

Questions for Sermon Discussion
“The Ascension of Christ and the Hope of the Church”
Ephesians 1:15-23
May 17, 2026
For the Small Group Ministry of Faith Pres Tacoma

1. Pastor Nicoletti used a sci-fi illustration about the alien invasion and human subjugation by the Carryx. What is your favorite story in which humans are attacked, invaded, or ruled over by aliens from outer space, from a book, movie, TV show, etc.? (If you're one of those people who think they're too good for science fiction, I guess you can share a story about humans doing those things ... but your story will probably be less fun ...)

2. Compared to Christmas, Easter, and even Pentecost, Ascension is an often-overlooked Christian holiday. Do you think it's worth dedicating a whole Sunday to this event in redemptive history? What do we gain by celebrating Ascension Sunday? What would we lose by omitting it from our annual calendar?

3. When you see powerful worldly opposition to the Christian Church, how do you tend to respond to it? Is it with despair, cynicism, pragmatic accommodation, retreat, or something else? Why do you think you respond the way you do?

4. Whatever your response is when you see powerful worldly opposition to the Christian Church, how should the ascension and enthronement of Jesus challenge that response?

5. The sermon claimed that Christians often find it easier to apply the idea that Christ is working all things for the good of his people (Rom 8:28) to individual Christians, but harder to apply that same concept to the Church as a community and an institution. Do you think that's true? Do you see that tendency in yourself? If so, why do you think that is?

6. Do you often think about Jesus reigning now, over the earth, in power, from heaven? If you thought of it more often, how do you think that would affect your Christian walk? (Please consider and include areas beyond the ways discussed in the sermon.)

7. Are there any other ways that this sermon brought something new, fresh, or helpful for you, out of the Bible passage it was based on?

8. As a group, compare the sermon text with Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. How do these three texts illuminate each other, especially as we consider the meaning of Christ's Ascension?

9. How uncomfortable did it make you when the pastor kind of compared Jesus to invading aliens? Did it help that he also contrasted them in key ways, or do you think he should be brought up on charges of heresy anyway?

10. How should the ascension and enthronement of Jesus make you more hopeful for the present and future condition of the Church?

11. How should the ascension and enthronement of Jesus motivate you personally, in the present, to serve in the life of the Church?

12. Was there anything in the sermon that you disagreed with or had questions about?

13. How did this sermon or Bible passage challenge you to grow as a disciple of Christ?

14. How can this group pray for, encourage, or help you to grow in this way (see #13)?