

# ASCENSION

LUKE 24 : 46 ~ 53

JUNE 2, 2019

*“ As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to Heaven. ”*

Bishop William Willimon tells of once visiting a man with only a couple of days left to live. He asked the man whether he was fearful in nearing his death. To Willimon's surprise the man replied, *“Fear? No! I'm not fearful because of my faith in Jesus.”*

The man continued, explaining, *“I look back over my life, all the mistakes I've made, all the times I've turned away from Jesus, gone my own way, strayed and gotten lost. And time and time again, he found a way to get to me, looked for me when I wasn't looking for him. I don't think he will let something like my dying defeat his love for me.”*

What a magnificent portrayal of the mind of God. How outrageous are the claims of the Gospel. The divine Creator of all that lives and moves and has its being, came down to earth and suffered and died to say to us that no one on this earth is beyond His love and concern.

Sometimes you and I can be like the twin boys who were conceived in the same womb. Weeks passed, as the twins developed. As their awareness grew, they laughed for joy: *“Isn't it great that we were conceived? Isn't it great to be alive?”*

Together, the twins explored their world. When they found their mother's cord which gave them life, they sang for joy: *“How great is our mother's love, that she shares her own life with us.”*

As the weeks stretched into months, the twins noticed how much each was changing. "What does it mean?" asked the one.

"It means that our stay in this world is drawing to an end," said the other.

"But I don't want to go," said the one. "I want to stay here always."

"We have no choice," said the other. "But maybe there is life after birth!"

"But how can there be?" responded the one. "We will shed our life cord, and how is life possible without it? Besides, we have seen evidence that others were here before us, and none of them have returned to tell us that there is life after birth. No, I'm afraid that this is the end."

And so the one fell into deep despair, saying, "If conception ends in birth, what is the purpose of life in the womb? It's meaningless! Maybe there is no mother after all!"

"But there has to be," protested the other. "How else did we get there? How do we remain alive?"

"Have you ever seen our mother?" said the one. "Maybe she lives only in our minds. Maybe we made her up, because the idea made us feel good!"

And so the last days in the womb were filled with deep questioning and fear. Finally the moment of birth arrived. When the twins had passed from their world, they opened their eyes and cried for joy. For what they saw exceeded their fondest dreams.

What a good analogy of what awaits us when we pass to a better world with Jesus. Some of us have difficulty accepting that God loves us that much. Others of us have difficulty accepting the reality that life goes on beyond the grave.

"For the Christian, the encouraging truth is that Christ defeated man's last enemy and still lives. He conquered pain and sin and death. This leads the Christian to believe

that evil does not have the last word for him either, and that he will find unspeakable joy at the end of his journey with all that seems hostile to love woven into a plan greater than his present power to perceive.”

God really does love us that much. Life really does go on beyond the grave. Has it changed your life to know that Jesus is alive? Maybe you have not yet opened your heart to God and surrendered your fate and future to His care.