



## WEEKLY STUDY

### WEEK 2

This week, we studied the Ascension of Jesus and discovered what it means for those of us who eagerly await an outpouring of the Spirit of God and the return of Jesus.

Peace of Christ,  
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Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

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### DAILY STUDY

#### MONDAY: ACTS 1.9-11

*After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.*

<sup>10</sup> *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.* <sup>11</sup> *“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.”*

- The question from the men dressed in white might have seemed like a silly one. “We’re looking up because our friend, our Lord, just lifted off the ground and went into the sky.” Wouldn’t you spend some time processing such an unusual sight? But they asked the question to remind them of the instructions Jesus had just given them before his ascension, “Be my witnesses all over the world.” There was work to do. There is work to do as we await the return of this same Jesus. **Why is the fact of the ascension of Jesus so important to the Christian faith? What are its implications for your life today?**
- *Jesus, I worship you...I'm in awe of you...I am sometimes confused by you...but I put my trust in you and in your return. Come Lord Jesus. Amen.*

## TUESDAY: LUKE 24.50-53

*When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.<sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.<sup>52</sup> Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.<sup>53</sup> And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.*

- Luke overlaps his telling of the story between the book of Luke and the book of the Acts of the Apostles. Jesus ascended once, but it was written about in both accounts. Here we see the disciples returning to the city where those who had crucified Jesus 40 days earlier were preparing for the festival of Pentecost. They returned to that place with great joy. **Has God ever redeemed a place that represented great sorrow and allowed you to return with great joy?**
- *God, thank you for your redemptive work in Jesus that can turn the darkest day into a time of rejoicing. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY: JOHN 16.26-30

*In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.<sup>27</sup> No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.<sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”*

*<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus’ disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech.<sup>30</sup> Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”*

- Whereas Jesus often taught in parables and other devices to allow his message to be carried in the hearts of the people who believed, here he is telling his disciples a beautifully difficult truth. He was leaving them and returning to God. Those who believed that he was the Son of God could understand that this had to happen even though they were sad to lose their friend. **When have you had to sacrifice a personal loss for the sake of the bigger picture?**
- *Jesus, I believe that you came and walked this earth. I believe that you suffered and died. I believe that you rose again and ascended into heaven. Send me the power of the Holy Spirit so that I may be a witness to you everywhere I go. Amen.*

## THURSDAY: 1 TIMOTHY 3.16

*Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:*

*He appeared in the flesh,  
was vindicated by the Spirit,  
was seen by angels,  
was preached among the nations,  
was believed on in the world,  
was taken up in glory.*

- This statement of faith that Paul wrote to Timothy contains the mystery that makes possible a godly life for Jesus followers. After his resurrection, Jesus was taken up in glory. Can you imagine the scene? What do you imagine glory looks like? **What do you think Paul meant when he wrote**

**that true godliness springs from the mystery of Jesus' putting on of flesh and returning to heaven?**

- *God, wrap me in the mystery that leads me to a life of godliness. Amen.*

### **FRIDAY: JEREMIAH 29.10-14**

*This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."*

- We can have confidence in the future because of the promises of God. For Jeremiah's audience this meant an understanding of the heart of God for His people. He desires good for us even when we experience seasons of captivity and hardship. Likewise, the ascension of Jesus allows us to live with confidence knowing that he has promised to return in the same way he went up. **What does it feel like to claim these words from Jeremiah are for you? "(Your name), I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."**
- *Jesus, thank you for the hope I have in you and in your return. Even when I can't comprehend the mystery, I trust in you. Amen.*

### **SATURDAY: PSALM 33.16.22**

*No king is saved by the size of his army;  
no warrior escapes by his great strength.  
<sup>17</sup> A horse is a vain hope for deliverance;  
despite all its great strength it cannot save.  
<sup>18</sup> But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him,  
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,  
<sup>19</sup> to deliver them from death  
and keep them alive in famine.  
<sup>20</sup> We wait in hope for the Lord;  
he is our help and our shield.  
<sup>21</sup> In him our hearts rejoice,  
for we trust in his holy name.  
<sup>22</sup> May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,  
even as we put our hope in you.*

- We have confidence in God because of what he has done, is doing, and promises yet to do. We are not saved by the strength of our own armies but by God's unfailing love. And we wait. In order for Jesus to return (Come Lord Jesus) he had to go back to heaven at the ascension. It is really easy to look at the state of the world around us and be discouraged about the future. A hopeful person stands out in the crowd. **When are you most likely to be discouraged about the future? What helps you to stay focused on the promised return of Jesus and the Kingdom he is ushering in?**
- *God, I depend fully on your unfailing love. Deliver me. In you my heart rejoices. Amen.*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read the following passages and discuss your responses to these questions:

1. What does this passage say about the return of Jesus?
2. What does this passage mean for my life today as I wait for Jesus?
3. What does this passage say to the church?

- Matthew 24.42-44

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1 Peter 1.5-7

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 2 Peter 3.11-13

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- Luke 21.34-36

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.