



## A Reflection for Ascension Day Easter Week 6 Readings - Acts 1. 1-11 & Luke 24. 44-53

When I think of The Ascension an image similar to the one above comes to mind. Jesus high above ascending to heaven as the disciples stand looking skyward. There is a collective feeling of euphoria with the disciples having experienced a blessing. Jesus ascends.

*Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'*

*Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.*

Jesus eventually disappears and they are left together. As they wait a sense of normality replaces the euphoria. Was this is to be the last time for them to be in his company? They had encountered post resurrection appearances before. I wonder how long they waited? Who made the decision to move off? In obedience they do as Jesus had asked and they go and wait.

For the disciples the Jesus story is now complete. It is everything that they have witnessed. They believe that Jesus is The Messiah. This belief has changed everything, irrevocably. The way in which this group of people view and engage with the world has changed for ever.

The world though has not changed. It is the disciples who have changed. A world view is still in operation enforcing a way of being regardless of the ministry of Jesus. For the majority they are living their lives as they always have. That has not changed.

Jesus shows his trust in this group. He believes in them and that they have all the resources that they need to continue his work to the world. To show love and to invite all to life eternal. They are to live out the Jesus story in their lives and in so doing to by pass the rigid structures that seek to be life limiting and not life giving. Those rigid structures that could only see Jesus as a threat.

As we wait for Pentecost let us use this time to discover again who Jesus is as we put our trust in him for he has already put his trust in us.

Thank you for reading and please keep safe.

The Reverend Nick Devenish

*Adrian's music choices for Ascension Day - Hymn: 167 Hail the day that sees him rise. Psalm: 47.*

*Organ music: Bach - Heut' triumphiret Gottes Sohn (Today has God's Son triumphed)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=osaiWui7kz0>

*Image - The Ascension by John Singleton Copley (mfa Boston)*