

Do You Have Plans for Ascension Sunday?

Ascension Thursday is May 17. Some churches will celebrate it then. Most will wait until Ascension Sunday on May 20, and then celebrate Pentecost one week later.

For some of you, I may as well be speaking a foreign language. Don't let that bother you, because I myself am just bluffing. It is only because of that marvelous tool we call *Google* that I even know the tiny bit that I wrote above. But, indulge me as I share a couple of things I do know.

Historically, the churches of the Restoration Movement have never used what is the known to many denominational churches as 'the church calendar' to commemorate great events in the life of Christ. We do Christmas. We do Resurrection Sunday. Then, we pretty much call it a year.

This was probably based, in part, on our group's distinctives. Our founders liked to think of us as a people of the book. We don't need some man-made and largely speculative tool to cause us to know the things we need to know about the life and work of Jesus. We liked to think that our people knew their stuff.

But, what happens when God's people no longer know their stuff, when they lose their patience for learning doctrine and biblical truth beyond a little jewel of thought here and a little pearl of wisdom there. When they cease to be grounded, they are blown to and fro by every wind of teaching that addresses them as the center of God's universe ... What will God do about *my* finances? What will God do about *my* marriage? What will God do about *my* stress?

I am not advocating that we begin to observe the church calendar. From what I could find out, some of these days on the calendar get phoned-in anyway by the churches that do use the tool. Rather, I would like to put in a word for your renewing your commitment to God's Word. Assurance is based on doctrine which is grounded in truth which is based on events in history. If you are just browsing the web or the bookshelves for whatever may or may not address your current felt need, you're not standing on anything firm. On the other hand, if you are standing on the Word of God, you are standing on something rock solid. Obviously, it is of more value to know God's Word than it is to be led about by your feelings and self-perceived needs.

"So, when Jesus ascended to heaven, He disappeared in a cloud. Cool ... Say, where is that class on anger management being held?"

Do you realize that because of the Ascension that was witnessed and passed along to us, we have a basis for believing that Jesus is already on His throne, bringing time to an end; that He is interceding for us at the right hand of the Father; that the Holy Spirit is with believers and with His church empowering them to live as God's people. That might not be as specific or practical as a class on living with diabetes, but its exponentially more useful and important to know.

As Discipleship at ARCC continues to be rolled out, there will be a renewed commitment to know that our folks are grounded in truth. In the meantime, make sure that you are revisiting your participation in the educational ministries of the church.