

What Do We Know About Jesus? (10)

Jesus Goes To Heaven

Beloved brethren, if you had the opportunity, right now, to just stop everything and go to heaven, would you do it?

Luke recorded the following for all mankind--50 And he led them out until [they were] over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven. ; Ax.1:9-11--9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

After a carefully reading of the above scriptures and putting yourself in the disciples position, how would you feel? How would you have felt to have your companion and teacher to just be taken up from your presence and to disappear? Jesus had been the companion of the apostles. He had taught them for two and one-half years, they had eaten together and prayed together, and they had faced many difficult times together. Now, all that is to come to an end. Jesus is going to leave them, and they aren't prepared for it! They had become extremely close companions, they loved each other; yet they would see Him no more in the flesh. How do you think they felt? How would you have felt?

The feelings of these apostles were caused by their not understanding the whole truth about Jesus and His work. They were thinking, as we often do, in terms of physical associations--something that was to be in this life and on this earth. Jesus was still going to be with them, but in a different way-- teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.(Mat.28:20). In His prayer in John 17, Jesus repeatedly expressed His concern for these apostles. He loved them as they had loved Him.

In our first bulletin on "What Do We Know About Jesus" we learned that Jesus

was both God and man. Jesus came down from heaven to earth, in the first place, to do the will of His Father (Jn.6:38-38 For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me). He acted and taught in harmony with God's instructions (Jn.12:49-50 For I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life eternal: the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak.). Now that His earthly life was about over, Jesus declares, "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." (Jn.17:4). Jesus could not go to heaven, according to God's plan, until He had done what He was supposed to do. All of His life, then, was in preparation to go to heaven. This whole story is summarized in Philippians 2:5-11, Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient [even] unto death, yea, the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; 10 that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven and [things] on earth and [things] under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. We have already established the fact that Jesus is our example, thus we can see the for our preparation if we are to go to heaven. Jesus walked this earth as a man, and He lived so as to go to heaven! If He did, so can we since He is our example.

Jesus wants us to go to heaven "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne." (Rev.3:21). When Jesus was about to leave this earth, He said to Peter, "Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered, Whither I go, thou canst not follow now; but thou shalt follow afterwards." (Jn.13:36). Jesus tells us the way to heaven, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (Jn.14:6); "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Mat.7:21). He loved us enough to die for us, "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom.5:8), He set the example for us, "For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps:" (1Pet.2:21) to show us it can be done, then He gave us instructions to

follow to get there. Could we possibly have a right to expect more? His shed blood gives power to the gospel, "for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins."(Mat.26:28). The gospel is God's power to save our souls, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"(Rom.1:16), and when we obey His truth we purify our souls, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently:"(1Pet.1:22). Now, we should remember, also, what happens to those not obeying His gospel, "rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: 9 who shall suffer punishment, [even] eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, "(2Thes.1:8-9).

Jesus looked forward, once again, to sharing the glory of the Father in heaven(Jn.17:5), but He was to have even more. All things were to be put under His control(Eph. 1:20-23), and all things are to be under Him until the very end (1Cor.15:24-28)

We have already noticed that Jesus wants to share all this with us. Do we wish to share all this with Him? What would be the only other alternative?

Now, how did you answer the question at the beginning of this bulletin? Jesus longed to go back to heaven! He was not the only one to express this idea, "But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: " (Phil.1:23). It may be that we do not long for it because we are not prepared for it. What do you think?

I sincerely hope these topics of "What Do We Know About Jesus" has been helpful in your understanding our Lord and Savior and His mission to this earth. It has been a pure joy for me to place these thoughts in our bulletin. I am indebted to our Holy Father in revealing these facts through His Son and through His Spirit, and I would be amiss if I didn't thank my beloved brother and teacher Olen Holderby for his dedication to the Lord.

We are truly bless in having Gailen, who spends hours upon hours searching the Scriptures, to ensure only the truth is taught.

We are not here for union, BUT, we are here for UNITY! The same unity that

God and Jesus share, we are one with them by following the divine pattern.