**Earthly Authority Enthroned in Heaven**

Based on [Mark 16:14-20](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Mk16.14-20)

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The Ascension of Our Lord

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The ascension of Jesus Christ is as his coronation, his being crowned as King of all. Certainly the Son of God was King before he Ascended, but the ascension makes it official and public. It was an actual event that happened 40 days after His resurrection. We who can perceive invisible things, that is the church on earth by faith and the spiritual beings angels and devils are all aware that Jesus has been crowned King of all creation. He upholds all things by the word of his power. Without him not anything was made that was made. He died for our sins and is risen for our justification and now, as the psalmist says “You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in Your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious.” This is his ascension, as our Gospel reading says, “19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to [his disciples], was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.”

The most fundamental events of the life of Christ are outlined in the creeds of our church: namely that the Son of God was conceived and born, died, raised, ascended. He ascended as a man to the place from where God rules the world. Now we can say and must say that a man rules in God’s place. And this man is God, this man is the king of the universe, this man is to be worshipped and adored, this human being who shares our flesh and nature, is our Lord and our God and our King. We worry about a virus, the government, the experts, the economy. But the truth is that we are not in any of their hands. We are in faultless hands, infallible hands, holy hands, hands pierced in payment for our souls and hands out of which no one can snatch us.

Scripture tells us that the Israelites crowned their first king, Saul, because they wanted a man to be their king, just like the surrounding nations had. Samuel the prophet, who was their judge on God’s behalf, was angry about this, but God told Samuel not to take it personally. In wanting a human king to rule them, they were not rejecting him, but they were rejecting God.

Jesus has ascended and our king rules from heaven. But once again, the people want an earthly king. Christ is able to rule us perfectly from heaven, but sinners have doubts and so they desperately seek for a ruler on earth. They seek a powerful king here who they can go to and depend on to get things done. You see, it is those who have doubts about Christ’s ability to rule the world from heaven, who desperately seek for a ruler on earth. That same impulse is why the Roman Church invented a Pope on earth to have spiritual authority while Christ is in heaven. And it is why we have invented experts on earth to have moral authority in a pandemic while Christ is in heaven.

I say all of this because it gives great insight into our social reactions to the current pandemic and lockdown. How these events have unfolded and continue to unfold reveal sinful mankind’s same misguided hope that salvation can be better sought from sinful men on earth than a perfect man in heaven. It reveals just how desperate people today are for earthly rulers.

The worldly wisdom given about how to react in the current pandemic is a gamble. It is a gamble, and as a society we have said that you can only bet one way. In this pandemic, there is a strong message being sent that society is morally and politically obligated to bet on the experts and the government...because, even if they have a relatively low “batting average” in terms of predicting the future of this thing, they are the best authority we have on earth.

There’s a saying that in the land of the blind, the one eyed man is king. Never forget that the earth is blind, and even if some people or institutions claim to have an eye, only Jesus Christ has perfect vision. His ascension into heaven is to reveal faith on earth. As he is lifted up he disappears in the clouds. Out of sight out of mind? Does that mean we are left with uncertainty, turning to mistake prone men and women to give us assurance and comfort? That is the faithless response to the ascension...Jesus is gone, now we are left to fend for ourselves.

But the faithful response to the ascension is giving all praise honor and glory every day of our lives to our king who reigns from on high. He has not left us to search for knowledge and power elsewhere. He has not left us so that we may now trust in governments and experts and other mere mortals. In fact he has not left us at all. He has simply taken up his throne. He has always ruled all things, but now his work of salvation is complete and our hearts and consciences are to know that Christ is where he belongs, above all earthly powers and principalities to rule all things, not by consulting with charts, and projections, and experts and governments, but by ordering all things for the good of those who love him, and are called according to his purpose.

The Israelites wanted a human king to rule them, just like the surrounding nations. And what a marvelous irony, what a glorious turnaround, what amazing maneuvering of God. He used the sinful desire of his people who wanted a man to be their lord, as a way to prepare them to receive His own Son. The people wanted a man to be their God, God became a man to be the king of his people.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ to the seat of power is such an essential teaching that no one should overlook the day. I’m not saying we shouldn’t listen to experts, but in a world where God is ignored, it is easy to turn them into false idols. Experts can make predictions about what the virus is going to do next, and what’s the best amount of time to spend washing your hands, but they have no real power. Jesus Christ has ascended on high and fills all things. The reason behind all the power in the world, from the force of gravity to the power of the fused atom is the word and command of Jesus Christ our king. All the handwashing in the world won’t stop a virus if he commands it to spread. And people can shake hands and touch their faces ten times a minute and not get the virus if Jesus commands the plague to cease.

*Trust not in rulers, they are but mortal. Vain are their counsels at life’s last portal. Since sinners can no help afford. Put all your trust in Christ our Lord. Alleluia.*