

THINK ABOUT IT ... Choose the correct answer:

1. WHO is God?
 - A. Only God the Father
 - B. Only Jesus Christ
 - C. The Trinity: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
 - D. Christ, the Theotokos, and John the Baptist

2. The Ascension is:
 - A. Bringing back Lazarus to earthly life
 - B. Christ's glorified body going up to heaven
 - C. The announcement of the empty tomb
 - D. Christ's entry into Jerusalem

3. The Ascension also represents:
 - A. Opening of the gates of Heaven
 - B. A sign of the Second Coming
 - C. Christ's promise of Eternal Life
 - D. All of the above

4. Descent means:
 - A. Going up
 - B. Coming down
 - C. Sending away
 - D. Smelling pleasant

5. WHO came down to earth on Pentecost?
 - A. The Theotokos
 - B. Baby Jesus
 - C. The Holy Spirit
 - D. John the Baptist

6. Who were the first bishops?
 - A. The Myrrhbearing women
 - B. The soldiers guarding the tomb
 - C. The Old Testament prophets
 - D. The Apostles

Ascension and Pentecost

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” (John 17:5)



“Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are.”

The Resurrection, the Ascension, and Pentecost are God's promise that everyone who believes in Christ can have Eternal Life. That is what God did to give Salvation to the people of the earth.

RESURRECTION

Christ arose from the dead forever. He cannot die, because **He is God**, and God will not ever die. He is **immortal** -- that means that He was from the beginning before creation and He will be unto eternity forever and He will never change.

Although Christ visited the apostles and some other persons after His Resurrection, He did not arise in order to return again into an earthly (human) body. His Resurrection was **not the same thing as those whom He had brought back to life**, such as Lazarus. They returned to their lives in the same body which would eventually die.

Because of Christ's Resurrection, the soul of anyone who believes in Christ can have Eternal Life. That's why we sing that **by His death and Resurrection He "destroyed death"** and that He "trampled down death by death."

ASCENSION

The words **"ascend" and "ascension" mean to go up**. So at Christ's Ascension, He rose up to "sit at the right hand" of the Father.

But Christ did not go away. He is still with us, the faithful, for ever. He hears us when we pray to Him, and He loves us very much.

By His Ascension, Christ opened up the "gates" (entrance) of Heaven to us. He ascended into heaven because He cares about us. It is only through belief in Christ that anyone can come to God the Father, enter heaven, and have Eternal Life.

TRINITY -- FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT

The Orthodox Church teaches that our God is one God in three Persons. That means that **the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit are ONE GOD**. The way that is described is that we say that they are all of the **same "essence"** -- their thoughts are the same, they all want the same good things for us, and their love for us the same.

PENTECOST

Ascension is related to the **descent of the Holy Spirit** from heaven to earth, which we celebrate at Pentecost. The word **"descent" means coming down**.

The Holy Spirit descended in the form of a flame of fire on each of the Apostles. When that happened, the Kingdom of God **became mystically present on earth in His Church**. That is why Pentecost is traditionally called the beginning of the Church. **The Apostles were the first bishops**, and it has continued from bishop to bishop, in an unbroken line (like links in a chain or like passing something from one person's hand to another's.)

An important Orthodox saint, St. John Chrysostom said: "Heaven received the Holy Body, and the earth accepted the Holy Spirit."

The Orthodox Church teaches that **Pentecost is the fulfillment of the mission of Jesus Christ on earth**. The Salvation that Christ brought to us, the people of the earth, will always be available and can never end. It is possible for anyone who believes in Him to have Eternal Life.

CHRIST'S PROMISE

The Ascension is also a sign of the Second Coming of Christ. The angels said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)