

Deep Dive into Shane's Message from 6-15-25

Bible Study Questions: "He Ascended into Heaven"

Opening Questions

1. **Personal Reflection:** Share about a time when you had to say goodbye to someone important in your life. How did that experience make you feel, and what did you learn from it?
2. **Biblical Foundation:** Read John 16:7 where Jesus says "it is for your good that I am going away." How does this statement challenge our natural desire to have Jesus physically present with us? What might Jesus mean by "for your good"?

Understanding the Ascension

3. **Scripture Study:** Read Acts 1:1-11 together. What details stand out to you about how the ascension took place? What was the disciples' mindset and expectations at this moment?
4. **Greater Works:** In John 14:12, Jesus promises that believers will do "even greater things" than He did because He was going to the Father. How do you understand this promise? Can you think of examples from church history or your own experience where this has been fulfilled?

The Holy Spirit's Role

5. **Spirit vs. Physical Presence:** Shane argued that having the Holy Spirit is actually better than having Jesus physically present. Do you agree with this? What are the advantages of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us compared to Jesus' physical presence?
6. **Personal Application:** Jesus told His disciples to "wait for the gift my Father promised" (Acts 1:4). How can we better surrender to and cooperate with the Holy Spirit's work in our daily lives?

Kingdom Implications

7. **Here But Not Yet:** Shane described Jesus' kingdom as "here, but not yet." What does this mean practically for how we live today? How do we balance anticipating Christ's return while actively participating in His kingdom now?
8. **Witnesses and Representatives:** In Acts 1:8, Jesus calls His followers to be His "witnesses." What does it mean to be Jesus' representatives on earth? How does knowing we carry His presence through the Holy Spirit change how we interact with others?

Living in Light of the Ascension

9. **Confidence in Trials:** Shane mentioned we can live with confidence knowing Jesus' presence is always with us. Think of a current challenge you're facing. How might remembering the ascension and the indwelling Holy Spirit change your perspective on this situation?
10. **Enthronement:** The sermon described the ascension as Jesus' enthronement—Him taking His rightful place on the throne. How does knowing Jesus is currently reigning as King "far above all rule and authority" (Ephesians 1:21) impact how you view current world events or personal struggles?

Application and Response

11. **Mary's Clinging:** Jesus told Mary Magdalene not to cling to Him because He hadn't yet ascended (John 20:17). Shane said we don't need to cling to Jesus because "Jesus is clinging to us." What does this mean for how we approach our relationship with Christ? What might we be "clinging to" that we need to release?
12. **Living in Anticipation:** The angels asked the disciples, "Why do you stand here looking into the sky?" (Acts 1:11). How do we balance eagerly awaiting Christ's return while actively engaging in His kingdom work today? What is one specific way you can be "about the kingdom" this week?

Discussion Questions: "He Ascended into Heaven"

Opening & Personal Connection

1. **Goodbye Experiences:** Shane opened by talking about difficult goodbyes. Share about a time when someone important had to leave your life. How did you initially feel, and how did your relationship change over time?
2. **Presence vs. Absence:** If you could have Jesus physically present with you for one day, what would you want to do or talk about? After hearing this sermon, how might your answer change?

Challenging Our Assumptions

3. **Better Than Physical Presence:** Shane argued that Jesus leaving was actually "for our good." This seems counterintuitive. What's your honest reaction to this claim? What would it take for you to truly believe this?
4. **Greater Works Promise:** Jesus promised His followers would do "greater things" than He did. What does this look like in practical terms today? Have you seen examples of this, or does it feel like an unfulfilled promise?

The Holy Spirit Reality

5. **Spirit vs. Jesus:** If the Holy Spirit is truly Jesus' presence with us, why do many Christians still feel distant from God or struggle to sense His presence? What might be getting in the way?
6. **Daily Surrender:** Shane talked about surrendering to the Holy Spirit's work. What does this actually look like on a Tuesday morning or during a stressful week? How do we "listen for what God is doing"?

Kingdom Living

7. **Here But Not Yet:** The kingdom is "already here but not yet fully realized." How do you see evidence of God's kingdom in the world today? Where do you see the "not yet" most clearly?
8. **Being Jesus' Hands and Feet:** Shane said we get to be Jesus' "hands and feet" on earth. When have you felt like you were truly representing Jesus to someone? What made that experience meaningful?

Wrestling with Doubt

9. **When God Feels Absent:** Even knowing Jesus' presence is with us through the Spirit, there are times when God feels distant or silent. How do you reconcile the promise of His constant presence with these experiences?
10. **Jesus on the Throne:** Shane emphasized that Jesus is currently reigning as King over all things. When you look at suffering, injustice, or chaos in the world, how do you hold onto this truth? What questions does it raise for you?

Personal Application

11. **Clinging vs. Being Held:** Shane said we don't need to cling to Jesus because "Jesus is clinging to us." What are you currently "clinging to" - whether it's control, relationships, outcomes, or security? How might trusting that Jesus is holding onto you change how you live?
12. **Kingdom Action:** The angels essentially told the disciples to stop staring at the sky and get to work. What's one specific way you sense God calling you to participate in His kingdom work this week? What's holding you back from taking that step?