

achievement, purpose and performance, plan and action, will be abolished.
From J. I. Packer, *Keep In Step with the Spirit* (1984)

I'll Fly Away

By Albert E. Brumley

See print copy for words.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**



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Pentecost



We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the **firstfruits of the Spirit**, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

(Romans 8:22-23)

Old Orchard Church

Eighth Sunday of Easter

May 23, 2010—10:15 to 11:45 a.m.

Celebrating the Immortal Jesus as the Resurrection Community of the Spirit

Blessed be the Lord Jesus Christ
Who has baptized us with his Spirit—

Divine wind,
Fire from heaven,
Light from above,
Comforter
The very life of God in our lives!

Praise be to the Spirit who animates the church;
Who sets Christ before us, glorifying his dying and rising,
Convincing us we are loved,
Softening our concrete hearts,
Recreating us in the Beloved,
Drawing together what had split apart:
Young and old, rich and poor, men and women,
This racial group and that, the weak and the strong,
The sick and the well—
One new community of redeemed children of Adam!

Come, O Source of joy and gladness,
Breathe your life in and through us.
Alleluia!



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Joel 2:28-32

New Testament Reading: Acts 2

Today's Sermon

“Concrete Hearts and Unearthly Powers: ‘Law and Flesh’”

(Part 3)

Romans 7 & 8

In Christ, But of Adam

In Rom. 7:14-25 Paul is not...describing a man in Adam, but a man in Christ.

The freedom from sin's power which Christ bestows in this world is less than the deliverance for which the **wretched man** cries out [**Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?** 7:24]. For what he desires is deliverance **out of this body of death**, i.e. this mortal body, which is at present sin's place of residence (v. 23). But that deliverance will not come until **the mortal puts on immortality** (1 Cor. 15:54): a consummation for which, according to Rom. 8:23, those who have the Spirit wait, groaning. And it is surely this groaning, in exact terms, which Rom. 7:24 voices. What the **wretched man** is longing for is what 8:23 calls **the redemption of our bodies**. But if this is so, then what he gives thanks for in v.25a [**Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!**] must be the promise that through Christ this blessing will ultimately be his. And if 25a is a thanksgiving, not for a present deliverance from the condition described in vss. 15-23, but for a hope of future deliverance from it, then the juxtaposition of v. 25b [**So then, I, even I, serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin**] with v. 25a [**Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!**] ceases to present a problem. On this view, v. 25b is... simply a summing-up of the situation thus far described, a state of affairs which will last while mortal life lasts. The man in Christ serves the law of God with his mind, in the sense that he wants and wills to keep it perfectly, but with the flesh he serves the law of sin, as appears from the fact that he never is able to keep the law as perfectly and consistently as he wishes to do. The emphatic...**I, even I**, expresses Paul's sense of how painfully paradoxical it is that a Christian man like himself, who desires so heartily to keep God's law and do only good, should find himself under the constant necessity of breaking the law and doing what in effect is evil. But such is the state of the Christian till his body is redeemed....

The paragraph [7:14-25] is in the present tense because it describes a present state. It reproduces Paul's present theological self-knowledge as a Christian: not all of it, but just that part of it which is germane to the subject in hand—namely, the function of the law in giving knowledge of sin. (The other side of Paul's self-knowledge, that given him by the gospel, is set out in chapter 8.) The thesis of the paragraph, **I am carnal, sold under sin**, is stated categorically and without qualification, not because this is the whole truth about Paul the Christian, but because it is the only part of the truth about himself that the law can tell him. What the law does for the Christian is to give him knowledge of the sin that still remains in him. When he reviews his life by the light of the law, he always finds that he has done less than the good that he wanted to do; thus he "finds" and "sees" that sin, is still in him, and that he is still to a degree being taken captive by it (vss. 21-23). The wretchedness of the **wretched man** thus springs from the discovery of his continuing sinfulness, and the knowledge that he cannot hope to be rid of indwelling sin, his troublesome inmate, while he remains in the body. He is painfully conscious that for the present his reach exceeds his grasp, and therefore he longs for the eschatological [end time] deliverance through which the tension between will and