

Living an Incredible Life

God's Incredible Calling

Acts 1:1-11

May 4th, 2008

Dramatic vignette entitled "To Those in Need."

As followers of Jesus we have an incredible calling from God: we are the body of Christ on this earth. We are the hands and feet and mouthpiece of Jesus himself. That is a high and holy calling that should always challenge and encourage us. Let's pray together ...

In the church year this morning is called Ascension Sunday. Historically, for followers of Jesus this Sunday used to be a huge celebration. It ranked slightly below Christmas and Easter in importance and in sheer joy and festivity. But in our day, most of us have never heard of it – and if we have, it certainly doesn't rank high on our list of important holy days. "So Jesus ascended into heaven," we say, "Okay, and what does that make in my life?" All the difference in the world. Once we understand what Jesus did and why it will change the course of our lives. So let's explore Ascension Sunday by asking three questions: What happened? What does it mean for us?

First, let's explore what happened. On Ascension Sunday we celebrate that Jesus ascended. Acts 1:9 says, "After he said this, he was taken up before their eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight." The other record of this event occurs at the end of Luke's Gospel – "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." One minute he was there and the next minute – poof! – he was gone. So that's what happened. Now, as I said, historically the church has made a big deal out of the Ascension of Jesus. When was the last time you heard a sermon on the Ascension of Jesus? One of the wonderful benefits of following the traditional church year is this: it helps us reclaim important events in the Bible and it grounds us every year in the pattern of Jesus.

Second, what does it mean for us today? What is the significance for us.