and the Sanhedrin would all of a sudden have this vision of Jesus on a throne? That they would be able to see Him? No, no, no they never got a vision of Jesus sitting on a throne.

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How in the world could they see Him then sitting on a throne? They would see Him sitting on a throne when they see His church advance against the gates of hell.

And that is our responsibility. Every time we confront darkness in our world, every time that we confront people when they want to call evil good and good evil, that is the kingdom of God advancing. When we believe that the kingdom of God wants to overtake the gates of hell we don't look at the world that is going to hell in a handbasket, we don't look at the darkness, we don't look at the pain and suffering and want to wilt away. No, those of us who understand the power of Jesus that is on our side, that is now ours, the power of authority, we can look evil and darkness and pain in the eye and we can say, *'In the name of Jesus we are not going to let this win.'* That is what Jesus offers us. That is the invitation.

So the very nature of the power of His authority is confrontational and I want you to understand that. To accept Jesus as King is to confront not just the earthly powers, not just the demonic powers, but it is also confrontation against us, against what we want to do because what we want is our own kingdom, we want our own way, we want to have our own throne in our own kingdom in our own way for our own glory. That is what many of us pursue, but we have to understand that the confrontation of Jesus as King is there every morning when we wake up. He is trying to get us to give it to Him, to let Him rule and reign over our worry, over our situations, over our problems, and to trust Him.

Lastly there is the power of intercession. Romans Chapter 8 and verse 34 says this: ***"Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died -- more than that, who was raised -- who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."*** I love this. Again this is where I think we need to understand our convictions, our beliefs in the fullness of the gospel. I don't think there is a Christian that would deny the crucifixion and the sacrifice of Jesus. I don't think there is a Christian alive that would deny the resurrection of Jesus. But I think what we need to do is to start accepting and realizing the importance and the significance of Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father. And the significance of that is this – Jesus is now interceding for us. And the position at the right hand is not just a position of authority; it is a position of privilege.

Jesus is saying that if we need something He is the one who gets to ask the Father. He is the one interceding for us. If we are in need, He is there ready to ask the Father. 'Is interceding for us' is present tense. I love that. It means that right now Jesus is interceding for us. Right now whatever it is that you are in need of Jesus is interceding for you on your behalf. Do you realize that? It is so hard for us to understand this today. I don't know if it is Lake Norman, or our being Americanists, I don't know if it is our wealth, but I believe there is a problem, not just with this church, but with our entire culture that we are afraid to show that we are in need, that we are people in need. We are afraid to let people know about our problems and our struggles.

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So we need to understand that we are a people in need, and Jesus is always interceding for us, with whatever need we have. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Father. Listen, it is always good to know somebody when you have a problem. If you have a problem at work, if you have a problem with a neighbor, or if you have a problem with finances, and you share that problem with someone they may say, *'I know a guy.'* When someone says, *'I know a guy, or I know someone that can fix that problem,'* that is great. And if he is sure this guy can be trusted your problem is solved. And all of us need to know that guy, no matter what the problem is. And what we have to understand is Jesus is that guy. He is that guy we can go to with our problems. *'I have a problem with my kids.'* Talk to Jesus. *'I have a problem with my boss.'* Tell it to Jesus.

So what does it mean for our lives when we talk about the power of authority, the power of completion and the power of intercession? How does this affect us? I want to give you three applications based on the three powers that we have.

Number one – it means we can rest boldly. If the work of Jesus has been completed for us and we believe in His finished work on the cross, then we no longer have to hold on to our debt. It is like someone paying off your mortgage, paying off your credit cards, paying off your school bill, or paying off your business loan, and you still want to continue paying the monthly payment because you are so used to it. Jesus paid the debts. When our feelings of shame and guilt come, what we need to do is claim the words of Jesus when He said, ***"It is finished."***

Let's say that together right now. Let's do that. ***"It is finished."*** (*Audience repeats.*) Listen, when you feel overwhelmed by your past, what should you say? (*Audience: "It is finished."*) We can say that because Jesus said it was finished. And if Jesus said it was finished, then it is finished. Maybe you are thinking, *'But I feel'* I don't care what you feel, Jesus said, ***"It is finished."***

There is a picture in the book of Zachariah where Satan is at the right hand of the throne of God and he is accusing the people of Israel because of their sin. Every time Satan accuses you, and every time he is at the throne accusing the Father about you, you know what Jesus says? ***"It is finished."*** When we wake up every morning we need to say, ***"It is finished."*** And then we can now feel free to rest, to rest boldly, to rest so well that we are enjoying life, rest like we are on that back patio with hearts full of joy, gratitude and peace because it is finished. Rest boldly, my friends, rest boldly in the cross of Jesus Christ. Rest boldly that His blood is covering our sins, past, present and future. Rest boldly in the cross. Rest boldly in the blood.

Number two – reject passivity. I think that this is one of the hardest things for me. I am by nature someone who is laid back, someone who does not like confrontation, and someone who doesn't like things to go badly. When things go badly I want to take a nap. I am not sure if any of you are like this are not, and if something goes wrong you

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may want to fix this. But when something goes wrong for me I need to go take a nap. That is just me. God has redeemed me and He is trying to change me because I have been taking a lot less naps recently.

I believe that when we understand the authority of Jesus, and we understand that there is a war where our children are under attack, our marriage is under attack, and we ourselves are under attack, when we understand that we live in a world where there is a clash of kingdoms going on right now, we need to know what we are going to do. We need to know how we are going to handle it. Listen, one of the things we need to understand is we need to boldly proclaim *'in the name of Jesus,' 'in the name of Jesus.'* We are going to practice this. Can you say *'in the name of Jesus?'* (Audience responds – *'In the name of Jesus.'*) So that means that when something is going on with your kids you go into their room when they are not there and you lay yourself over their bed and cry out to God *'in the name of Jesus.'* Walk around your house, walk around their school, walk around your business park, walk around the places where you know the enemy is attacking and you say, *'in the name of Jesus.'*

Listen, I don't like to talk about this, but my wife and I have experienced demonic attacks. When you grow up as a Christian you don't hear ghost stories, you hear demon stories, and they are always scarier because you know demons are real. So when you grow up in church, you go to church camps and they tell demon stories that freak you out. I hesitate to say this because I do not want to glorify the demonic, but my wife and I could share with you stories of encounters with demons that we have had. I could tell you the details, but here is what I know, when we have had those moments, when we had those stories I could share, the only thing I know to do is to just say, *'Jesus.'* And they flee.

And the reason I hesitate to even say that on a Sunday morning is because some people are like, *'Can you tell me one of those stories?'* The reason I hesitate to tell the stories is because many times when you tell the demon stories we glorify the demonic instead of the name of Jesus. You may have stories as well, but we must understand that we have the name of Jesus and we can hide behind the name of Jesus. And that is because the name of Jesus has power. We need to declare this power over our family, we need to declare this power over our marriage, we need to declare this power over our work, we need to declare this power over our friends and our neighborhood, and we need to declare this power over this nation. We must start declaring the power of the name of Jesus. Can we say that and not be afraid any more of what man may do to us?

Lastly, we must pray expectantly. We have to rest boldly. We have to reject passivity. And we must pray expectantly. Jesus taught us to pray. The flowing out of this idea of Jesus interceding for us is this idea that we can pray boldly. We can pray expectantly. I am a good Calvinist, and if you don't understand what that means, it means you just have a high regard for the sovereignty of God. I believe deeply in the

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sovereignty of God. Many times my prayers may sound like this, '*God, if it be your will, and if it is not it is going to be a bother,*' kind of prayers.

I shy away from the whole idea of the prosperity gospel. The prosperity gospel is people who want to take a nugget of truth and they twist it and distort it. The prosperity gospel says, '*Hey you have this authority, you have this power in the name of Jesus, so why don't you ask God for a nicer car, a nicer house, and whatever in the name of Jesus, and God has to give it to you.*' And that is corrupt and it is demonic.

The nugget of truth that they corrupt is this idea that God wants His kingdom to come; He wants His kingdom to come. Do we expect that? Do we expect God to work? When we pray do we expect God to move? Do we expect Him to do something that is supernatural? I have to confront this in my own heart. Two weeks ago after the sermon we invited anyone who was not sure about their relationship with Jesus to go to the Prayer Room, and someone did that and accepted Christ. And when I was told someone had accepted Christ I was like – really? How sad was that of me, to react in that way as opposed to expecting that people will respond to the gospel, that people will respond when we pray.

And maybe you have been asking, you have been praying for something for a long time. Listen, I got an email this morning from someone that I had met previously and this is what his email said, "*This morning I am baptizing my mother after praying for her salvation for 47 years.*" Sometimes we have to pray for 47 years, but we are to pray expectantly. And if the kingdom of God does not look like we want it to look, God is always working. If He is not answering the request that you are giving to Him, He may be working to change you, because the kingdom of God is working inside of us.

What I want to see this church become is a praying church. Right now we are just a church that prays. And there is a difference between a praying church and a church that prays. How we become a praying church is when we start praying expectantly. We have a few people on our prayer team but we need dozens more on our prayer team. If you want to be a part of our prayer team, go to the Prayer Room after the service and talk to Pastor Justin who is leading it up for us right now. Ask him to put you on the prayer team so you can be a part of praying expectantly for the kingdom of God in Lake Norman.

We are not going to ask you to just pray for Life Fellowship. We are going to ask you to pray kingdom prayers. I want to encourage you to be a part of our prayer team if God is leading you to do this. We have to rest boldly, we have to resist passivity, and we have to pray expectantly.

Let's pray. *Jesus, we are grateful that you are a King sitting on a throne. And God whatever it is that you are calling us to do, calling us to be, transform our hearts and our lives to reflect this authority and this power that you have given to us. Jesus, you*

**HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN
THE APOSTLES CREED - Part 4
Ben Rudolph**

are seated at the right hand of the Father and I pray, that we would have a spirit of expectation of your kingdom coming and your will being done. God there are people in this room this morning that need to say, 'It is finished,' they need to hear your words and to declare that and to claim that. I pray that over people right now.

I pray that there are people in this room right now that need to hear, 'In the name of Jesus,' that God they would cry that out. If there are people in this room who need to hear 'your kingdom come, your will be done,' may they hear that this morning, may they hear your words, Jesus, giving them the hope, the confidence, the boldness, the expectation that you want us to have in you and in your kingdom. God, may we leave here today with a different spirit, and with a different expectation.

And before I end this service let me just say to you sitting here this morning that do have needs, that do have questions, you are not sure about your relationship that you have with Jesus, you are not sure if you were to die today that you would spend eternity with Jesus. If you are struggling with an issue, with work, with finances, with your health, or with your family, I would encourage you when you leave here to go to the Prayer Room because there are people there that would love to pray with you. Let's respond to Jesus.

God, may your Spirit move in our hearts in a way that only you can do. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.