

Small Group Study sermon May 17
With the help of Chat GPT

Opening Prayer

The Ascension of Jesus

Luke 24:44-53 Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Acts 1, selected verses -So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying. All were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

From chat GPT:

The ascension of Jesus is often treated as the quiet conclusion to Easter, but in Scripture it is not an ending at all. It is a coronation, a commissioning, and a promise. In the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles, the ascension stands at the hinge of redemption

history: the earthly ministry of Christ gives way to His heavenly reign and the birth of the Church. Luke alone records the ascension twice—once at the close of his Gospel and again at the opening of Acts. This deliberate repetition tells us something important: the ascension is not a minor detail. It is central to understanding who Jesus is now and what His followers are called to become.

The ascension asks every believer a question: Where is your vision fixed? The disciples initially stared upward, frozen between wonder and uncertainty. But Jesus called them into Spirit-filled attention. The Christian life is lived with eyes lifted toward heaven and feet planted firmly on earth.

Why do you think Luke emphasizes the ascension twice?

Why is the connection between ascension and the Holy Spirit important?

In what ways do believers sometimes “stand looking into heaven” instead of engaging in God’s work?

How does the promise of Christ’s return in Spirit encourage you?

Closing Prayer - Holy God, ascended Lord and Savior, teach us to live in the power of Your resurrection and under the authority of Your Love. Keep us from passive faith and fearful hearts. Fill us with the Holy Spirit so that we may bear witness to Your kingdom with courage and joy. As the disciples watched You ascend, give us hope in Your promise to return. Until that day, help us to worship faithfully, serve boldly, and live expectantly. We pray in your name and say, thank you and Amen.

Have a restful night.