

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35

Acts 1:6-14

1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11

John 17:1-11

MESSAGE

“Lifted Up, Sent Out, Held Secure”

Pastor Bruce

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

- **Psalm 68:1–10, 32–35** – God’s victorious presence and sustaining power
- **Acts 1:6–14** – Waiting in hope and obedience
- **1 Peter 4:12–14; 5:6–11** – Endurance, humility, and restoration
- **John 17:1–11** – Jesus’ prayer that God would keep His people

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)

- God is portrayed as a **victorious king rising and scattering His enemies**
- He is not distant—He:
 - Defends the weak (“father to the fatherless”)
 - Provides for His people
- The psalm climaxes with **praise to the One who rides the heavens**

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)

Connection to Ascension:

- Jesus' ascension is His **enthronement**—He is now reigning as King over all.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

- 1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)**
- 2. Jesus Ascends—but the Mission Continues (Acts 1:6–14)**

⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

- 1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)**
- 2. Jesus Ascends—but the Mission Continues (Acts 1:6–14)**

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

¹² Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

- 1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)**
- 2. Jesus Ascends—but the Mission Continues (Acts 1:6–14)**

¹³ When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)

2. Jesus Ascends—but the Mission Continues (Acts 1:6–14)

- The disciples expected a political kingdom
- Jesus redirects them:
 - “It is not for you to know the times...”
 - “You will receive power... and be my witnesses”
- Jesus ascends physically, leaving them with:
 - A **promise (the Spirit)**
 - A **mission (witnesses to the world)**

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

- 1. The Ascended King Reigns in Power (Psalm 68)**
- 2. Jesus Ascends—but the Mission Continues (Acts 1:6–14)**

Connection to Ascension:

- The ascension is not an ending—it is a **launching point**.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

3. Jesus Intercedes for His People (John 17:1–11)

Jesus Prays to Be Glorified

17 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

3. Jesus Intercedes for His People (John 17:1–11)

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

⁶ “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

3. Jesus Intercedes for His People (John 17:1–11)

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

3. Jesus Intercedes for His People (John 17:1–11)

- Jesus prays before His ascension:
 - For **God’s glory**
 - For **His disciples’ protection and unity**
- Key truth:
 - Jesus entrusts His followers to the Father
 - He does not abandon them—He **covers them in prayer**

Connection to Ascension:

- Even now, the ascended Christ **prays and intercedes** for us.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

4. Living Faithfully in a Difficult World (1 Peter 4 & 5)

Suffering for Being a Christian

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

4. Living Faithfully in a Difficult World (1 Peter 4 & 5)

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

4. Living Faithfully in a Difficult World (1 Peter 4 & 5)

¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

4. Living Faithfully in a Difficult World (1 Peter 4 & 5)

- Believers will face:
 - Trials
 - Opposition
 - Suffering
- But Peter calls us to:
 - **Humility under God’s hand**
 - **Trust in His care**
 - **Resist the enemy**
 - **Stand firm in faith**

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

4. Living Faithfully in a Difficult World (1 Peter 4 & 5)

Connection to Ascension:

- Because Christ is ascended:
 - Suffering is not meaningless
 - Glory is coming
 - ***

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

God is not passive—He rules with power, justice, and care.

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

The Church lives in the “in-between”:

- Jesus reigns
- The Spirit empowers
- The mission is ongoing

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

We are not alone—we are **held, known, and prayed for by Christ Himself.**

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

We endure not in fear—but in **hope and confidence in God’s ultimate victory.**

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Ascension Sunday reminds us:

- Jesus is **King over all** (Psalm 68)
- We are **sent out as witnesses** (Acts 1)
- We are **prayed for and protected** (John 17)
- We are **strengthened to endure** (1 Peter)

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

The ascension of Jesus is not about absence—it is about **authority, presence, and mission.**

Christ has:

- Taken His throne
- Entrusted His people
- Given His Spirit
- Secured our future

We live today not wondering if God is at work—but knowing **He reigns and we are part of His purpose.**

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Call to Action

1. Lift your eyes

Recognize Jesus as **King over your life**

- Surrender control
- Trust His authority

2. Step into your mission

You are called to be a **witness**

- In your home
- In your workplace
- In your community

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Call to Action

3. Stand firm in faith

- Don't be surprised by difficulty
- Trust that God is shaping and strengthening you

4. Stay devoted in prayer

Like the disciples:

- Wait on God
- Seek His Spirit
- Stay united with other believers

“LIFTED UP, SENT OUT, HELD SECURE”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

This week:

Ask yourself daily: *“How can I live today as someone sent by the ascended King?”*
