

“All Things Under His Feet”

God the Father raised Christ from the dead “and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things under His feet ...” This is the Gospel of the Ascension of Our Lord!

He who descended has ascended. The Son of God returns “from whence He came.” The authority, power and dominion that He willingly set aside He now takes in hand once again – “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to [Him]” – Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty, ruling and reigning over all things.

Let me say this in another way. Jesus, the Son of God, is the One through whom all things were created (as St. John writes in his Gospel). He is the Creator who rules and reigns over all Creation! God alone is Creator – and everything else is Creation. More importantly – He is the Creator – and you are not.

So why would the Son of God leave His heavenly throne in the first place – to come into His creation? Why set aside His power and authority to be born in human flesh – to live, suffer and die – to be buried, and raised to life again on the third day – only to return “from whence He came” at His ascension?

Why? All of this is FOR YOU. The Creator becomes part of Creation – God becomes incarnate – Jesus Christ is true God and true man, at the same time. He is not the kind of God the deists believe in – a far, far away God – a God who creates, and then walks away (like winding up a clock, and leaving it to run by itself).

No, the one true God gets His hands dirty – He comes in the flesh to live as true man – with all your temptations, sufferings, even death. Why? To “redeem” you, a lost and condemned person – to purchase and win you from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil.

Redemption is bloody work – a work that can’t be delegated to anyone else. God takes it on Himself, because only He can redeem sinners.

This is our Creed – what we believe. We believe such things to be true – by faith, not by sight. And that doesn't sit well with our sinful nature, with our reason, or with science. We want to see in order to believe – we want empirical evidence – we trust the scientific method of hypothesis-experiment-observation-conclusion.

In the Age of Enlightenment – man, ruling over all things according to his own wisdom and reason – rejected the miracles recorded in Holy Scripture because they didn't make sense. The theory of evolution is held by most people today as an undisputed fact. Even in the midst of this pandemic, science is held up as the savior.

And what does God have to say about all of this? “You shall have no other gods.” We are to “fear, love, and trust in God above ALL THINGS.”

Dearly beloved, there is a great danger in removing the Creator from His Creation. To reject that Jesus actually walked on water, and that He was dead and was made alive – is to reject the *supernatural* – which literally means, “above nature.” It is to reject the Creator who is above all Creation – who has dominion over all things.

The theory of evolution takes the Creator out of the picture – and that has devastating results. God is rejected as the source of your life – as the One who sustains your life – and who gives meaning and purpose to life.

To look to science ALONE for your salvation from this virus – is to reject Christ, “who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven” – to redeem us – to save us from all sin, death and eternal destruction. If Christ is not your Savior – then you are left to save yourself.

Will science save you from this pandemic? Maybe ... hopefully. But there will be more to come. Christ promises that in the Last Days there will be pestilences – and already, mankind has experienced much worse pandemics. Will there be an even worse virus down the road – more contagious – mutating faster than vaccines can be developed – matching, or exceeding, the 200 million people who died in the bubonic plague?

How will you face a tragedy like that? How are you facing the tragedy before you today? Certainly science has a role to play – but does God have anything to say or to do? Has He been quarantined to deal with spiritual/heavenly matters while we are left to control physical/earthly matters?

Dearly beloved, WE must repent for taking God out of the picture – of living as if He is far, far removed from our daily strife – for fearing, loving, and trusting in MANY things above God.

Dearly beloved, God is not dead! “Christ is risen. He is risen, indeed!” God is not defeated – sin, death and the devil are defeated. In Christ, “death has been done to death.” Christ has been raised from the dead for your salvation – to deliver you from all evil – to give you life everlasting.

Even now, sitting at the right hand of God the Father almighty – with all things under His feet – He rules and reigns over all things FOR YOU.

Why then, do we suffer such things as illness, disaster, and death? [P] These are the results of mankind’s sin. We have brought these things into God’s very good Creation. Sin is a rebellion against God – and it corrupts all that He has created.

And yet, He rules and reigns over all things – even in the midst of sin’s chaos. The trials and tribulations we endure teach us that we are not in control – that we are not the Creator. They lead us to “fear, love, and trust in God above all things” – to trust that our Creator is also our Redeemer, a gracious and loving God who sacrifices Himself that we might be saved.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus’ body was not just left in the grave – but was raised to life – ascended into heaven – and now sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty – where He lives eternally, as true God and true man?

Because Christ’s ascension is YOUR ascension. Because you were created with both body and soul – created to live in communion with God (not separated from Him). That is why Christ will come again on the Last Day – to take you to heaven – ascending to live with Him in both body and soul --- to deliver you from evil, once and for all.

Until that day – you live by faith – trusting that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus Christ – that He exercises dominion over all Creation for your benefit – that He is with you always, even now, giving you His resurrected-ascended-reigning Body and Blood – to rule over your sin and death with His forgiveness and life – to preserve you steadfast in the one true faith, unto life everlasting. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, guards your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.