

April 14, 2019

At the Right Hand of God

Mark 16:15-20

16:15 And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

16:17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

16:18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

16:19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

16:20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.

1. Glory of Jesus

The Apostles’ Creed says: “The Lord was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father.” This statement represents the life and works of Jesus by the letter “V” in the alphabet, as Philippians 2: 6-11 does.

Philippians 2:6-8 says, “Though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of

men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” In the Apostles’ Creed, the same thing is described as followings. “The Lord was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.” It describes that Jesus was walking down from the birth to the cross, from heaven to the earth, from the earth to the the dead. Jesus followed the descending line of the left half of the letter “V”.

Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” This is what the Apostles’ Creed says, “On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father.” Jesus rose from the death, resurrected, returned to heaven, sat on the throne of heaven. He followed the rising line of the right half of the letter “V”.

This “V” is the “V” of “Victory.” He, the Son of God, became a person, suffered affliction, and traced a downside line to death. As a result, we, who were far from God and at the bottom for sins, are saved. Jesus rose from the dead, went to heavens, returned to heaven where he was. Jesus followed the rising line of the letter “V” and arrived at the throne of heaven. Therefore, those who believe in Jesus also have received the life of Jesus’ resurrection, that is, the eternal life, and became a citizen of the heaven where Jesus is there.

It is also for us that Jesus climbs the rising line of the letter “V”, as

it was for our salvation that Jesus followed the falling line of the letter “V”. It is not for Jesus alone to receive glory. Jesus gives us the same glory. The night before the Cross, Jesus told the disciples that he would return to heaven, “in order that where he is the disciples may be also.” (John 14: 3). And he prayed, “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am.” (John 17:24). To those who confess that “On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,” the victory of the resurrection of Jesus and the glory of heaven are given to the person. The victory which Jesus overcomes death is at the same time the victory of those who believe in Jesus the Son of God, the Savior, and the Lord. The Bible says, “Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5: 5) This victory is secured by the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

2. Sovereignty of Jesus

The throne of Jesus is called the “right hand of God.” In Luke 22:69 Jesus himself declares, “But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.” Many places such as Romans 8:34, Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:3 and Hebrews 10:12 say that Christ is in the “right hand of God.” What does this “right hand” mean?

The Bible says, “The right hand of the LORD exalts, the right hand of the LORD does valiantly!” (Psalm 118:16), “My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens.” (Isaiah 48:13). The “right hand” represents “power.” God promised to

save those who trust with his powerful hands. In Isaiah 41:10, “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” Isaiah 41:13 also says, “For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you.’” God will hold our hands out for help and hold them tight with their right hand, and they will never release. If we only hold on to God’s hand, our faith may weaken and let go of it. But it is safe if God holds our hands. It’s the same as a child not getting lost if a parent holds his hand and walks together. As Psalm says, “Give salvation by your right hand and answer me!” (Psalms 60:5, 108:6), let us seek the right hand of God’s power by extending our hand of faith to God.

Thus, the word “right hand” stands for “power.” So, we understand that “the right hand of God” is the seat of the highest authority, where all the power of God works. The arrival of Jesus in the “right hand of God” means that all of God’s almighty power, sovereignty, was given to him. The “right hand of God” is the throne for the King, and it states that Jesus is the Lord of all things.

Believers are also suffer various sufferings and troubles in the world. You may be standing in the middle of nowhere as if all sides were closed. However, heaven is open. “Heaven is open.” This is a great comfort when it feels like there is no place to go in suffering. It is salvation. God will surely give his salvation those who look to the heaven with faith. When people exposed his hostility and pressed him, Stephen looked up at the heavens and said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of

God.” (Acts 7:56) Stephen is empowered by Jesus who is at the right hand of God, and he witnessed for Jesus who is at the right hand. And, he returned victoriously to heaven. We also want to look up to the throne of heaven and to have the salvation from there in the difficulties.

3. Mission of Jesus

Jesus is the King who sits on the right hand of God. So how does Jesus control and guide his Kingdom from the throne? The first disciples of Jesus hoped for the reconstruction of Israel in the ascension of Jesus, but before that, Jesus stated that the gospel should spread from Jerusalem to the Jews, Samaritans, and even to the end of the earth. The Kingdom of God extends to all people in the whole world beyond the racial and physical border. (Acts 1: 6-8). In fact, in just a few years, the gospel was transmitted to people of various races and classes, churches were born in various places, and the Kingdom of God was expanding. One of the purposes for Jesus to return to heaven and to reach the throne was to do the world mission, and thereby expand the Kingdom of God.

Jesus said in John 14:12, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.” After Jesus came back to heaven, the disciples would do “greater works” than Jesus did, but is there anything greater works than Jesus did? No one can do more than Jesus did. But if it does, I think it is a world mission. Jesus preached to all parts of Judea, by himself, and through twelve and seventy-two disciples, but still could not go through all the towns and

villages. Also, the preaching of Jesus was limited to Judea. It is impossible to go somewhere around the earth and to go around the whole world at the same time. However, after seating the throne of heaven, Jesus began the mission to the whole world by pouring the Holy Spirit on all who believe in him and making them his witnesses.

After the resurrection, he commanded, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” (Mark 16:15). And he was “taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.” (Mark 16:19). Jesus entrusted his mission to his disciples. But that does not mean that he is throwing the mission to his disciples and pulling out of it. As Mark 16:20 says, “The Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by accompanying signs.” Jesus himself is preaching with his disciples.

In Matthew 28:18–20, Jesus gave his disciples two promises with the Great Commission. They are “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” and “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” The fact that Jesus says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” means that Jesus comes to the right seat of God. “I am with you always, to the end of the age” is a promise that, even Jesus returns to heaven, he will constantly give his power to his disciples from the seat of the right hand of God. Mark states that Jesus’ promises have realized saying, “The Lord worked with them.” (Mark 16:20)

Jesus still sits on the right hand of God. Just as the Early Church looked up at the throne, gained power from it, and got guidance, let us turn straight to Jesus Christ, who is seated on the right hand of God, and do the “greater works” by him.

(Prayer)

Father God. You have brought Jesus Christ to the best place over anything. That is because we worship Jesus Christ as the Lord, trust in him, and do his work. Even so, our eyes often look at the things of this world and become scared and uneasy. At such times, help us to remember that the Lord is constantly pouring his power from his throne. Help us to look at the throne and guide us to receive the power. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Lord of all things.