

COMING TO THE CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN HEBREWS 12:22,23

INTRODUCTION:

1. What is the “*church of the firstborn*”? Faithful Christians!
2. Emphasizing the blessed state in which the Hebrew Christians found themselves, the writer reminds them of who they are.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

- A. At one time these Jewish Christians had been strong having “*endured a great struggle with suffering.*” (Heb. 10.32-34)
- B. However, because of the severity of their persecutions, many here in danger of apostasy. (Heb. 2.1-3; 5.11-14; 12.4)
- C. Therefore, the writer reminds them of superiority of Christ as he attempts to strengthen their faith. (Heb. 6.9-12)

II. PRESENTING THE CASE FOR CHRIST

- A. Through a series of arguments the writer presents his case as to why they ought to remain faithful to Christ.
 1. Chapters 1-3: Christ is superior to the prophets, the angels, and even Moses. (Heb. 1.1-4; 2.2; 3.3-6)
 2. Chapters 4-6: Christ is the High Priest through which is the assurance of salvation. (Heb. 4.14,15; 5.9,10; 6.19,20)
 3. Chapter 7-10: The superiority of Christ over the Old Law. (Heb. 7.1,2,9,10,28; 8.13; 9.9-14; 10.11,12)
 4. Chapter 11: Those they admired looked to Christ by faith. (Heb. 11.13-16)
- B. Chapter 12: The writer encourages them to stay in the faith.
 1. Verses 1-4: Why should believers endure to the end?
 2. Verses 5-11: Why were they suffering persecution?
 3. Verses 12-17: Therefore they needed to be faithful.

III. TO WHAT HAVE THE FAITHFUL COME?

- A. Christians have not come to the mountain that can be touched with hands. (Heb. 12.18-21; Ex. 19,12,13,18,19)
- B. **HEBREWS 12.22:** “*But you have come to Mount Zion...*”
 1. The gospel which began at Jerusalem. (Isa. 2.2,3; Acts 2)
 2. The city of the living God. (Heb. 12.22; 11.10)
 3. To Jesus the Mediator. (Heb. 12.24; 9.15; 1 Tim. 2.5)

CONCLUSION: Since we have to into a relationship with God through Christ, what shall we do? (Heb. 12.25-29)

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

2424 McCarran St. ♦ North Las Vegas, NV ♦ 89030
Phone: (702) 642-3141 Email: Pruitt@nlvchurchofchrist.com
www.nlvchurchofchrist.com

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS :	9:00AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP:	9:50AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP:	6:00PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS	7:30PM

*Worshipping
God “in Spirit
and truth”
(John 4.23)*

OCTOBER 4TH, 2009

THE AIRPLANE AND THE CHURCH

The story is told of a jetliner full of passengers which sat at the gate for nearly an hour until it finally took off. One of the passengers asked the flight attendant what caused the delay. The flight attendant responded that the pilot heard a noise that troubled him and refused to take off until the problem had been fixed. “So”, the flight attendant continued, “it took us some time to find another pilot.”

How often it is that that both churches and individuals are looking for someone to tell them what they want to hear. It is the job of the preacher to speak the truth in love. It is the elders responsibility to shepherd the flock of God. Yet some do not want to hear the truth or desire for error to be identified. Therefore they want to change the pilot. Paul addressed this tendency in **2 TIMOTHY 4.3:** “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers...*”

The solution is expressed in verse 1: “*Preach the word*” The church is not to be a group which panders. It is not to structure the worship or tailor the doctrine to fit the preferences of the masses. Instead, the church is to be “*the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim. 3.15). And when the truth is supported and upheld, the members will be benefited and God will be glorified.

Christians ought always to have a love for the truth and never go in search of another pilot.

CLP

THE SPECIAL PEOPLE OF GOD

1 PETER 2:9

INTRODUCTION:

1. Special: (Gk: Peripoiesis) “obtaining, acquisition, possession” [ESV – “A people for His own possession”]
2. One of the most important social needs of humanity is the need to belong. We all want to be a part of a family.
3. Christians are a special people who belong to God as we are part of the greatest family in the world. (Eph. 3.15)

I. THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE CHOSEN

- A. Christians have been chosen since before the foundation of the world. (Eph. 1.3-6). What does it mean to be chosen?
 1. To choose is to create an opportunity by which salvation can be extended. (Rom. 8.28-30; 2 Thes. 2.14)
 2. Many are called, but few are chosen. (Matt. 22.14)
- B. God saw you and I as people worth saving. (John 3.16)
 1. We do not present God with the privilege of our service, but it is God who chose us. (1 John 4.19; Rom. 11.18)
 2. The sacrifice of Christ offered not by obligation, but by volition. (Matt. 26.54; John 10.18)
 3. Although we did not deserve it. (Rom. 5.6-8)

II. THE BLESSINGS OF BEING A CHRISTIAN

- A. Christians are recipients of blessings of a life that “*now is and of that which is to come*” (1 Tim. 4.8)
 1. He has Not promised material prosperity nor an easy life, but spiritual blessing in Christ. (Eph. 1.3; 2 Cor. 8.9)
 2. What else can we ask for? (1 Cor. 4.8; Ps. 23; Eph. 3.20)
- B. What blessing do Christians enjoy in this life?
 1. The blessing of joy. (1 Pet. 1.8; Rom. 5.11)
 2. The blessing of hope. (Rom. 5.5; Heb. 6.19)
 3. The blessing of peace. (Phil. 4.6,7; Col. 1.19-21)
 4. The blessing of fellowship. (Heb. 10.19; Eph. 2.17,18)
 5. The blessing of forgiveness. (1 John 2.1; Heb. 7.24,25)

CONCLUSION: Christians often focus on the fear of God and what they need to do. But we forget the goodness of God. (Rom. 11.22)

1. We cannot ignore the tremendous value God sees in us.
2. **TITUS 2.14:** “*special people, zealous for good works*”

THE STRANGER

A few months before I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small Tennessee town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family.

The stranger was quickly accepted and was around to welcome me into the world a few months later. As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. In my young mind, each member had a special niche.

My brother, Bill, five years my senior, was my example. Fran, my younger sister, gave me an opportunity to play 'big brother' and develop the art of teasing. My parents were complementary instructors -- Mom taught me to love the Word of God, and Dad taught me to obey it.

But, the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spell-bound for hours each evening. If I wanted to know about politics, history, or science, he knew it all. The pictures he could draw were so lifelike that I would often laugh or cry.

You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions. But, this stranger never felt obligation to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house -- not from us, from our friends, or adults. Our longtime visitor, however, used occasional four-letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted.

My dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home - not even for cooking. But the stranger felt like we needed exposure and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He talked freely (probably too much too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and generally embarrassing

As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. Time after time he opposed the values of my parents. Yet he was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave.

More than 30 years have passed since the stranger moved in with the young family on Morningside Drive. He is not nearly so intriguing to my Dad as he was in those early years.

But, if you were to walk into my parents' den today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and look at his pictures.

His name? We always just called him T.V