

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Jesus Now Series, Lesson 50

Lesson Title: Ascension—Jesus Reigns in Heaven

Take Home Point: Jesus ascended and now rules and intercedes for us.

Warm-Up:

Imagine you are leaving on an extended vacation. Your best friend gives you a phone card so you can call her whenever you want. "Call me anytime," she says, "and remember I will also pay for any additional time you put on the card. I'll be waiting to hear from you!" You are grateful, and take care to put the phone card in a prominent place in your car. As you travel, you think about your friend, her kindness, and her willingness to listen to your travel stories. Wherever you stop, you mention to people that you have a thoughtful and faithful friend. You make sure you know where the card is at all times. But you never call; you never actually use it. When you return, you tell your friend how appreciative you were and how it helped you think of her. Mystified, she asks, "But why didn't you use it to call me?!"

Read: Acts 1:3-11; Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 7:24-25

Observation (What happened?):

According to Colossians, where are we to set our hearts and minds?

From the verses in Hebrews, what is Jesus doing for us since he is forever alive?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What does it mean to set your heart and mind on things above?

What does it mean that Jesus intercedes for you and me?

Insight:

What did Paul mean when he said to set your heart and mind on things above? Actually, he tells us in Colossians 3:12-14: *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love."* (NIV) These attitudes and decisions are the things above on which we can choose to set our minds. And not only does Jesus himself intercede before God to help us, he has given us his Holy Spirit who also helps us. Once again, it is Paul who writes about this in Romans 8:26-27: *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."* (NIV) What a perfect resource for us!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

List the actions you take daily to set your heart and mind on things above, not on earthly things.

Where in your life do you need Jesus to intercede for you before God? Take it to him in prayer.