

Series: Hebrews

Lesson # 71

Title: No Continuing City

Scripture: Hebrews 13: 14

Date: 3-22-09

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Princeton, New Jersey

Hebrews 13: 11: For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. 12: Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. 14: For here we have no continuing city but we seek one to come.

NO CONTINUING CITY

Our eyes are naturally impressed with what we can see. With the world "seeing is believing"; the Lord said, "Believe and thou shalt see the glory of God." But consider what you would have seen with the natural eye if you would have lived in the days when the Hebrew brethren first read this Hebrew letter.

The true believers were a small, rag-tag group of men and women, they were rejected by the majority of the people, they gathered together in whatever little place they could find, most of the they gathered in secrecy, they often suffered imprisonment, they suffered under the whip of those who hated them, their worship service consisted of singing psalms, of one of their members offering prayer for the group, of some man standing up to keep reminding them over and over of the person and finished work of Christ, the people were often poor and in need of financial support. To the natural eye, nothing about them would make you want to go to their place of worship and join in with them.

On the other hand, in the populated city of Jerusalem there was a beautiful stone temple. It was a place of much activity. A great number of people passed in and out. The priests and the scribes were present dressed in their robes. The offerings, even the sale of various items needed in sacrifice were present. Furnishings and instruments of the temple used in the services were very appealing to the natural eye. At the time the priests and the temple worshippers yet had leniency from the ruling government. The worshippers were not persecuted but actually regarded by most with much respect. And they had the old testament scriptures to which they could point in support of their view that this was the way of worship that they received from Moses who received it from God.

In the day when the Hebrew letter was written the Hebrew believer was under pressure from family and friends to forsake Christ and return to temple worship--the city of importance being Jerusalem. But it was that city--out of which the Savior went to lay down his life upon the cross--without the camp--so we are told to go forth unto him without the camp, for here, in the earth, in earth's religion, in carnal worship--we have no continuing city.

Hebrews 13: 13: Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. 14: For here have we no continuing city

In a short time from the writing of this letter, the LORD gave us proof that true worship is not in earthly ceremonies when he moved an enemy nation against that city and destroyed it.

HERE WE HAVE NO CONTINUING CITY

We find it hard to comprehend that no city in our nation will continue to last. In history there have been great cities--as you might view one of our cities such as New York City or Philadelphia or Chicago--great cities which once thrived as these cities in our nation thrive. The people in those places never could have imagined that their cities would not continue. Yet, today those cities no longer exist except in the history books.

But that is to show us that faith is the substance, the evidence of things not seen. We have been given reason upon reason why we should not look to things that we can see but to Christ by faith.

1. The things of this world may entice but they are not our security.

As the enemies of righteousness attempt to turn us from Christ by enticing us with what this world has to offer, or by making us feel we are doing without, or by pointing out how we would not have to suffer if we would just not be so narrow and single-minded for Christ--most of the religious world in our day knows nothing at all of bearing reproach--how can they when they all alike worship a Jesus who is bound by their whims and wills. Nothing worthy of reproach in worshipping that Jesus.

Yet, the Holy Spirit reminds the believer to be content in whatever state we are in. Because through faith we believe that the Lord will never leave us or forsake us but is our ever-present help. Therefore we do not fear what man shall do--as they reproach us.

Hebrews 13: 5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6: So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

2. The world is always changing and will finally dissolve into nothing.

Trends change and if you will keep up then you have to change with it. As we behold everything continually changing we get in the mind-set of continual change. It becomes more difficult for us to understand how anything could really stay the same.

Yet, the Holy Spirit teaches us to turn from this ever changing world, from its leaders, from its changing doctrines, from the message which makes man to be the all-important object in all things, and consider what we have been taught by God's faithful, consistent, messengers.

The great blessings of the gospel which are so free, so sure, so fully accomplished by Christ Jesus our Lord--never change. Jesus Christ who accomplished the everlasting salvation of his people is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. He establishes our hearts with grace

Hebrews 13: 7: Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation. 8: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

3. Even the religion of the world changes.

The variety pack of doctrines which are strange to God's word are always changing to suit the people. But bodily exercise--the external motions of religion are not profitable. Salvation is a heart matter. Worship is a matter of the spirit. Our Bread is in heaven. Our Altar is in heaven. Christ establishes our hearts with grace, not our hands with ceremonies and earthly food.

Hebrews 13: 9: Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

4. Our Salvation our continuing city is built by Christ.

No one wants to suffer but all who trust the true King and Savior shall. But we are reminded that our sanctification was accomplished because Christ suffered--being rejected of men--and it was that very suffering he endured that made me the righteousness of God in him. Is it too much for me to suffer for his name's sake?

Hebrews 13: 10: We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. 11: For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. 12: Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. 13: Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

5. Do you see how the Holy Spirit continues to teach us that our salvation is not in the visible, carnal, fleshly, things of this world but in Christ at God's right hand? So this fact is pressed home to us one more time with this statement:

Hebrews 13: 14: For here we have no continuing city but we seek one to come.

I Corinthians 7: 31:...for the fashion of this world passeth away.

Psalm 49: 10: For he seeth *that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. 11: Their inward thought *is, that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling places to all generations; they call *their* lands after their own names. 12: Nevertheless man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

2 Peter 3: 10: But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11: *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12: Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of

God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13: Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 14: Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Illustration: Soap bubbles

V14: BUT WE SEEK ONE TO COME

Hebrews 10: 34:...ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

Hebrews 11: 8: By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went...(he left the camp)...10: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

Hebrews 11: 16: But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Hebrews 12: 22: But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

This city is continuing because it cannot be shaken--Hebrews 12: 27: And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28: Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

2 Peter 3: 13: Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness

Revelations 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.