

# Major Bible Themes

## 52 Vital Doctrines of the Scriptures Simplified and Explained

Adapted from the book *Major Bible Themes*  
written by Lewis Sperry Chafer and revised by John f. Walvoord

### God the Son: His Ascension

- The Fact of the Ascension of Christ
  - The ascension of Christ is recorded in Mark 16:19, Luke 24:50-51, and Acts 1:9-11.
  - The phrases “lifted up,” “received Him out of their sight,” and “taken up from you into heaven” in Acts 1 verify that this was a literal ascension.
  - There are references to other ascensions that must have taken place prior to this final ascension...
    - ✦ After Mary Magdalene touched Christ (John 20:17) and before Thomas touched Him (John 20:27).
    - ✦ When Christ prepared the heavenly temple (Heb 9:23-24).
    - ✦ When Christ led the host of captives captive (Eph 4:8-10).
- Evidence of the Arrival of Christ in Heaven
  - The fact that Christ is repeatedly said to have arrived in heaven confirms His ascension.
  - Many passages testify that Christ is in heaven after His ascension (Acts 7:55-56; Phil 3:20; 1 Thess 1:10; 4:16; Heb 9:24; Rev 1:13-18; 5:5-12; 7:9-17; 19:11-16).
- The Meaning of the Ascension
  - The ascension marked the end of Christ’s earthly ministries, His victorious return to His previous glory, and the beginning of His work at the right hand of the Father (Eph 1:20).
  - He currently occupies a heavenly throne, but one day He will sit on the earthly Davidic throne (Matt 25:31).
- The Present Work of Christ in Heaven
  - In His position at the right hand of the Father, Christ fulfills seven figures relating Him to the Church...
    - ✦ As the last Adam and head of the new creation.
    - ✦ As the Head of the body of Christ.
    - ✦ As the Great Shepherd of His sheep.
    - ✦ As the true vine in relation to the branches.
    - ✦ As the Chief Cornerstone in relation to the Church as stones of the building.
    - ✦ As our High Priest in relation to the Church as a royal priesthood.
    - ✦ As the Bridegroom in relation to the Church as the bride.
  - Of these, His chief ministry is as our High Priest representing the Church before the throne of God.

- Four important truths are seen in His work as High Priest...
  - ✦ 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 (Heb 8:1-2).
    - He is now serving as Priest, not King.
    - He is not now establishing a kingdom on earth.
  - ✦ As our High Priest Christ is the granter of spiritual gifts.
    - To each believer some gift is given (1 Pet 4:10).
    - Gifted men are “given” and placed into service (Eph 4:7-11).
  - ✦ As Priest He lives to make intercession for His own (Heb 7:25).
  - ✦ He now appears for His own in the presence of God (1 John 2:1) defending them against the accusations of Satan (Rev 12:10).
- The Present Work of Christ on Earth
  - Christ is at work in His Church on earth while He is in heaven.
  - Christ indwells every born-again believer (Col 1:27).
  - Christ is the Light of men (John 1:4).
  - Christ is the giver of eternal life (John 10:10; 1 John 5:12).
  - Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell every believer so that they might be empowered to accomplish His present work of calling out a people to form the body of Christ and witness about Him to the ends of the earth (John 15:26-27).
  - Christ opens doors of ministry for gifted believers (1 Cor 12:5).

- Questions

- How does the ascension of Christ relate to His exaltation?
- Discuss the question of whether Christ ascended more than once.
- What evidence may be offered to prove that the ascension in Acts 1 is a literal ascension?
- To what extent does Scripture testify to the arrival of Christ in heaven after His ascension?
- How does the ascension of Christ relate to His earthly ministry?
- In what sense was the ascension of Christ a triumph?
- Distinguish the throne of Christ in heaven from the Davidic throne.
- Name the seven figures relating Christ to His Church.
- How is Christ as our High Priest related to the bestowal of spiritual gifts to men?
- Contrast the priestly intercession of Christ with the priests of the Old Testament.
- Describe the work of Christ as our Advocate in heaven.
- To what extent is Christ also working on earth during the present age?