

Overview

This Bible study session focused on Lesson 8: God the Son - His Present Ministry, examining Christ's current work following His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. The lesson emphasized that Jesus' ministry did not cease after returning to heaven but continues actively on behalf of believers. Key themes included Christ's exaltation, His position at the right hand of God, His role as mediator and high priest, and the blessed hope of believers' future glorification.

Key Concepts or Theories:

Christ's Exaltation: Jesus was highly exalted by God the Father after humbling Himself through incarnation and crucifixion

Right Hand of God: Represents authority, power, and completed redemptive work

Mediator and High Priest: Jesus intercedes continuously for believers, having experienced human temptation without sin

Glorified Body: Believers will receive transformed bodies like Christ's resurrected body

Sanctification: The ongoing process of spiritual growth and transformation in believers' lives

Important Questions Raised:

Can angels be redeemed or procreate?

How can we prove Jesus is God from Scripture?

Was Jesus' life given or taken at the crucifixion?

What does it mean that Jesus is seated at the right hand of God?

How is our citizenship in heaven while we live on earth?

What is the difference between temptation and sin?

Key Takeaways and Summary of Learning Objectives

Jesus Christ continues His ministry from heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father

All power and authority in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus

Christ serves as our mediator, high priest, and advocate, interceding continuously for believers

Jesus experienced full humanity, including temptation, yet remained without sin

Believers have a blessed hope of receiving glorified bodies and sharing in Christ's glory

The right hand of God signifies both authority and the completion of redemptive work

Jesus' present ministry includes preparing a place for His followers in heaven

Sanctification is an ongoing process throughout the believer's life

Topic 1: The Exaltation of Christ

Following His resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ was restored to the glory He possessed before the world began. The Father highly exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name. This exaltation came after Christ's humiliation—from the cradle (manger) to the cross to the crown. Jesus voluntarily emptied Himself (kenosis) during His incarnation, temporarily veiling His celestial glory while remaining fully God. His divine glory was not lost but concealed during His earthly ministry, allowing Him to identify with humanity while maintaining His deity.

The exaltation demonstrates that Jesus' work of redemption is complete. God the Father honored the Son's sacrifice by seating Him at His right hand, a position of supreme authority and power. This fulfills Jesus' prayer in John 17:5, where He asked the Father to restore the glory He had before the world existed. The exaltation also proves Jesus' deity, as only God could possess such eternal glory and authority over all creation, including angels, authorities, and powers.

Relevant Q&A

Question: Why did God exalt Jesus?

Answer: Because Jesus first humbled Himself—coming to earth in a manger, dying on the cross, and completing the work of redemption. The exaltation followed the humiliation, demonstrating God's pattern of honoring those who humble themselves.

Question: What does it mean that Jesus "emptied Himself"?

Answer: The kenosis refers to Jesus voluntarily veiling His divine glory during His incarnation. He remained fully God but did not display the same celestial glory He had in heaven. His glory was temporarily concealed, not eliminated, allowing Him to walk among humanity.

Topic 2: Jesus Seated at the Right Hand of God

The right hand of God represents authority, power, and honor. After completing His redemptive work, Jesus sat down at the right hand of God the Father, signifying that His work of salvation is finished. The seated position indicates rest from completed labor—no further sacrifice is needed. This contrasts with Old Testament priests who stood daily offering repeated sacrifices that could never fully take away sins.

Jesus' position at the right hand demonstrates His unique role as mediator between God and humanity. He continuously intercedes for believers, understanding their struggles because He experienced human temptation without succumbing to sin. The study highlighted Stephen's vision in Acts 7, where Jesus stood (rather than sat) to receive His faithful martyr, showing Christ's active engagement in supporting believers during persecution. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus, and everything—including angels, authorities, and powers—is subject to Him.

Relevant Q&A

Question: Why does the Bible repeatedly mention Jesus sitting down?

Answer: The seated position signifies that the work of redemption is complete. Unlike Old Testament priests who stood continually offering sacrifices, Jesus sat down because His one sacrifice was sufficient for all time.

Question: Why was Jesus standing when Stephen saw Him?

Answer: Jesus stood to receive Stephen, honoring His faithful servant who was being martyred. This demonstrates that when believers stand firm for Christ, He stands with them and for them.

Question: What does it mean that Jesus intercedes for us?

Answer: Jesus continuously pleads our case before the Father, acting as our advocate. He understands our weaknesses because He experienced human temptation, making Him the perfect mediator who can sympathize with our struggles.

Topic 3: Christ as High Priest and Mediator

Jesus serves as our great High Priest, superior to all earthly priests. Unlike the Levitical priests who had to offer sacrifices first for their own sins and then for the people's sins, Jesus was sinless and offered Himself once for all. He entered not into earthly holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself to appear in God's presence on our behalf. The earthly tabernacle and temple were merely copies of the true heavenly sanctuary where Christ ministers.

As the one mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5), Jesus uniquely qualifies for this role because He is both fully God and fully man. He experienced human life, including

hunger, thirst, temptation, and suffering, enabling Him to understand and sympathize with human weakness. Yet He remained without sin, making Him the perfect sacrifice and advocate. His present ministry includes interceding for believers day and night, ensuring that those who draw near to God through Him are saved to the uttermost.

Relevant Q&A

Question: How is Jesus different from Old Testament priests?

Answer: Jesus is holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He didn't need to offer sacrifices for His own sins, and His one sacrifice was sufficient for all time, unlike the repeated sacrifices of earthly priests.

Question: What does it mean that earthly holy places were "copies"?

Answer: The tabernacle and temple were physical representations of the true heavenly sanctuary. Jesus entered the real heaven itself, not a man-made copy, to present His blood on the true mercy seat.

Question: Is temptation the same as sin?

Answer: No. Temptation becomes sin only when we yield to it and act upon it. Jesus was tempted in all ways like we are, yet He never sinned because He never yielded to temptation.

Topic 4: The Blessed Hope and Future Glory

Jesus promised to prepare a place for His followers in His Father's house, which has many mansions. This represents the believer's blessed hope—the assurance of eternal life in God's presence. Believers' citizenship is in heaven, not on earth; they are like ambassadors temporarily stationed in a foreign country, knowing their true home awaits them.

The study emphasized that believers will receive glorified bodies like Christ's resurrected body. These bodies will be free from pain, deterioration, and all effects of sin. Those who die before Christ's return receive an intermediate body, with the final glorified body coming at the resurrection. Philippians 3:20-21 promises that Christ "will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body." This transformation will enable believers to share in Christ's glory and experience abilities beyond current human limitations, such as the ability Jesus demonstrated when He passed through walls after His resurrection.

Relevant Q&A

Question: How is our citizenship in heaven while we live on earth?

Answer: Like an ambassador who represents their home country while stationed abroad,

believers represent heaven while temporarily living on earth. This world is not our permanent home; we are just passing through.

Question: What will our glorified bodies be like?

Answer: They will be like Christ's resurrected body—free from pain, disease, deterioration, and all effects of sin. We will have abilities beyond our current physical limitations, as Jesus demonstrated after His resurrection.

Question: What happens to believers who die before Christ's return?

Answer: They receive an intermediate body immediately upon death and will later receive their final glorified body at the resurrection when Christ returns.

Topic 5: Eschatological Timeline Discussion

The session included discussion of end-times events, though this topic will be covered more thoroughly in later lessons. The timeline includes the rapture of the church, followed by seven years of tribulation (with the last three and a half years being the Great Tribulation). After this, Christ will return with His saints for the Battle of Armageddon, followed by the Great White Throne Judgment for unbelievers.

The millennium (thousand-year reign of Christ) will follow, during which Jesus will govern as King of Kings. Some people will enter the millennium in their natural bodies and will have children during this time. Scripture indicates people will live extraordinarily long lives during this period. At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released briefly and will deceive some, but will be quickly defeated and cast into the lake of fire permanently. The discussion emphasized that all these events demonstrate Christ's ultimate authority over all creation and history.

Relevant Q&A

Question: What is the Great White Throne Judgment?

Answer: This is the final judgment for unbelievers, where Satan, the false prophet, the Antichrist, and all who rejected Christ will be thrown into the lake of fire.

Question: Who will enter the millennium?

Answer: Both those with glorified bodies (believers who were raptured or resurrected) and those in natural bodies (people who came to faith during the tribulation) will enter the millennium.

Question: Why will Satan be released after the millennium?

Answer: This final test will reveal the hearts of those born during the millennium, demonstrating that even in a perfect environment under Christ's rule, some will still choose rebellion when given the opportunity.

Topic 6: Practical Applications and Spiritual Growth

The discussion emphasized sanctification as an ongoing process in believers' lives. Sanctification means God continuously works to transform believers, helping them grow in holiness and drop sinful habits over time. Participants shared how looking back over their spiritual journeys, they could see areas where God had delivered them from sins they once struggled with, often without them even realizing the change was happening.

The study highlighted Peter's journey as an example of sanctification. Despite his failures, including denying Christ three times, Jesus restored Peter and commissioned him to "feed my sheep." Peter's later writings show he internalized this lesson, demonstrating spiritual growth. The discussion emphasized that believers should not be discouraged by their failures but should trust in God's grace and the ongoing work of sanctification. Like Peter, believers may doubt or fail, but God's grace continues to work in their lives, transforming them progressively into Christ's image.

Relevant Q&A

Question: Why did Peter deny Jesus if he loved Him?

Answer: Peter's fear overcame his love in that moment. His love for Christ was genuine but not yet mature (phileo rather than agape love). Jesus later restored Peter and helped him grow into the leader God intended him to be.

Question: How does sanctification work in believers' lives?

Answer: Sanctification is a gradual, ongoing process where God transforms believers over time. Looking back, believers often realize they no longer struggle with sins that once dominated their lives, demonstrating God's faithful work of transformation.

Question: What can we learn from Peter's restoration?

Answer: God's grace is greater than our failures. Jesus didn't abandon Peter after his denial but restored him and gave him important ministry. This shows that God can use imperfect people and continues working in believers despite their shortcomings.

Actionable Next Steps / Assignments

Continue reading and studying Lesson 8 materials on God the Son's present ministry

Research the scripture about people living a thousand years during the millennium (use Google to find the specific reference)

Review the eldership development materials that were distributed, with particular attention to the highlighted sections on biblical qualifications, theological commitment, and the books of Romans and Hebrews

Prepare for the upcoming Women's Fellowship meeting (third week of the month)

Men's Fellowship meeting scheduled for the following Saturday

Note that the pastor will be out of town March 22nd (not preaching that Sunday)

Continue daily Bible reading and personal devotions

Reflect on areas of personal sanctification and spiritual growth in your own life

Supplemental Resources

Eldership Development Manual (distributed to leadership team members)

Strong's Concordance (mentioned as a traditional tool for finding scriptures, now supplemented by online search tools)

Google search for scripture references (recommended method for quickly finding specific verses)

YouTube resources for additional Bible teaching and world news

Book of Romans (recommended reading for understanding salvation and sin)

Book of Hebrews (recommended reading for understanding Christ's priesthood)

Future lessons in the study book will cover eschatology topics including: The Church and the Body of Christ, Second Coming of Christ, The King and the Kingdoms, and The New Heaven and Earth