

Where is Jesus Today?

Vintage Jesus, week 5

November 5, 2006

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"I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."

— Jesus (John 16:28)

During His life on earth, Jesus said He was the eternal God who had "come down from heaven" (John 6:38). This is the humble incarnation of Jesus. Jesus also repeatedly said that following His death, burial, and resurrection, He would ascend back into heaven where He had come from (John 6:62; 14:2, 12; 16:5, 10, 28; 20:17). This is the glorious exaltation of Jesus.

Sadly, when many people think of Jesus, they only remember His past humble incarnation and neglect His current glorious exaltation. Indeed, if we were to see Jesus today, we would not see a humble, marginalized Galilean peasant. Instead, we would see what John saw—Ultimate Fighter Jesus:

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. (Revelation 19:11–16)

Jesus physically ascended into heaven.

Acts 1:7–11 *He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 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."*

Jesus took Christians with Him into heaven.

Ephesians 4:8 *"When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train . . ."*

Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father.

Psalms 110:1 *The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."*

Matthew 26:64 *“Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

Jesus is seated upon a throne in heaven.

The imagery of a throne is used roughly 196 times in Scripture, with 135 occurrences in the Old Testament and 61 occurrences in the New Testament. Of the New Testament occurrences, 45 of the 61 are in the book of Revelation. The imagery of the throne appears in 17 of the 22 chapters.

Revelation 4:2–11 . . . *there before me was a **throne** in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the **throne**. Surrounding the **throne** were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the **throne** came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the **throne**, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also before the **throne** there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the **throne**, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.” Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the **throne** and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the **throne**, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the **throne** and say: “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”*

Jesus rules and reigns as Sovereign, King, and Lord.

Matthew 11:27 *“All things have been committed to me [Jesus] by my Father.”*

John 3:35 *The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.*

Ephesians 1:22 *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church . . .*

Acts 10:36 . . . *Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.*

Ephesians 4:15 . . . *we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.*

Colossians 1:15 *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

Colossians 1:17–18 *He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

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.

Jesus is our God-man mediator.

1 Timothy 2:5 *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus . . .*

Jesus has seated us in authority with Him.

Ephesians 2:6 *And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus . . .*

Jesus will take Christians to heaven upon their death.

John 14:2–3 *“In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*

1 Thessalonians 4:17 *After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*

Jesus has commissioned us to herald His reign.

Matthew 28:18–20 *Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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.”*

In conclusion, today Jesus rules and reigns from His heavenly throne over all people, times, and places with all authority. As a result, Jesus is Lord over gays and straights, men and women, young and old, rich and poor, black and white, simple and wise, powerful and powerless, Republicans and Democrats, married and single, Christians and non-Christians, angels and demons, and the living and the dead.

Next week: What will Jesus do upon His return?