A Study of Selected Events After the Resurrection and the Ascension
Study Guide

Primary References: The available Concordia Commentaries and R.C.H. Lenski's Commentary on the New Testament

The importance of Resurrection

In **Luke 23:39 – 43** we have the account where Jesus says to "the thief on the cross", **"…today you will be with me in Paradise"** even though this is "three days" before the Resurrection. Additionally, **1 John 1:7** (and other verses as well) says that "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." Therefore, since Christ's sacrifice on the Cross atones for all our sin, why does Paul state in **1 Corinthians 15:17 – "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins"**? Why is the Resurrection critical to our salvation? (**1 Corinthians 15:12 – 58** is very helpful in understanding the full context of verse 17)

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What is the danger of not keeping the Cross of Christ and the Resurrection of Christ in proper balance in our theology, practice, and lives?

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Since, like the thief on the cross, we "go to heaven" when we die, why do we need the resurrection of the body?

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Jesus appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus

The account of Jesus' appearance to the disciples on the way to Emmaus is one of the most well known in the Bible surrounding the Resurrection. Let's take a fresh look at it as we read **Luke 24:13 – 35.**

Who likely were the two disciples relative to Jesus' ministry? See also **Luke 10:1 & 17** and **Acts 1:21 – 26.**

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Considering Luke was a constant companion to Paul once he joined Paul's ministry, how does this post-Resurrection account about Jesus fit well with Paul's preaching to the Jews and may even account for the main reason Luke included it in his Gospel?

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What are possible reasons how it was that Luke named Cleopas as one of the disciples to whom Jesus appeared on the way to Emmaus and of what benefit is that to us? For possible hints see **Luke 1:1 – 4**, **1 Corinthians 15:3 – 6** and **Acts 24:22 – 27.**

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Many theologians, pastors, teachers, and laity have noted that Jesus first appeared to women after His Resurrection indicating their importance and that God wanted them included among his followers and the subsequent Church in general. Considering that Jesus probably spent more time with these two disciples than anyone else on Resurrection Day, what similar and additional lessons do we get from the account of the Jesus' appearance to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus?

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Relative to the Jesus first appearing to women, how is verse 25 particularly consistent with the reaction of the 11 main Disciples and how is this and other verses particularly reassuring to us about the legitimacy of the Resurrection?

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What is the possible theological/doctrinal significance of verses 30 – 31?

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Verse 32 can be considered a positive statement about the Holy Spirit working in our lives from Scripture, but how can it be misinterpreted?

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Any other thoughts on this Biblical account? _____

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Let's finish the book of **Luke** by reading **Luke 24:36 – 53**.

It is interesting to note that this text would indicate that the two disciples that walked with Jesus are likely with the main eleven Disciples when Jesus first appears to that main inner circle. (Actually 10 at this meeting since Thomas was not there.) Others may have been present as well but we are not told.) Why are the Disciples troubled and skeptical of the Resurrection?

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What similarity in teaching does Jesus repeat with the Disciples that also occurred with two on the way to Emmaus? What again is a likely reason that this is repeated?

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Note that in these verses we go straight from that first meeting with Disciples on Resurrection Day to the Ascension. In contrast, **Matthew** ends with the Great Commission but no mention of the Ascension. **Mark's** ending is controversial (we will talk about that separately) but the earliest manuscripts do not even include any accounts of appearances by Jesus after the Resurrection, only an angel announcing to the women that Jesus has risen. **John** ends with the Disciples and Jesus on the shore of the Sea of Galilee with no mention of the Great Commission or the Ascension. How do you account for such a wide variation in Resurrection and post-Resurrection accounts, especially in **Luke** being the only reference to the Ascension that is indisputably in a canonical text?

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The "Who, What, When, Why, and Where" of the Ascension (not necessarily in that order 😊)

First "The Where" – Let's compare **Luke 24:50 – 53** and **Acts 1:9 – 12**. According to these verses where did the Ascension take place?

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We often associate "The Great Commission" with the Ascension (especially in depictions on TV and the movies). However, what do we learn about the location of the Great Commission vs the Ascension (as well as account for apparent discrepancies) in:

Matthew 28:8 – 10, 16 – 20 and **Mark 16:5 – 8, 14 – 20** (Note that verses 14 – 20 are not in the earliest/most reliable manuscripts of **Mark**)

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How do you explain the apparent contradiction in Jesus' directive in **Matthew 28:8 – 10** and **Mark 16:6 – 7** compared to **Luke 24:48 – 49** and **Acts 1:4 – 5**?

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What is(are) the possible reason(s) that Jesus would have the disciples go to Galilee and that He would appear to them there in addition to His appearances in and near Jerusalem? Hint: Consider that much of Jesus' ministry took place in Galilee and consider again **1 Corinthians 15:6**.

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A quick aside: Since **Mark 16:14 – 20** is not in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts and thus is highly disputed as being inspired Scripture, how should we incorporate these verses into our theology?

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"Who" was present at the Ascension and "When" did it occur? What do we learn, and not learn, from **Luke 24:50 – 53,** Acts **1:1 – 11,** and **Acts 2:1 – 2** to help answer that question?

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What do the following verses tell us about "the Why" of the Ascension?

John 14:1 – 3 _____

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John 16:7 – 15 and **John 14:25 – 26** _____

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How do these verses support or help illuminate how the Great Commission (**Matthew 28:18 – 20** and the more condensed version at the Ascension in **Acts 1:8)** will be fulfilled?

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Compare **John 20:16 – 17** to **John 20:27, Matthew 28:9 – 10,** and **Luke 24:39.** How do you explain that Jesus tells Mary Magdalene not to cling (or touch him in the KJV, NKJV, NIV) to him but does not give this same directive to others and even tells the Disciples to touch him? Hint: It has to do with "the Why" of the Ascension. 😊

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What do **Hebrews 9:24 – 26, Hebrews 7:25 – 26, 1 Timothy 2:5,** and **1 John 2:1** tell us about why Jesus ascended into heaven?

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Why is this work of Christ essential?

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It is clear that Jesus physically and visibly ascended into to the sky and became obscured by clouds from the Disciples perspective at the Ascension. That is "the What" of what happened on earth. However, what do the following verses tell us about "what" occurred in heaven upon His arrival and what is the significance of those events?

Psalm 68:18 _____

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Psalm 24:7 – 10 _____

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What insight does this give us about heaven? (See also **Luke 15:7,10**)

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What does this say about how God created us and how we should live?

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How does **Ephesians 4:7 – 16** elaborate more on both "what" and "why" the Ascension occurred?

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The last "what" we will examine is that immediately following the Ascension (if not concurrent with the Ascension) Jesus was seated at the right hand of God. Many verses attest to this. How do the following verses elaborate on the meaning of that momentous event in heaven and earth and in our daily lives?

Matthew 26:62 – 65 _____

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Matthew 28:18 – 20 _____

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Ephesians 1:16 – 23 _____

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Hebrews 10:12 _____

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Any final thoughts on the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord Jesus the Christ?

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He [Jesus] said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." 9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, 11 and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Acts 1:7 – 11 (ESV)