

Fathom Academy: Christian Theology

WEEK 9: SOTERIOLOGY PT. 2

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Week 9: Resurrection | Ascension | Exaltation

[Soteriology Pt. 2]

Resurrection, Ascension, Exaltation [*Soteriology* II]

Part I: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Part II: The Ascension of Jesus Christ

Part III: The Exaltation of Jesus Christ

Part IV: Conclusions and Implications

Part I: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Definitions: What the Resurrection is not

- **Resuscitation**
- **A Figment of the Disciples' Imagination (D.F. Strauss)**
- **An Apparition of a Phantasm**
- **A Metaphor for the Experience of New Birth and Forgiveness**

Resurrection in the Gospels

- **Empty Tomb**
- **Bodily**
- **Unique**
- **Unexpected and Terrifying**

Resurrection in the Pauline Corpus

- **Christ as Firstfruits from the Dead [1 Cor. 15:20–23]**
- **Resurrection as the Conquest of Death [1 Cor. 15:26, 54–57]**

- **“Raised for our Justification” [Romans 4:23–25]**

Resurrection in the Wider NT

- **“Death could not hold him” [Acts 2:22–25]**
- **Destroyer of Tyrants [Acts, *passim*]**
- **“New birth into a living hope” [1 Peter 1:3]**
- **“I hold the keys to Death and Hades” [Revelation 1:17–18]**

Resurrection in the History of Doctrine

- **Resurrection as Non-Event (Enlightenment Rationalism)**
- **Resurrection as Human Projection (D.F. Strauss)**
- **Resurrection as Experience of the Early Christian Community (Bultmann)**
- **Resurrection as Beyond Historical Inquiry (Barth)**
- **Resurrection as Open to Historical Inquiry (Pannenberg)**

The *Meaning* of the Resurrection

- **The vindication of the Son [Romans 1:4]**
- **“The inaugurating firstfruits of the eschatological resurrection harvest” [Richard Gaffin]**
- **The beginning of the new creation [Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1]**
- **The pattern for sanctification [Romans 6:3–11; Colossians 3:1–4]**

Part II: The Ascension of Jesus Christ

Definitions: What the Ascension is not

- **The disappearance of Jesus into a disembodied state**
- **A metaphor for Jesus' spiritual omnipresence**
- **A transfer of power from Jesus to the Church**
- **A comment on spatial geography / cosmology**

Ascension in the NT: Key Texts

- **“And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy” [Luke 24:50–53]**
- **“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” [Acts 1:6–11]**

The *Meaning* of the Ascension

- **Ascension orients our view of the relationship between Heaven and Earth**
- **Ascension prevents triumphalism and despair**
- **Ascension must always be linked with Pentecost and Second Coming**
- **Ascension as Coronation**

Part III: The Exaltation of Jesus Christ

Exaltation in the NT: Key Texts

- **Seated far above every rule and authority [Ephesians 1:20–23]**
- **Every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord [Philippians 2:8–11]**

The *Ongoing* Work of the Exalted Son

“In his state of exaltation, there still remains much for Christ to do.”

[Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:568]

- **Holding all things together [Colossians 1:15–17; Hebrews 1:3]**
- **Reigning through his people, the Church [Ephesians 1:22–23; 1 Corinthians 12:12–31]**
- **Making constant intercession on behalf of his people [Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 10:12–14; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1]**

The *Meaning* of the Exaltation

- **Christ is already reigning now, but his reign will one day be complete**
- **Christ is on the throne [Psalm 110:1]**
- **The exaltation of Christ will climax in his return in glory**

Part IV: Conclusions and Implications

Concluding Observations

“ . . . if we seek redemption, we will find it in his passion; acquittal in his condemnation; remission of the curse in his cross; satisfaction in his sacrifice; purification in his blood; reconciliation in his descent into hell; mortification of the flesh in his sepulcher; newness of life in his resurrection; immortality also in his resurrection; the inheritance of the celestial kingdom in his entrance into heaven . . . ”

-John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.16.19