

## Sunday Assembly Reflection

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**REFLECTION:** Following the good news of the resurrection on Easter Sunday, Jim Reynolds talked about the even better news of Jesus' ascension following the resurrection. Scripture tells us that after the resurrection, Jesus was exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. In addition, the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us (Acts 2:33). What makes this such good news for us?

- Jesus' ascension means that Jesus' physical presence on the earth has been replaced by the Holy Spirit, and poured out on us. Through the Holy Spirit, God is accessible, not just for one small group in the Middle East, but to every member of the human race. He is with each of us, right now.
- It means that Jesus is on the throne and has all authority (meaning the right and power) and lives to intercede on behalf of us.

But many of us have a fear or distrust of authority. Maybe you have experienced abuse, or watched others abused by someone in authority. And our culture teaches us to answer to no one, and to look out for #1. But that teaching has two fundamental flaws – 1) it contradicts what we profess when we accept Jesus as Lord, and 2) we're still giving our authority to something else, like our feelings, a "psychic fiction," or a higher self that actually keeps us from being free. So how do we know that we won't be abused by Jesus' authority? From the nail prints in His hands – His nails' love for us.

I'm a skeptic by nature and question everything. I go a little overboard on unimportant things, but regarding authority, I think my questioning is good. Jim said that when Jesus' authority is displayed, commands are obeyed, freedom is exercised, and love is embodied for a lifetime. Take time to question whether the authority in your life is producing obedience, freedom, and staying-through-the tough-times-love.

**QUESTIONS:** Please pick one of the questions below to answer in your small groups; more if you have time. Be sure to pray for each other at the end.

1. Since Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt 28:18), what are some of the "pretender" authorities you have listened to or are listening to? Do your feelings rule? Or maybe you ascribe to an "all-beliefs-are-equal" non-authority? Others? What do you think caused you to arrive at that conclusion? What has been the result?
2. Share an area of your life where you struggle to submit to His authority?
3. What does the statement that "Jesus' ascension connects the worst we do with the best God does" mean to you?

Sunday Assembly Reflection is written by Lake Highlands Church members for Lifegroups and individuals to receive more from the spoken Sunday Assembly message through reflection and quick discussion. It is published on the first three Monday's of the month. If you are interested in knowing more about a Lifegroup or have a question about the reflection, please contact Donjalea Crane, [donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org](mailto:donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org) or contact one of our Lifegroup leaders by going to [lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings](http://lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings).

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Read this prayer of Paul's over your group at the end:

*I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else – not only in this world but also in the world to come. God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.*

Ephesians 1:19-23

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