

“The Church of the Firstborn”

Heb. 12:18-24

Introduction:

- A. “You have not come ...” (vv. 18-21) Versus “You have come ...” (vv. 22-24)
- B. Christians have come to the “church of the firstborn(ones)”?
 - 1. Church made up of the firstborn, like “church of the Thessalonians” (cf. 1 Thess. 1:1)
 - 2. Firstborn had special privileges under O.T.
 - 3. Firstborn were set apart to God. (Cf. Ex. 13:2; 22:29).
 - 4. Firstborn were redeemed from death. (Ex. 34:20).
- C. In this lesson we ask three questions about coming to the church of the firstborn:

Discussion:

I. What Does One Come to?

- A. List in vv. 22-24.
- B. Not to “organized religion.”
 - 1. Not to some denomination - unscriptural.
 - 2. Not to some local church - scriptural.
- C. But, to a special relationship with God with honor and privileges.
 - 1. Becomes one of the redeemed/sanctified (Like firstborn of OT).
 - 2. Becomes one enrolled in heaven (v. 23; cf. Rev. 20:12, 15; 21:27)
 - 3. Becomes one of the saved. (Acts 2:47).
 - 4. Becomes one of the reconciled. (Eph. 2:16; Eph. 1:23).
 - 5. Becomes member of the one body. (Cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4).
 - 6. Becomes a child of God (1 John 3:1)
- D. To a kingdom that cannot be moved. (V. 28; cf. Dan. 2:44)

II. How Does One Come to It?

- A. By recognizing Christ’s authority. (Vv. 24, 26; Matt. 28:18).
- B. By submitting to His authority. (Matt. 28:19,20).
 - 1. Baptized. (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).
 - 2. Commitment to observe all things. (Matt. 28:20).

III. What Does One Do after He Has Come?

- A. Continues to hear Christ (vs. 25, 28).
- B. Lives in constant obedience. (1 John 1:7-9).
- C. Joins local church - God’s only “organized religion” (Cf. Acts 9:26).
 - 1. Many of these churches (under one authority) (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17).
 - 2. Join in collective or organized worship. (Heb. 10:25; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11-14).
 - 3. Join in collective funds & work done by these funds. (1 Cor. 16:2).
 - 4. Join in collective discipline (1 Cor. 5).
 - 5. Submit to common oversight, will and judgment.

Conclusion:

- A. Obey Christ.
- B. Enjoy privileges of being a firstborn.