

This is the Feast

Old Orchard Church

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 22, 2011—10:15 to 11:50 am.

Celebrating the Immortal Jesus as the
Resurrection Community of
Power and Discipline

His Power and Ours

**In Christ's death, believers died;
In his resurrection, they too live.
So well does he love us,
So deeply does he care,
So closely does he take us to himself
That he made his death under wrath, ours;
His new life in power, our life in power.**

**What he is, he gives;
What he won, he shares,
That we might be conformed to his image.**

**Thanks be to God,
Who gives us the victory
Over all that would enslave us,
Through our Lord Jesus Christ!**

**It is the first day of the week;
It is the day of resurrection—
Of our Lord and, in due time, of his people.
Alleluia!**



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 62:1-7
Epistle Lesson: 2 Timothy 1:3-10

Sermon

“At 30: Numbering Our Days, Finding Our Wisdom” (Part III)
Psalm 90

Ron Lutjens, pastor, preaching

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.**

I Am Weak But He Is Strong (In Me)

The Lord Jesus is the Source of our Christian life—we were born into Him; God has made us complete in Him. This truth we are to hold by faith; it is true of each of us. “**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...**” II Cor. 5:17a). Second, as we hold to this fact by faith, we are brought into the practical reality of it day by day in our experience. Little by little we receive that which is already ours. The important thing to know and be sure of is that all is ours, we are complete in Him, NOW. This fact enables us to hold still while He patiently works into our character that life of ours which is hid with Christ in God.

Progress is only advancing in the knowledge, the spiritual knowledge, of what we really possess at the outset. It is like ascending a ladder. The ladder is grace. The first step is, we believe that the Lord Jesus was sent of God; second, that in the fullness of His work we are justified; third, we make His acquaintance; fourth, we come to see Him in heaven; we know our association with Him there, and His power here; fifth, we learn the mystery, the great things we are entitled to because of being His body; sixth, that we are seated in heavenly places in Christ; seventh, lost in wonder and in praise in the knowledge of Himself. —J. B. Stoney

Since we are complete in our Lord Jesus, it will not do to try and add to that finished work. It is now a matter of walking by faith and receiving, appropriating, from the ever-abundant Source within. Walker Marshall is concise here: “*Christ's resurrection was our resurrection to a life of holiness, as Adam's fall was our fall into spiritual death. And we are not ourselves the first makers and formers of our new holy nature, any more than of our original corruption, but both are formed ready for us to partake of them. And by union with Christ, we partake of that spiritual life that He took possession of for us at His resurrection, and thereby we are enabled to bring forth the fruits of it; as the Scripture showeth by the similitude of a marriage union.* Romans 7:4: **So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.**”

Our part is not production, but reception of our life in Christ. This entails Bible-based fact finding; explicit faith in Him and His purpose for us in Christ; and patient trust while He takes us through the necessary processing involved. No believer ever fell into maturity, even though he is complete in Christ. Spiritual growth necessitates heart-hunger for the Lord Jesus; determination, based upon assurance, to have that which is ours in Him, plus meditation and thought. We will never come into the knowledge of our spiritual possessions through a superficial understanding of the Word. How can we ever expect to have intimate fellowship with One we know little of?

—Miles Stanford in *The Green Letters* (1964)