

I'll Fly Away

By Albert E. Brumley

Words are in the printed copy.

Ascension Sunday

Seventh Sunday of Easter



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**

Credits:

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God has ascended amid shouts of joy,
the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.

Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

Psalm 47:5-6

Old Orchard Church

May 12, 2013— 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

Celebrating the Immortal Jesus: Lord of All Authority and Power

Blessing them,
 He ascended into heaven.
Gone, but not gone.
Ascended, but still with us.
Alive among us
Among us
Us!
No longer sad at his leaving,
 we wait in joy and wonder
 for the Spirit.
Blessed,
 we wait to do his bidding,
 to go out to all the world
 to tell the Good News
 that God loves us so much
 He chose to live among us.
Lo, He is with us always
 even unto the end of the world...

Ascended Lord, ever Emmanuel!

—Ann Weems, 1991



Sermon

“The Holy Spirit: The Great Missionary of Men’s Souls”
Acts 2:1-13

Aaron Turner, Director of Outreach, Midtown Church, preaching

Scripture Readings

New Testament Lesson: Acts 1:1-11

Epistle Lesson: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Heaven and Earth Reunited

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes,
and a cloud hid him from their sight. Acts 1:9

In the beginning, there was blessed fellowship between God and man, between heaven and earth. Although God and His creation were separate, they were united without being identified. But our fall into sin disrupted all that. Separateness became separation. The alienation of sin brought disfellowship into creation. Man alienated himself from God; people became alienated from one another, and from the creation. Life in creation was subjected to the principle of self-existence, independence and isolation. But the glorious purpose—and result!—of Christ’s work was the re-union of heaven and earth, of God and His people. Redemption, which was intended and provided in terms of the original creation, aims at the restoration of fellowship. The principle of self-existence was overcome, in redemption, by the greater principle of reconciliation.

That’s what Christ’s ascension is about: reunion, fellowship restored, oneness between heaven and earth brought about by our Savior’s entrance into the Father’s presence.

So much about our Savior’s ascension is unique. There were no Christmas angels, no Golgotha darkness, no Easter earthquake. No brightly lit sky or rending of the veil or rolling stone. No singing.

The event is reported in utter simplicity: *he was taken up.*

Ah, but notice the *timing* of Christ’s departure: ‘**when He had spoken these things.**’ What things? You may recall that the disciples had asked Jesus a question, a good question, actually: ‘**Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?**’ The Savior’s answer came immediately, in word and in deed. The word was this: you don’t need to know the times or season in the Father’s hand; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses around the world. ‘**Now,**’ writes Luke, ‘**when He had spoken these things...He was taken up.**’

And what, do you suppose, is the meaning of his divine act-as-answer? It is this: the restoration of God’s rule requires the reunion of the Son with the Father. The Son of God, who is the Second Adam, carries His flesh (and ours), His sacrifice (for us), and His obedience into heaven, there to receive the Father’s approval and reward. The kingdom of God is restored on the basis of atonement and reconciliation. *The ascension belongs to Christ’s reconciling work for His sheep.*

—N.D. Kloosterman (1992)

