

The Lord's Message: Graduation Day

Date: May 21, 2023

Where: Sherwood & Tilghman UMC

Scripture Reference: Luke 24:44-53

It is that time of the year when graduations of high school, colleges and trade schools are happening. For the graduates this completes a step in their education or their life. They may be wondering what is next for me. What are my plans? What is my life going to look like? Today, we celebrate Ascension Sunday. Ascension Sunday is the time that Jesus took His disciples up on the Mount of Olives, from there He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father. This is a special place. The Mount of Olives is across the way from the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount is the place where Abraham agonized over following God's command to sacrifice his son, Isaac. God tested Abraham's faithfulness. Abraham was obedient to God. God provided a ram instead of Isaac for the sacrifice. It is on the Temple Mount where King Solomon builds the Temple to God. Now there is only the Wailing Wall as Israel waits for the temple to be rebuilt. Below the Mount of Olives on the same hillside is the Garden of Gethsemane. It is here that Jesus, knowing that His future would be great torment and pain; physical, mental, and spiritual pain, prayed to God to take the cup of God's wrath from Him. This is found in **Luke 22:41-44**. Jesus returns to this place as the Resurrection Savior. Jesus has been teaching His disciples for three years, now it is time for them to put His teachings in action. Any good parent or teacher will tell you that their job is to teach, raise and nurture children to become successful adults. To put into action what they have learned. This is graduation day for Jesus' disciples.

Let us pray.

There are three principles that Jesus wants the disciples, and all of us, to remember.

The first principle is to remember that all the prophecies found in the Bible concerning the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus. In **Luke 24:44-45**, Jesus tells them this and opens their minds to understand the scriptures. Just as Jesus, had opened the minds of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, **Luke 24:32**, Jesus now opens the minds of all the disciples. We need to keep reading the Bible everyday and if possible be involved in Bible Study with others. I want to put in a plug for the Adult Bible Study on Sunday mornings. If you are not able to attend, consider getting together with other Christians in your neighborhood or your family. It is vital that we continue to learn and grow together in our understanding of God and His love for each of us and the world.

The second principle is that Jesus suffered and died, was resurrected on the third day, so that we could receive forgiveness of our sins, and the wages of sin, death would be destroyed. Jesus said in **Luke 24:46**. There is no other way, person, or religion to seek repentance and to be forgiven of our sins. In **John 14:6**, Jesus says that He is the way, the truth, and the life. We should know this and believe this with all our heart, soul, and mind.

The third principle is to be witness of the grace of God. In **Luke 24:47**, Jesus tells His disciples, and He tells us today, that we are to be His witnesses of His acts of love. Jesus says in **Acts 1:8b**. Jesus knew that this would be tough job for His disciples and us to carry out, so Jesus provides us with a gift. The gift of the Holy Spirit as it says in **Luke 24:49**. It can be difficult to talk to people about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, grace, love, and forgiveness. If we rely on the Holy Spirit, it can be done, even when facing persecution, **Mark 13:9-11**. We can be witness of the grace of God by relying on the Holy Spirit. We will go deeper into this next week, when we celebrate Pentecost, God sending to us the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

After Jesus' final teachings, Jesus ascended into Heaven, **Luke 24:50-51**. The disciples celebrated and worshipped Jesus in the temple, **Luke 24:52**. These once ordinary people who had been with Jesus for three years, would now carry out God's ministry to the world. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, they would change the world. Every day, Christians are changing the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. It all starts by giving our life to God and being His witness in the world.

Earlier, I said that that every book in the Bible tells us about Jesus. I did not put this together, I found this online, but it provides us with the proof that *Jesus is in Every Book of the Bible*.

Jesus in Every Book of the Bible

- In Genesis, Jesus Christ is the Seed of the woman
- In Exodus, He is the Passover Lamb.
- In Leviticus, He is our High Priest.
- In Numbers, He is the Pillar of cloud by day and the Pillar of fire by night
- In Deuteronomy, He is the Prophet like unto Moses.
- In Joshua, He is the Commander of the Lord's army.
- In Judges, He is our Judge and Lawgiver.
- In Ruth, He is our Kinsman Redeemer.
- In 1st and 2nd Samuel, He is the Seed of David.
- In Kings and Chronicles, He is our reigning King.
- In Ezra, He is our faithful Scribe
- In Nehemiah, He is the Rebuilder of everything broken
- In Esther, He is our Mordecai, our Advocate.

- In Job, He is our ever-living Redeemer.
- In Psalms, He is our Shepherd.
- In Proverbs, He is our Wisdom.
- In Ecclesiastes, He is our meaning for life.
- In the Song of Solomon, He is the loving Bridegroom.
- In Isaiah, He is the Prince of Peace
 - In Jeremiah and Lamentations, He is our weeping Prophet.
- In Ezekiel, the Glorious Lord
- In Daniel, He is the fourth Man in the "fiery furnace."
- In Hosea, He is the faithful Husband
 - In Joel, He is the Outpourer of the Holy Spirit.
- In Amos, He is our Burden-bearer.
- In Obadiah, He is our Judge and Savior.
- In Jonah, He is the risen Prophet.
- In Micah, He is the Ruler of the world from Bethlehem.
- In Nahum, He is our Stronghold.
- In Habakkuk, he is the Watchman
- In Zephaniah, He is the Mighty to save
- In Haggai, He is the Restorer
- In Zechariah, He is the branch of David; the One pierced for us
- In Malachi, He is the Son of Righteousness
- In Matthew, He is King of the Jews, the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God
- In Mark, He is the Servant, Miracle Worker
- In Luke, He is the Baby in the manger, The Son of Man
- In John, He is the Son of God; the Living Word; the way, truth, and life
- In Acts, He is the Savior of the world, Ascended Lord.
- In Romans, He is the Justifier.
- In I Corinthians, He is the Resurrection
- In II Corinthians, He is our Comfort.
- In Galatians, He is our Liberty.
- In Ephesians, He is Head of the Church.
- In Philippians, He is our Joy.
- In Colossians, He is our Completeness and the glue that holds our world together
- In 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, He is the Coming King.
- In I & II Timothy, He is our Mediator.
- In Philemon, He is our Benefactor.
- In Titus, He is the Blessed Hope.
- In Hebrews, He is our Perfection
- In James, he is the Power behind our faith.

- In I, II Peter, He is our Chief Shepherd and Chief Cornerstone
- In I, II, III John, He is our Truth and Everlasting Life
- In Jude, He is the Foundation of our faith. Our security
- In Revelation, He is The King of Kings and Lord of Lords!
- He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End!
- He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all!
- He is the Architect of the universe and the Manager of all times.
- He always was, He always is, and He always will be...
- Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, but never Undone!
- He was bruised and brought healing!
- He was pierced and eased pain!
- He was persecuted and brought freedom!
- He was dead and brought life!
- He is risen and brings power!
- He reigns and brings Peace!
- The world can't understand him,
- The armies can't defeat Him,
- The schools can't explain Him, and
- The leaders can't ignore Him.
- Herod couldn't kill Him,
- The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him, and
- The grave couldn't hold Him!
- Nero couldn't crush Him,
- Hitler couldn't silence Him,
- Other religions can't replace Him, and
- The world can't explain Him away!
- He is light, love, longevity, and Lord.
- He is Goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, and God.
- He is Holy, Righteous, mighty, powerful, and pure.
- His ways are right, His word is eternal,
- His will is unchanging, and His mind is on us.
- He is my Redeemer, He is my Savior,
- He is my guide, and He is my peace!
- He is my Joy, He is my comfort,
- He is my Lord, and He rules my life!

I choose to bear witness to the love of God the Father, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Do you? This is Graduation Day. Amen.

