

Christ Ascended from Bethany

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Christ Ascended from Mount Olivet
(Acts 1:9, 12)

Christ Ascended from Bethany
(Luke 24:50-51)

It has been assumed by some that Christ ascended only once into heaven following his resurrection. Based on this false assumption, a claim has been made that there is a contradiction between the accounts in Acts 1:9, 12 and Luke 24:50-51. However, it will be shown in this study that Christ's movements were not limited following his resurrection. In fact, he moved with ease between both the heavenly and earthly realms numerous times. A similar interaction is mentioned in other scriptures to prove loyal spirit-beings are not restricted in their ability to serve mankind (cf. Heb. 1:13-14).

Then he (Jacob) dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it (Gen. 28:12; Ed. note in parenthesis; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

And he (Christ) said to him (Nathanael), 'Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter (NU omits *hereafter*) you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon (toward or unto) the Son of Man (Jn. 1:51; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Therefore, the resurrected Christ is not limited in his ability to move back and forth between the spiritual and physical realms. In fact, there are multiple examples of Christ appearing and disappearing after his resurrection (cf. Lk. 24:31, 34, 36; Jn. 20:19, 26; 21:1). According to

Christ's words, he is still actively involved with those who look to him as the only head of God's church.

For where two or three are gathered together in my (Christ's) name, I am there in the midst of them (Mt. 18:20; Ed. note in parenthesis).

As God's true servants are often scattered and few in number, relative to the population at large (cf. Mt. 7:13-14; 20:16; Lk. 12:32), it is not a coincidence that Christ mentioned only two or three being gathered in his name at any given time (see studies: Should the Body of Christ be Legally Incorporated? and How to Identify the Body of Christ Today). With these examples in mind, scriptures dealing with Christ ascending to heaven after his resurrection will be examined.

Christ's first ascension occurred shortly after Mary Magdalene spoke with him in the garden where his tomb was located.

Then they (two angels) said to her (Mary Magdalene), 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.'¹⁴ Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.¹⁵ Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?' She, supposing him to be the gardener, said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.'¹⁶ Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him, "Rabboni!" which is to say, Teacher.¹⁷ Jesus said to her, 'Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, **'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God'** (because Christ himself was not Almighty God, nor part of a trinity as taught in much of Christianity; cf. Jn. 17:3) (Jn.

20:13-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

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Shortly after this conversation with Mary, Christ ascended to his Father from the garden area. Once Christ had been accepted by Almighty God, as a sacrifice for every sinner who repents (Jn. 1:29; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:26; 10:12), he was then able to return and have contact with a number of people.

Then he (the resurrected Christ) said to Thomas, 'Reach your finger here, and look at my hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing' (Jn. 20:27; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Therefore, Christ's first ascension was not from Mount Olivet or Bethany, but from the locale of his garden tomb. Approximately forty days after this ascension, Christ again rose to his Father in heaven.

And he (Christ) led them (his disciples) as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹Now it came to pass, while he blessed them, that he was parted from them and carried up into heaven (Lk. 24:50-51; Ed. notes in parentheses).

As *Bethany is 1.5 miles east of Jerusalem on the south-eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, both Luke 24:50-51 and Acts 1:9, 12 are in harmony regarding the location of Christ's final ascension, just prior to the Day of Pentecost. So there is no contradiction in scripture.

*[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethany-\(Biblical_village\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethany-(Biblical_village))

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