

**Acts 1:9-12 (NIV)**

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

<sup>10</sup>They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

<sup>11</sup>“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.”

<sup>12</sup>Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city.

44-01-07-Our Deposit in the Bank of Heaven

Ascension, Incarnation, humanity, Christ’s Reign, prayer

Acts 1:9-12

Our faith in Jesus Christ gives us Heaven’s authority on Earth.

**INTRODUCTION: (Text as the Scripture Reading)**

–[What if **an investor**, until returning from overseas, *authorized* you to manage a *billion-dollar* bank account? *What might you do? **You’d probably:***

1. **make certain** you knew the investor’s background and business plans.
2. **be sure** to stay in touch with him and seek his guidance about transactions.
3. **not** be afraid that the checks you wrote from that account would bounce. AND
4. **not** worry that the investor would forget about the account and fail to return.]

–We have a ***deposit in the bank of Heaven***. *Jesus* is both the *Investor* and the *Deposit*. He’s *authorized* us to *draw on His heavenly resources* for *His ongoing business plans on Earth*. His objective is to spread His Kingdom globally, and His *Holy Spirit* has been given to us to guide us in making *heavenly investments*, until He returns. Until the day He comes back to close every personal and corporate account, **HOM.idea**.

**I. What Makes Our Earthly Deposit in Heaven Valid?**

A. Jesus isn’t only a legitimate earthly Investor but can legitimately run an earthly business from Heaven [now called ‘working remote’].

1. Although supernaturally conceived, He’s native to Earth—a natural born citizen of this planet— **John 1:14**, The Word became flesh and made his dwelling **among us**. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of **grace and truth**.
2. Through His Son, God invested the *heavenly currency* of “**grace and truth**” into the *business of humanity*.)

B. While “**grace and truth**” are *now a heavenly deposit*, they remain our *earthly currency*, for two very solid reasons:

1. Because Jesus lives there in a resurrected **human** body. (His *eternal humanity validates His heavenly currency* on Earth.)
2. Also, Jesus, still “full of **grace and truth**,” now lives within us. (His *indwelling presence brings Heaven’s business down-to-Earth*, thus answering the prayer He taught us in **Mat 6:10** (NASB), “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.”)

C. Why should Christians be so excited about the Ascension? (It’s the day *God accepted His Son’s payment for the debt of our sins* and for *the entire creation’s redemption and restoration*.)

**TRANS:** A billion-dollar bank account is **nothing** compared to the divine assets we can draw upon through Christ's deposit of Himself in Heaven. Prayer is our checkbook, allowing us direct access (24/7) to make withdrawals from the wealth purchased by His Cross. **Our faith in Jesus** brings **Heaven's authority** for *Kingdom business* to **Earth!**

## II. What Hinders Us, Then, from Drawing Upon This Account?

- A. Well, we may still have some cloudy thinking— v.9, *After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.*
1. With our *Divine Investor* physically gone, we're left holding the checkbook, just as the 3 servants were in the parable Jesus told—**Mat 25:14-15** (NKJV), For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.
  2. The last servant, with **cloudy thinking**, failed to use the funds he received; the other two, with a *clear picture of their duty*, wisely invested the resources committed to them. (God wants us to be like the two faithful servants: investing Christ in our world!)
- B. Or, we may be too focused on God's direct control over those aspects of the business He's entrusted to our personal attention— v.10a, *They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going...*
1. [When **William Carey** wanted to go to the foreign mission field, a church leader tried discouraging him by saying that *God didn't need Carey's help, but could convert the heathen by Himself and in His own good time!*]
  2. But God already told us *His good pleasure*: that we expand His Kingdom on Earth by accessing Christ's authority in Heaven.
- C. If we do have cloudy thinking, God may send divine messengers to get our vision back down-to-earth— v.10b-11a, ... *suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky?..."* (Despite sometimes doing miracles, God's angels are actually messengers, and their usual message to us is "Don't be afraid, just have faith and get down to business!")

**TRANS:** Jesus wants us ready for His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, but we can't prepare for it are by staring at the sky. As *His servants*, we must get to business  blessing our world, our nation, our neighborhoods, and our homes by investing His resources of "grace and truth" "on earth as it is in heaven." **Our faith in Jesus Christ gives us Heaven's authority on Earth...**

## III. How Are We to Administer God's Investment Plan?

- A. In v.11b-12a the disciples acted upon the message the angels had for them: "*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.*" *Then they returned to Jerusalem.... (They quit staring and started preparing for Kingdom business by returning to pray and wait for Pentecost.)*
- B. God's primary area of investment is people!
1. [There's a scene in ***It's a Wonderful Life*** where the *Depression* hit, and people were on a run to get their money out of the Building and Loan Association. George Bailey tried to make them understand, by saying: "*No ... you're thinking of this place all wrong. As if I had the money back in a safe. The money's not here. Your money's in Joe's house...right next to yours. And in the Kennedy house, and Mrs. Macklin's house, and a hundred others.*")]
  2. Undue preoccupation with our own wants and needs can distract us from bringing God's light to others— **Mat 5:14-16**, "*You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*"
- C. As participating stewards in God's earthly investment plan, our attitude and vision can't be individualistic. (God's plan is *cosmic*— **John 3:16**, For God so loved the **world** [*cosmos*] that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.)
1. Jesus told us in **John 9:5**, "*While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*" (He's ascended now, but our faith-union with Him makes us "the light of world," not to be hidden, but to "shine before men.")
  2. Redemption in Christ **does have** crucial personal aspects, but its dimensions are global, and it's destiny is cosmically universal, because He will return to resurrect and reign with us, His redeemed people over "a new heaven and a new earth."

## **CONCLUSION:**

—Until our ascended Lord descends back to Earth, we keep praying, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven." It's not just a prayer but an earthly investment we make in our own lives and the lives of others. *Jesus* is our heavenly *Deposit*, and we're His earthly trustees. **Our faith in Him gives us Heaven's authority**. So, let's stand in that authority and use it to bless people with the light of "grace and truth" made freely available by God's loving investment of His Son.