

**Loris First Baptist Church**  
***“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”***

**Doctrine #11: God the Son (His Ascension and Priestly Ministry)**

Note: Most information based on pages 70-75 of the book “Major Bible Themes” by Lewis Sperry Chaffer.

**The Fact of the Ascension of Christ:**

1. Since the “resurrection” of Christ is the “first” in a series of exaltations of Christ, the “ascension” of Christ to heaven may be considered the second important step.

Mark 16:19 *“After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, HE WAS TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN and He sat at the right hand of God.”*

Luke 24:50-51 *“When He had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up his hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, HE LEFT THEM AND WAS TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN.”*

Acts 1:9-11 *“After He said this, HE WAS TAKEN UP BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, WHO HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM YOU INTO HEAVEN, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

2. The question has been raised whether Christ ascended to heaven “prior” to His “formal” ascension stated in Mark 16:19, Luke 24:50-51, and Acts 1:9-11.

- a. Those who believe in a “prior” ascension point out the word of Christ to Mary Magdalene:

John 20:17 *“I ASCEND unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”*

- b. Those who believe in a “prior” ascension point out the typology of the Old Testament where the priest, right after sacrifice, brought blood into the holy place. They apply that concept to what Christ did after dying on the cross:

Hebrews 9:11-12 *“When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but HE ENTERED THE MOST HOLY PLACE ONCE FOR ALL BY HIS OWN BLOOD, having obtained eternal redemption.”*

Hebrews 9:24 *“For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; HE ENTERED HEAVEN ITSELF, now to appear for us in God’s presence.”*

3. Although expositors (i.e. biblical scholars and theologians) have differed in their opinions, most conservative evangelicals believe in only “1” ascension of Christ into heaven after His death.

a. They interpret the present tense of John 20:17, “I ascend,” as being his FUTURE and ONLY ascension into heaven.

b. They point out that, in Hebrews, Scripture is careful to point out that Christ entered heaven “by His blood” or “through His blood” and NOT “with” His blood.

(1) The physical application of blood occurred only on the cross.

(2) The benefits of the finished work continue to be applied to believers today.

1 John 1:7 *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and THE BLOOD OF JESUS, his Son, purifies us from all sin.”*

4. A further question has been raised whether the ascension in Acts 1:9-11 was a “literal” (i.e. “true” and “actual”) act that really occurred.

a. The passage fully supports the fact that Christ “literally” went to heaven, just as “literally” as He came to earth when He was conceived and born.

b. Acts 1 uses four Greek words to describe the ascension:

(1) “He was TAKEN up” (v. 9);

(2) “a cloud RECEIVED Him out of their sight” (v. 9);

(3) “He WENT up” (v. 10);

(4) and “is TAKEN up from you into heaven” (v. 11).

Note 1: These four statements are significant because in verse 11 it is predicted that HIS SECOND COMING WILL BE IN A LIKE MANNER; that is, His ascension and His second coming will be gradual, visible, bodily, and with clouds (Acts 1:9-11).

Note 2: This refers to His coming to “set up His kingdom” (Revelation 19:11-20:6) rather than to the rapture of the church (1Thessalonians 4:13-17).

## Evidence for the Arrival of Christ in Heaven

1. Although the evidence for His ascension from earth to heaven is complete, the fact that Christ is repeatedly said to have arrived in heaven confirms the fact of His ascension.
2. Many passages testify that Christ is seen in heaven after His ascension:

Acts 2:32-35 “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. EXALTED TO THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.’”

Acts 3:21 “He (i.e. Jesus) MUST REMAIN IN HEAVEN until the time comes for God to restore everything, as He promised long ago through His holy prophets.”

Acts 7:55-56 “But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, LOOKED UP INTO HEAVEN and saw the glory of God, AND JESUS standing at the right hand of God. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’”

Acts 9:3-6 “As he (i.e. Paul) neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ ‘Who are you, Lord?’ Saul asked. ‘I AM JESUS, whom you are persecuting,’ He replied. ‘Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’”

Acts 22:6-8 “About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly A BRIGHT LIGHT FROM HEAVEN flashed around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?’ ‘Who are you, LORD?’ I asked.”

Acts 26:13-15 “About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I SAW A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’”

Romans 8:34 “Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—IS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD and is also interceding for us.”

Ephesians 1:20-22 “...which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead AND SEATED HIM AT HIS RIGHT HAND IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church...”

Ephesians 4:8-10 “*This is why it says: ‘When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.’ (What does ‘he ascended’ mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)*.”

Philippians 2:6-11 “*Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, IN HEAVEN and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*”

Philippians 3:20 “*But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await A SAVIOR FROM THERE, the Lord Jesus Christ...*”

1Thessalonians 1:9b-10 “*...They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN, whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.*”

1Thessalonians 4:16 “*For the Lord Himself WILL COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*”

Hebrews 1:3 “*The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty IN HEAVEN.*”

Hebrews 4:14 “*Therefore, since we have a great high priest WHO HAS GONE THROUGH THE HEAVENS, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.*”

Hebrews 7:26 “*Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, EXALTED ABOVE THE HEAVENS.*”

Hebrews 8:1 “*The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty IN HEAVEN...*”

Hebrews 9:24 “*Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; HE ENTERED HEAVEN ITSELF, now to appear for us in God’s presence.*”

Hebrews 12:2 “*Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND of the throne of God.*”

Revelation 5:5-6 “*Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.’ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, STANDING IN THE CENTER OF THE THRONE, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He came and took the scroll from the right hand of HIM WHO SAT ON THE THRONE.”*

## The Meaning of the Ascension

1. The ascension marked the end of His earthly ministry. As Christ had come, born in Bethlehem, so now He had returned to the Father. It also marked the return to His manifested glory which was hidden in earthly life even after His resurrection.
2. His entrance into heaven was a great triumph, signifying the completion of His work on earth, and an entering into His new sphere of work at the right hand of the Father.
3. The position of Christ in heaven is one of universal lordship while awaiting His ultimate triumph and His second coming, and Christ is frequently pictured at the right hand of the Father:

Psalm 110:1 *"The LORD says to my Lord: 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"*

Luke 20:42-43 *"Then Jesus said to them, 'How is it that they say THE CHRIST is the Son of David? David himself declares in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord: 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"*

Luke 22:67-69 *"'If you are the Christ,' they said, 'tell us.' Jesus answered, 'If I tell you, you will not believe Me, and if I asked you, you would not answer. But from now on, the Son of Man WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MIGHTY GOD.'"*

Ephesians 1:20 *"...which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead AND SEATED HIM AT HIS RIGHT HAND IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS.."*

Colossians 3:1 *"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, WHERE CHRIST IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD."*

1Peter 3:22 *"It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, WHO HAS GONE INTO HEAVEN AND IS AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to Him."*

4. The throne which Christ occupies in heaven is the Father's throne, not to be confused with the Davidic throne which is earthly.
5. Earth yet awaits the time when it will be made His footstool and His throne will be set up on earth as Jesus, Himself, proclaimed:

Matthew 25:31-32 *"When the Son of Man COMES IN HIS GLORY, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on HIS THRONE (i.e. "earthly" throne) in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."*

6. His present position is, of course, one of honor and authority, and in keeping with His position as Head of the church.

Colossians 1:18 "AND HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy."

### **The Present Work of Christ in Heaven**

1. In His position at the right hand of the Father, Christ fulfills the seven figures relating Him to the church:
  - a. Christ as the last Adam and head of the new creation;
  - b. Christ as the Head of the body of Christ;
  - c. Christ as the Great Shepherd of His sheep;
  - d. Christ as the True Vine in relation to the branches;
  - e. Christ as the Chief Cornerstone in relation to the church as stones of the building;
  - f. Christ as our High Priest in relationship to the church as a royal priesthood;
  - g. Christ as the Bridegroom in relation to the church as the bride.
    - 1) All of these figures are full of meaning in describing His present work. His chief ministry, however, is as our High Priest representing the church before the throne of God.
    - 2) Important truths are revealed in His work as High Priest.
      - a) As High Priest over the true tabernacle on high, the Lord Jesus Christ has entered into heaven itself there to minister as Priest in behalf of those who are His own in the world:

Hebrews 8:1-2 "The point of what we are saying is this: WE DO HAVE SUCH A HIGH PRIEST, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the SANCTUARY, THE TRUE TABERNACLE set up by the Lord, not by man."

- b) The fact that He, when ascending, was received by His Father in heaven is evidence that His earthly ministry was "accepted".
- c) That He sat down indicated that His work for the world was "completed".
- d) That He sat down on His Father's throne and not on His own throne reveals the truth, constantly and so consistently taught in the Scriptures, that He did not set up a

kingdom on the earth at His first advent into the world, but that He is now “waiting” until the time when that kingdom shall come in the earth and the divine will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Revelation 11:15 *“The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: The kingdom of the world HAS BECOME the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and HE WILL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.”*

- e) The Son, at the right hand of God, will yet “ask” of His Father (when the right time has come) and God, the Father, will give His Son, the Christ, the nations for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession:

Psalm 2:7-8 *“I will proclaim THE DECREE OF THE LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father. ASK OF ME, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.”*

- f) However, Scripture clearly indicates that He is not now establishing that kingdom rule in the earth, but that He is rather calling out from both Jews and Gentiles a heavenly people who are related to Him as His body and bride.
- g) After the present purpose is accomplished He will return and “build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down”:

Acts 15:14-17 *“Simon has described to us how God at first showed His concern BY TAKING FROM THE GENTILES A PEOPLE FOR HIMSELF. The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: ‘After this I will return AND REBUILD DAVID’S FALLEN TENT. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, that THE REMNANT OF MEN (i.e. “Jews”) may seek the Lord, and ALL THE GENTILES WHO BEAR MY NAME, says the Lord, who does these things’”*

- h) Though Jesus Christ is a King-Priest according to the Melchizedek type, He is now serving as Priest and not as King.

Hebrews 5:8-10 *“Although He (i.e. the Christ) was a son, He learned obedience from what He suffered and, once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him and was designated by God TO BE HIGH PRIEST IN THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”*

Hebrews 7:1 *“This Melchizedek was KING of Salem AND PRIEST of God Most High...”*

1John 2:1 *“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who SPEAKS TO THE FATHER IN OUR DEFENSE—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”*

i) He who is coming again and will then be King of Kings:

Revelation 19:11-16 *"I SAW HEAVEN STANDING OPEN and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice He judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on His head are MANY CROWNS. He has a name written on Him that no one knows but He Himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."*

2. As our High Priest Christ is the bestower of spiritual gifts.

Ephesians 4:7-11 *"BUT TO EACH ONE OF US GRACE HAS BEEN GIVEN AS CHRIST APPORTIONED IT. This is why it says: 'When He ascended on high, He led captives in His train AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.' (What does "He ascended" mean except that He also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) IT WAS HE WHO GAVE SOME TO BE apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers..."*

- a. According to the New Testament, a gift is a divine enablement wrought in and through the believer by the Spirit who indwells him. It is the Spirit working to accomplish certain divine purposes within men in accordance with Christ's direction:

John 16:13-15 *"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. HE WILL NOT SPEAK ON HIS OWN; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to Me BY TAKING WHAT IS MINE AND MAKING IT KNOWN TO YOU. ALL THAT BELONGS TO THE FATHER IS MINE. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."*

- b. The Lord did not leave this work to the uncertain and insufficient judgment of men

1 Corinthians 12:8-11 *"To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and HE GIVES THEM TO EACH ONE, JUST AS HE DETERMINES."*

3. The ascended Christ as Priest ever lives to make intercession for His own.

- a. This ministry began before He left the earth (John 17:1-26) and is for the "saved" rather than for the "unsaved":

John 17:9 *"I pray for them (i.e. "saved" disciples). I am not praying for the world (i.e. "lost" men), but for*



those You have given Me, for they are Yours.”

- b. This ministry will continue in heaven as long as His own are in the world. His work of intercession has to do with the weakness, the helplessness, and the immaturity of the saints who are on the earth—things concerning which they are in no way guilty.

Hebrews 4:14-16 *“Therefore, since WE HAVE A GREAT HIGH PRIEST WHO HAS GONE THROUGH THE HEAVENS, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest WHO IS UNABLE TO SYMPATHIZE WITH OUR WEAKNESSES, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, SO THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY AND FIND GRACE TO HELP US IN OUR TIME OF NEED.”*

Hebrews 7:23-25 *“Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives forever, HE HAS A PERMANENT PRIESTHOOD. Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, BECAUSE HE ALWAYS LIVES TO INTERCEDE FOR THEM.”*

1John 2:1 *“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. BUT IF ANYONE DOES SIN, we have one who speaks to the Father IN OUR DEFENSE—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”*

- c. He who knows the limitations of His own, and the power and strategy of the foe with whom they have to contend, is to them as the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

Psalms 23:1 *“THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I shall not be in want.”*

1Peter 2:24-25 *“He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep GOING ASTRAY, but now you have returned to THE SHEPHERD AND BISHOP OF YOUR SOULS.”*

Luke 22:31-32 *“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. BUT I HAVE PRAYED FOR YOU, Simon, THAT YOUR FAITH MAY NOT FAIL. AND WHEN YOU TURN BACK, strengthen your brothers.”*

1Peter 5:8-10 *“Be self-controlled and alert. YOUR ENEMY THE DEVIL prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, WILL HIMSELF RESTORE YOU AND MAKE YOU STRONG, FIRM AND STEADFAST.”*

4. Christ now appears for His own in the presence of God.

- a. The child of God is often guilty of actual sin which would separate him from God were it not for his Advocate and what He wrought in His death.
- b. The effect of the Christian’s sin upon himself is that he loses his fellowship with God, his joy, his peace, and his power.

1John 1:6-7 "*If we CLAIM TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. BUT IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, PURIFIES US FROM ALL SIN.*"

- c. All a child of God needs to do to restore his fellowship with God (as well as his joy, peace, and power) is to simply "confess" ("admit" and "repent" from) the sin that caused the damage to the relationship with God:

1John 1:9 "*IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, He is faithful and just and WILL FORGIVE US OUR SINS and purify us from all unrighteousness.*"

- d. Through the present priestly advocacy of Christ in heaven there is absolute "safety" and "security" for the Father's child *even while the child of God is sinning.*

- 1) An "advocate" is one who espouses and pleads the cause of another in the open courts.
- 2) As Advocate, Christ is now appearing in heaven for His own even "when" and "while" they are sinning:

Hebrews 9:24 "*For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; He entered heaven itself, now TO APPEAR FOR US in God's presence.*"

1John 2:1 "*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And IF ANYONE SINS, we have an ADVOCATE with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*"

- 3) Christ's pleading is said to be with the Father, and Satan is there also, ceasing not to accuse the brethren night and day before God:

Revelation 12:9-10 "*THE GREAT DRAGON was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, WHO ACCUSES THEM BEFORE OUR GOD DAY AND NIGHT, has been hurled down.'*"

- a) To the Christian, the sin may seem insignificant; but a holy God can never treat it lightly. It may be a secret sin on earth; but it is open scandal in heaven.
  - b) In marvelous grace and without solicitation from men, the Advocate pleads the cause of the guilty child of God.
- 4) What the Advocate does in thus securing the safety of the believer is so in accordance with infinite *justice* that He is mentioned in this connection as "Jesus Christ the righteous." Because He pleads for us based on His own perfectly redeeming blood, the Father is free to preserve His child against every accusation from Satan or men and from

the very judgments which sin would otherwise impose, since Christ through His death became the righteous “atonement” for all of our sins (past, present, and future):

Romans 3:25-26 *“God presented Him as A SACRIFICE OF ATONEMENT, through faith in HIS BLOOD. He did this to demonstrate HIS JUSTICE, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— He did it to demonstrate HIS JUSTICE at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those WHO HAVE FAITH IN JESUS.”*

NOTE(1): The truth concerning the priestly ministry of Christ in heaven DOES NOT make it “easy” or provide an “excuse” for the Christian to sin.

1John 2:1 *“My dear children, I write this to you SO THAT YOU WILL NOT SIN...”*

Romans 6:1-2 *“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; HOW CAN WE LIVE IN IT ANY LONGER?”*

NOTE(2): No one true Christian can sin carelessly who considers the necessary pleading which his sin imposes upon the Advocate.

1John 3:6 *“NO ONE WHO LIVES IN HIM KEEPS ON SINNING. No one who continues to sin has either seen Him or known Him...”*

1John 3:9-10a *“NO ONE WHO IS BORN OF GOD WILL CONTINUE TO SIN, because God’s seed remains in him; HE CANNOT GO ON SINNING, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right IS NOT A CHILD OF GOD...”*

5) The priestly ministries of Christ as Intercessor and as Advocate are unto “the eternal security” of those who are saved:

Romans 8:34 *“Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and IS ALSO INTERCEDING FOR US. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? ...For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION, WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

### **The Present Work of Christ on Earth**

1. Christ is also at work in His church on earth while He is bodily at the right hand of God in heaven.
2. In numerous passages Christ is said to indwell His church and to be with His church:

Matthew 28:18-20 *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, to the very end of the age.”*

John 14:18-20 "I will not leave you as orphans; I WILL COME TO YOU...On that day you will realize that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I AM IN YOU."

Colossians 1:27 "To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory."

3. He also abides in His church in the sense that He is the giver of eternal life to His church:

John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come THAT THEY (i.e. "His sheep") MAY HAVE LIFE, and have it to the full."

John 11:25 "I am the resurrection and THE LIFE. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and BELIEVES IN ME WILL NEVER DIE..."

John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, AND THE LIFE. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Colossians 3:4 "When Christ, WHO IS YOUR LIFE, appears, then YOU ALSO WILL APPEAR WITH HIM in glory."

1John 5:11-12 "And this is the testimony: God has given us ETERNAL LIFE, and this life is in his Son. HE WHO HAS THE SON HAS LIFE; He who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

4. In addition to Christ's own ministry to the church, He has sent His Holy Spirit to accomplish a present work in the believer, and the Father, likewise, indwells all believers in this age:

John 14:23 "Jesus replied, 'If anyone loves Me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and WE WILL COME TO HIM AND MAKE OUR HOME WITH HIM.'"

It may be concluded that the present work of Christ is the key to understanding God's present undertaking, that of calling out a people to form the body of Christ, and the empowering and sanctifying of this people to be a witness to Christ to the ends of the earth. His present work is preliminary to that which will follow in the events related to His second coming.

**Loris First Baptist Church**  
***“52 Vital Doctrines of The Bible”***

**Doctrine # 11 God the Son: His Ascension and Priestly Ministry**

1. Read Pages 1-12 from the Doctrine#11 Study Guide by next Wednesday.

2. Answer the following Questions about “God the Son” as you read:

**a. The Fact of the Ascension of Christ:**

- 1) According to Luke 24:50-51, after the resurrected Jesus had spoken to His disciples for the last time, what happened to Him?
  
- 2) According to Acts 1:9-11, what did the two men dressed in white tell the “Men of Galilee” had happened to the resurrected Jesus?
  
- 3) True or False. Some theologians believe that Jesus may have “ascended” into heaven right after He died on the cross and PRIOR to his final “formal” ascension into heaven.  
(page 1, middle; also John 20:17; Hebrews 9:11-12, 24)
  
- 4) True or False. According to Hebrews 9:11-12, Jesus entered into The Most Holy Place (i.e. in heaven) “with” His own blood, similar to what Israel’s high priest would do in the Tabernacle of Moses or the Temple in Jerusalem. (see also page 2, top)
  
- 5) According to 1John 1:7, what is a major benefit of “the blood” of Jesus spilt at Calvary?
  
- 6) True or False. Scripture seems to clearly indicate that Jesus Christ’s ascension into heaven was a “literal”, “physical” act that really occurred. (page 2, middle; also Acts 1:9-11)

**b. Evidence for the Arrival of Christ in Heaven:**

- 1) According to Acts 2:32-35, when Jesus entered into heaven, where was He exalted to?
  
- 2) According to Acts 3:21, what must Jesus do “until the time comes for God to restore everything”?
  
- 3) According to Ephesians 1:20-22, what did God the Father do with Christ when He raised Him from the dead?
  
- 4) True or False. Many passages of Scriptures testify to the “literal” fact that Christ is truly IN HEAVEN after His ascension. (page 3, top)
  
- 5) According to Hebrews 9:24, Christ did NOT enter a “man-made” sanctuary “that was only a copy of the true one”, rather, He entered “what”?

**c. The Meaning of the Ascension:**

- 1) What did the “ascension” mark the “end” of? (page 5, top)
  
- 2) What did the “ascension” mark the “return” to? (page 5, top)
  
- 3) According to Scripture, the position of Christ in heaven is one of “universal lordship” while He is awaiting what? (page 5, middle; also Psalm 110:1; Luke 20:42-43)

4) True or False. The throne which Christ occupies in heaven is the Davidic throne that was promised to The Son of Man in Psalm 89:3-4, Luke 1:32; and Matthew 25:31-32.  
(page 5, bottom and page 6, top)

5) According to Colossians 1:18, while Christ is on His throne in heaven, what is He still the “head of” that is located on the earth?

**d. The Present Work of Christ in Heaven:**

1) In His position at the right hand of the Father, how many “figures” does Christ fulfill that relate Him to His church? (page 6, middle)

2) List the descriptive “titles” of all the figures given in Scripture that help us understand Christ’s present work amongst “The Church” (i.e. His believers) while He is still in heaven? (page 6, middle-bottom)

3) What is the “chief” of all the ministries of Christ for His people on earth, while He remains in heaven?  
(page 6, bottom; see also Hebrews 8:1-2)

4) The fact that Jesus was “received” by His Father in heaven when He ascended is evidence that Christ’s earthly ministry was “accepted”. The fact that Christ “sat down” in Heaven once He ascended is an indication of “what”? (page 7, top)

5) True or False. The revelation of Scripture that Jesus Christ sat down on His Father’s throne and not on His own throne when He ascended into heaven clearly indicates that Jesus Christ DID NOT set up a kingdom on earth at His first advent (i.e. coming) into the world.  
(page 7, top)

- 6) According to Psalm 2:7-8, what is the “decree of the Lord”? (see also page 7, middle)
  
- 7) Scripture clearly indicates that Jesus Christ is NOT NOW establishing His kingdom rule in the earth (i.e. as the Catholic Church teaches!), but that He is rather doing “what” through His church?  
(page 7, middle)
  
- 8) According to Acts 15:14-17, after Jesus Christ has finished “calling out His people”, He will return to earth and rebuild what? (page 7, bottom)
  
- 9) According to Hebrews 5:8-10, because Jesus Christ “learned obedience from what He suffered”, once “made perfect”, He was “designated” by God to be “what”?
  
- 10) According to 1John 2:1, while in heaven, what is something that Jesus Christ is doing on our behalf while serving as our High Priest?
  
- 11) True or False. Jesus Christ is currently fulfilling His role (in the order of Melchizedek) as our High Priest, but will not fulfill His role as the King of the world until He comes back to earth.  
(page 8, top; see also Revelation 19:11-16)
  
- 12) According to Ephesians 4:7-11, as our High Priest, Christ is the “bestower” of what to His children?  
(see also page 8, middle)
  
- 13) According to the New Testament, what is essentially a “spiritual gift”? (page 8; John 16:13-15)



- 14) According to 1 Corinthians 12:8-11, who gives “spiritual gifts” to Christ’s church and who determines which believer gets which spiritual gift?
  
- 15) The “ascended” Christ as our High Priest ever lives to do “what” for His own? (page 9, top)
  
- 16) True or False. Christ’s intercessory ministry is for “all men” on the earth.  
(page 9, top; John 17:9)
  
- 17) According to Scriptural revelation, what does Jesus Christ’s work of “intercession” have to do with?  
(page 9, top)
  
- 18) According to Hebrews 4:14-16, as our High Priest, what is something that Jesus Christ is able to “sympathize” with and “give to us” when we need it?
  
- 19) According to Psalm 23:1, what is one benefit to the believer of having the Lord as “our Shepherd”?
  
- 20) According to 1 Peter 5:8-10, what is something that Jesus Christ will do as our High Priest after we have suffered a little while “standing firm in the faith”?
  
- 21) The child of God is often “guilty” of actual “sin” which would separate him from God were it not for what? (page 10, top)

- 22) Instead of losing our salvation, what do we actually lose as believers when we choose to sin?  
(page 10, top; 1John 1:6-7)
- 23) According to 1John 1:9, if we (i.e. believers) “confess our sins” to God, what happens?
- 24) True or False. Through the priestly “advocacy” of Christ in heaven, there is absolute “safety” and “security” for a child of God even while the child of God is “sinning”.  
(page 10, middle; Hebrews 9:24; 1John 2:1; Revelation 12:9-10)
- 25) To a Christian, his sin may seem insignificant and a “secret” on earth, but what is it in heaven?  
(page 10, bottom)
- 26) Because Jesus Christ, as our High Priest, pleads for the believer’s sins based on His own perfectly redeeming blood, the Father is “free” to do what? (page 11, top; see also Romans 3:25-26)
- 27) According to Romans 3:25, how does Jesus Christ become YOUR “sacrifice of atonement”?
- 28) True or False. Because Jesus Christ is our High Priest, it is “OK” for a believer to choose to sin.  
(page 11, middle; see also 1John 2:1 and Romans 6:1-2)
- 29) According to 1John 3:6, no “true believer” keeps on doing what?

- 30) According to 1John 3:9-10, what is something that a person who is “saved” (i.e. “born of God) is incapable of doing?
  
- 31) According to 1John 3:10, if someone does not do what is right (i.e. continues to blatantly sin) what can we know for certain that person is NOT?
  
- 32) The priestly ministries of Christ as Intercessor and as Advocate are for what?  
(page 11, bottom; see also Romans 8:34)

**e. The Present Work of Christ on Earth:**

- 1) According to Matthew 28:18-20, where is Jesus Christ in relation to His church while He is sitting on His throne in Heaven?
  
- 2) According to John 14:18-20, where is Jesus Christ in relation to an individual believer while He is sitting on His throne in Heaven?
  
- 3) Scripture reveals clearly that Christ abides in His church in the sense that He gives “what” to believers?  
(page 12, middle; see also John 10:10, John 11:25, 1John 5:11-12)
  
- 4) True or False. Only God, the Son, indwells believers and makes His home within them.  
(page 12, bottom; John 14:23)