

**Series: Understanding the Body of Christ**  
**Tonight's Lesson: The Importance of Christ's Exaltation**

**Introduction:**

1. In time past, God accomplished His work on earth through the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel is an earthly people with earthly promises, and the promise of an earthly kingdom.
  - One day all of these promises will be fulfilled when Christ returns to earth and reigns in Jerusalem as Israel's Messiah and King.
2. Today, Israel's kingdom program has been temporarily postponed, and God is forming and working through a living organism, a new creation called the church, the body of Christ.
3. The body of Christ is not given earthly promises, but heavenly. We are said to possess all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. **Ephesians 1:3**
4. All of these blessings rest upon the truth of Christ's exaltation in the heavenly places. Forty days after Christ's resurrection, He ascended into the heavens and was exalted.
  - Ascension - refers to Christ ascending into the heavenlies in His resurrection body.
  - Exaltation - refers to the act of the Father by which He gave to the risen and ascended Christ the position of honor and power at His own right hand.**Philippians 2:9-11; Ephesians 1:20-23**
5. It is on the basis of Christ's exaltation that the body of Christ can receive spiritual blessings.

**Because He has been exalted, we can have forgiveness of sins.**

1. After Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for sins, He was exalted to the right hand of the Father and sat down. **Hebrews 10:12, 1:3, 12:2; Ephesians 1:20**
2. When Jesus sat down in this exalted position, it spoke of His work of redemption as being complete and finished.
  - **Illustration:** husbands - when you are working around the house and doing a list of jobs that your wife has given you, you don't dare sit down until the work is done.
3. Christ's redemptive work fully satisfied the Father, so the Father sat Him down at His right hand.
4. Because Christ's sacrifice for sin fully satisfied the Father, forgiveness of sin can now be offered to mankind. **Acts 5:31, 13:37-39; Ephesians 1:20-2:1**
5. Forgiveness of sin is not something that we work for; it is something that we rejoice in as a sure fact. Just as sure as Christ is exalted in heavenly places is the truth of our total and complete forgiveness in Christ. **Ephesians 1:7**

**Because He has been exalted, we can now receive God's indwelling Holy Spirit.**

1. Jesus taught the twelve that He could not send the Holy Spirit until He went away. **John 16:7, 14:16-17**
  - After Christ was exalted in heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit in Acts 2. **Acts 2:33**

2. Later, it was revealed through Paul that the moment a person believes on Christ, God's Spirit immediately indwells that individual. **Ephesians 1:12-13, 4:30**
3. Because Christ is exalted, God has shed forth the Holy Spirit **abundantly** to those who believe on Christ. **Titus 3:5-6**
  - The word "shed" means "to pour forth, bestow, gush out."
  - We don't receive part of the Holy Spirit at salvation; we get all of Him!
4. What is the basis on which God can give us His very Spirit and life? **Titus 3:6** says that it is "...*through Jesus Christ our Savior.*"
5. We don't receive the Holy Spirit by **doing**, but by resting in the One who is exalted and seated at the right hand of the Father. **Titus 3:5**

**Because He has been exalted, we now have an intercessor to God the Father.**

1. What is Christ currently doing right now at the right hand of the Father? (**Romans 8:34**) He is making intercession for members of the body of Christ.
  - An intercessor is a go-between. He pleads the case of another.
2. When Satan tries to bring condemning accusations against us, Christ intercedes for us. His exaltation insures that nothing or nobody can separate us from God's love. **Romans 8:35-39**
  - Our intercessor has **power**. **Ephesians 1:20-23**
    - He is the Head of the body and holds all power.
  - Our intercessor has **compassion**. **Hebrews 2:17-18, 4:14-16**
    - The exalted Christ is no longer subject to poverty, pain, weariness, suffering, etc.
    - Yet, He understands all my sufferings, all my tears, all my loneliness, all my weariness, for He Himself has endured them.
    - Christ brought back to the right hand of the Father His glorified humanity, therefore He can understand what I, as a man, go through.
3. Our intercessor has power and compassion - what a combination! What an intercessor!

**In Conclusion:**

1. If you are a member of the body of Christ, this means that you are **in Christ**. His history becomes your history. What is true of Him is true of you. You are dead, buried, and raised with Him. **Colossians 2:12-13**
2. But it doesn't stop there. After He rose from the dead, Christ was exalted in heavenly places. Because we are in Christ, we too have been raised up and seated in heavenly places. **Ephesians 2:6**
3. We now possess all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. They are ours forever. How do we know this? Look at **Ephesians 1:3**. What are the last two words? In Christ!