

What Is “Going to Church” All About?

Hebrews 12:18-29

Halifax: 7 May 2017

Introduction:

Going to church seems to be something that Christians typically do. But why? What is this all about?

- And how is it, why is it, that there are so many different approaches?
 - Downtown, you have folks in a richly ornamented “sanctuary” (holy place) with images of saints being worshipped, shrines, robed priests swaying around with censers, tinkling bells, rich chanting of psalms, and a central altar for offering the sacrifice of the mass.
 - They say that God has directed their bishops over the years to establish these traditions—they feel that they are brought to God by these things.
 - And in the suburbs, you have a spacious building with multiple wings, and inside there is a multi-visual display, a band with guitars and drums and a light display playing a new release, and a cool guy with jeans giving a talk with video clips about how God helps you be a success in life by getting in touch with your true potential.
 - They say that God has directed them by prayer to shape their worship in a way that will be relevant and speak to the present generation and its concerns.
 - And then there is a small group that gathers on Tuesday in someone’s living room to share their insights with each about a passage of scripture and to strategize about how to reach their neighbourhood for Christ. They pray together and sing a couple of choruses. This is what they do for church.
 - They say that their study of the scriptures have led them away from the traditional church with all her leaders and synods and formalism.
 - We could go on and on—
 - there is the church where the service is regularly interrupted by tongues and outbreaks of laughter when “the Spirit comes,” and where everything is spontaneous and unplanned.
 - There is formal and informal, reverent and casual, organised and spontaneous.
 - Are all these ways of worship just kind of like different flavours of ice cream for everyone to pick what is best for them?
 - Should we have different services for children and youth and marrieds and adults? for educated and uneducated? for one personality and another?
- Today, and over the next few weeks, we are going to look at what all this meeting-for-church business is all about.
 - What does the Bible say about it?
 - What is it and why are we to do it and what is for, and what are we supposed to do when we are there?
- It is such a fundamental part of the Christian life that we need to be sure that we know what we are doing.
 - We need to consider carefully what God has said about it and where we are free to innovate and where we are bound by His directives.
 - In a matter of such importance, it is not wise for us to just gravitate to whatever strikes our fancy.

Today for our scripture reading, I have selected Hebrews 12:18-29.

- In this passage, we are told about the congregation of God's people as it is under the New Testament—in contrast with what it was under the Old Testament.
- Please give attention as I read this passage to you. It is God's Word. Hebrews 12:18-29.

Hebrews 12:18-29: For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, ¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard *it* begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. ²⁰ (For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.” ²¹ And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”) ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus

the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. ²⁵ See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven, ²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” ²⁷ Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God *is* a consuming fire.

May the Lord bless the reading of His holy word to our hearts, and may He enlighten us by His Spirit as we consider what the Bible says to us about worship.

- Let me explain from the outset that I will not be looking at every detail of this passage, but rather looking at broad themes that are brought out here.

Also, as New Testament worship is Trinitarian, and I am going to organise the sermon around each person of the Trinity.

- We will begin with God the Father, then look at God the Son, and then at the place of the Holy Spirit in our worship.

TRANS> So the first thing I want to show you is that...

I. The church is the congregation that actually gathers to God the Father.

A. This is our identity—we are the people that assemble before His awesome presence.

- All through the Bible we are called an assembly or congregation of the Lord.
- 1. When God first called Israel out of Egypt, it was that they might gather as a congregation to worship Him.
 - God directs Moses with these words in Exodus 3:18: **Then they will heed your voice; and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt; and you shall say to him, ‘The LORD God of the Hebrews has met with us; and now, please, let us go three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’**
 - They were to gather together as God's people to worship Him by sacrifices.
 - This is what Pharaoh tried to prevent.

2. After God called them out, they are repeatedly referred to as His congregation or assembly
 - (*kaw-hawl'* in Hebrew and either *soon-ag-o-gay'* or *ek-klay-see'-ah* in Greek).
 - The unique thing about them is that they are the people who are called to assemble before the living God.
 - God set up His tabernacle among them, and there they went to worship Him.
 - In Leviticus 23, we have a chapter in which God summarises all the different assemblies or holy convocations that they are to have.
 - These convocations (*mik-raw* in Hebrew) were assemblies in which the people were called together before God...
 - Among these there was even the weekly convocation on the Sabbath Day in their local communities—
 - Leviticus 23:3 says: **‘Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.**
 - That Sabbath was a holy day which means it was a day to stop work and devote oneself to worship—to gathering before the face of God.
 - It was a day for physical rest, but much more than that, work was stopped for the purpose of worship.
 - Even though Israel was very negligent about keeping these holy days of assembly before God, they were supposed to be kept by them...
3. When we come to the New Testament, we see that God’s people who are in Christ are also constantly referred to as God’s congregation or assembly.
 - That is what the word translated *church* means.
 - It is the word *ek-klay-see'ah*, in original.
 - This word *ek-klay-see'ah* refers to an assembly that is called out... called together to transact business of any kind.
 - It is used throughout the New Testament to describe the people of God, and we find it in Hebrews 12 as a description of who we are as Christians...
 - We are the congregation or assembly of those who worship God.
 - Hebrews 12:22-23 says this about us: **“you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling...**
 - You see how words are piled up to describe a great gathering to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem,
 - It is called a *general assembly* (a word that speaks of a solemn festal assembly) and it is called the church (*ek-klay-see'ah*) of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.
 - It even includes angels and the saints that have gone to glory, and it includes Jesus Himself who is the mediator of the New Covenant...

- In the Old Covenant they gathered to sacrifice, and we gather around the sacrifice that has already been made.
- That is what Hebrews talks about so much—that we no longer have priests officiating at altars on earth, but we have Christ in heaven who has offered that sacrifice that opens the way to God.
 - More about Jesus in a moment...

TRANS> But the point here is that our identity as God's people is that we are those who assemble before Him.

- That is who we are.
- This is what we do when we come together each Lord's Day.
- We are the congregation or assembly that assembles before the face of God Almighty.

B. And when people gather to God with a true sense of who He is, they worship.

1. You can't come before God with a true awareness of who He is and do anything else.
 - a. His glory and majesty are overwhelming!
 - You know that you are completely helpless before Him.
 - You are totally at His mercy—totally in His hands.
 - When you see His glory and majesty, you know that there is nothing you can do to sway Him or to change in any way what He decided to do with you.
 - b. And seeing His purity and holiness,
 - All your sins are brought up before you—you are struck with what a wretched creature you are before Him.
 - You are defiled and full of sin, completely unfit to be before Him.
 - It is terrifying and there is nothing you can do.
 - c. And when He speaks... there is no argument...
 - His word is true—it is final—it is right—there is no place for negotiation.
 - You have nothing to add—only total obedience to Him is appropriate.
- And what is interesting about Hebrews 12 is the way it speaks about the change for us that comes (or that ought to come) under the New Covenant.
2. Under the New Covenant, there is not less reason, but even more reason to be terrified before the majesty and glory that is now revealed to us.
 - a. All the visual stuff is taken away—the thunder and the earthquake and the smell of smoke and the loud voice of Sinai...
 - As well as the slaughtered animals and the veils that we are not allowed to go past with special priests and vestments and ceremonies in the temple...
 - b. In place of all the visible, we have God revealed through the gospel.
 - Hebrews 12:18 describes it as a mountain that cannot be touched...
 - It is not something visual and sensory—an experience that is driven by our sensory perception.
 - Instead we are told that we are brought into the presence of God spiritually through Jesus who died for our sins.
 - There is no visible throne, no altar, no bright lights or great sounds...
 - We receive this through faith in the word proclaimed, not by sight.

- At Sinai, they feared for their bodies as they stood before God...
 - They feared that they would be pierced through if they came near.
 - But we are brought near to the same God who is now revealed as so holy that the only way of acceptance was by the blood of His only Son that was shed for us.
 - By this He is seen to be far more awesome and holy and inapproachable by sinners than He was seen to be at Mt. Sinai!
 - The way is now opened by Jesus' sacrifice—
 - But the gospel reveals the intolerance of God for sin more than Sinai ever could with all its theatrical displays.
- c. We too see, but all the more, that there is nothing we can do to sway or influence the Almighty.
- We are not before Him to negotiate with Him, negotiation is impossible.
 - We are before Him to praise Him, to hear Him, and to obey Him.
 - Hebrews 12:25-26 nails it: **See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, ²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”**
3. The truth is that in our actual experience, we are much more at ease before God's majesty and glory now than Israel was at Sinai.
- One reason for this is very proper, but in another way it is very improper.
- a. It is very proper for us to have less fear because we know that Jesus is our representative before God and that we have forgiveness in Him...
- We know that God has spoken and has accepted His sacrifice for our sins.
 - We know that He has promised us the forgiveness of sins and an inheritance with Christ in glory.
 - We know that He is at work in us and that He Himself will change us completely when we at last come before His face—not just spiritually as we do now—but before the full manifestation of His glory.
- b. But it is very improper for us to have less fear simply because we are not before a smoking mountain with a visible representation of God!
- We are to see more of God's glory and majesty now that Christ has been revealed than Israel saw at Sinai...
 - I repeat Hebrews 12:25-26: **See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, ²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”**
 - If we understood what is revealed now, we would fear God far more than Israel did at Sinai!
 - Not in the way of those who have no offering for our sin, but in the way of those who would be terrified if we did not!
 - It is not just God's love that is more fully revealed in the gospel, but also His wrath and intolerance for sin that put Jesus on the cross.

- C. See then that you come before God with reverence and fear, for our God is a consuming fire...
1. Don't appear before Him as a blockhead who has no sense of His awesome majesty—or as one who can manipulate Him or negotiate with Him!
 - Come as a worshipper to bow down before Him with reverence!
 - Come to behold and admire His beauty as the God who made the heaven and earth, and even more as the God who sent His Son to redeem us.
 - Come to receive His grace and mercy.
 - Come to hear His word that you may obey it without compromise.
 - Come to receive His promises that you might believe them and rest in them and give thanks to his holy name.
 2. There is such perfection and majesty, such holiness and purity, such beauty and love that is revealed to us in the gospel...
 - There is acceptance, but acceptance by a God that is far more awesome than we ever knew Him to be until Christ came and revealed Him in the gospel!
 - In Him, God's acceptance is an acceptance that fills us with awe and wonder.
 - not an acceptance that makes us pert and familiar with God as if He were like us.
 3. Hear the call of Hebrews 12:28-29: **Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.** ²⁹ **For our God is a consuming fire.**
 - Such an approach before God is what we were created for.
 - Only through such worship can we find our true purpose.
 - We present ourselves to Him as slaves—unable to negotiate—only to admire Him and to obey Him without question and to receive His wonderful gifts of mercy and salvation with thanksgiving.

TRANS> What a marvellous thing it is to be a part of the church that gathers before the Father of glory.

II. Now let's take a look at God the Son (Jesus) who leads us in our worship.

- A. He Himself is a worshipper of the Father among us.
1. It is a most remarkable thing that the Son of God, who dwelt with God the Father from all eternity, became a human being, in both body and spirit.
 - He did not, of course, get rid of His divine nature, for the divine nature is unchangeable,
 - but He acquired a human nature that is fully human and not entangled with the divine nature except that He is the same person in both natures.
 - In Him we see what God the Son is like with a human nature, just like ours from creation (before it was corrupted by sin).
 2. And when you are a human being who is without sin, you worship the Father beautifully and perfectly.
 - Of course you do—because He is your Creator, and He is God Almighty.
 - You know Him, and as we just saw, when He is revealed, you cannot help but fall down before Him in worship and adoration.
 - You hear Him and you obey Him without debate because He is God.
 - You praise Him and adore Him because of His excellence and glory.

3. Even though Jesus has now gone to heaven, He is still fully human (He will never cease to be both human and divine) and He still worships God as a human.
 - Only now, He is in the immediate presence of the Father in glory.
 - In fact, we are told that Jesus is the right hand of the Father in heaven, gathering His church from the nations of the world to worship God.
- B. Jesus is in fact our worship leader—He leads us from heaven, from glory!
- Hebrews 12:24 says that when we come into this assembly of worshippers which is called the church, that we come to Jesus!
 - This should be understood in two particular ways!
1. First, He is our leader in that He alone opens the way for us to come to the Father.
 - a. We could not be God's worshipping assembly apart from Him.
 - He came into the world to establish the church, this assembly that is spread across the world that worships the Father in spirit and in truth...not with carnal sacrifices that are symbolic, but in spirit and in truth.
 - He loved to describe His mission in coming here in our flesh as bringing us to the Father...we who were cut off are brought *by Him* to be the assembly of those who worship God!
 - b. None of us could have access to the Father because of our sin, but He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and completely separate from sin...
 - So He was able to come before Him to worship Him in true righteousness.
 - And in order to make us righteous so we could come to the Father with Him, Jesus serves as our High Priest who intercedes for us.
 - As our priest, He offered the one and only sacrifice that could take away our sin—He offered Himself.
 - Hebrews 12:24 refers to this when He says that in coming to Him, we come: **to the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling...**
 - Worshippers in the Old Testament had to offer the blood of animals to come to the temple, but now Jesus has come and shed His blood.
 - That is why we no longer come to God in symbolic ways with visible representations like temples and altars and vestments that are made with men's hands...
 - Now we come with faith—full trust—in what Jesus has done and in God's acceptance of it.
 - We come in faith, believing the gospel...
 - Now we come nearer to God—not in a way that we can see Him—but spiritually by faith.
 - We have full access through the blood of Jesus as it says in Hebrews 10:19-22: **Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and having a High Priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.**

- c. It is very important to understand that before the Father is a place too awesome for us to be, yet by Jesus we stand before Him.
 - The only reason that the church can come before God to worship Him is because Jesus represents us.
 - He is the only one of us who is without sin, and He represents us all... and as our priest, He has sacrificed Himself to atone for our sins.
- He enables us to worship. That is the first way that He is our worship leader.
- 2. Secondly, He is our worship leader in that He actually directs what we do in worship.
 - Let me explain what I mean...
 - a. First of all, we need to see that He is the one who sets the agenda for our worship.
 - In Hebrews 8:2, He is referred to as our current **“minister of the sanctuary of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected and not man.”**
 - He replaces the priests of the Old Testament who led the worship in the temple made with man’s hands.
 - The word *minister* in this phrase *minister of the sanctuary* is a special word that is only used four times in the New Testament...
 - The Greek word is *li-toorg-os*, so we could refer to Him as our *liturgist*—the one who sets the agenda for our worship.
 - b. And what does He lead us, in particular, to do in our worship?
 - This is described in Hebrews 2:12 where He says, **“I will declare Your name (the Father’s name) to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to you.”**
 - This is a quotation from Psalm 22 where it is explained more fully that after Jesus’ sacrifice for our sins that He offered had been accepted by the Father,
 - Jesus promised that He would declare what God had done in the midst of the assembly and lead the assembly in singing praise!
 - He says specifically He that He will declare that the Father did not despise the affliction of the afflicted one, but that when He cried, He heard.
 - In other words, the Father did not reject His offering for our sins when He was afflicted for us, but accepted it!
 - That is the essence of worship under the New Covenant...
 - It is about declaring the gospel—the good news of sins forgiven and acceptance with God for us through Jesus’ offering.
 - Instead of offering sacrifices, the gospel is preached!
 - And we respond to God with praise and thanksgiving!
 - The emphasis of the New Testament is on preaching Christ crucified rather than carnal rituals.
- c. And Jesus leads and directs this worship from heaven through the ministers that He has appointed on earth.
 - 1) First, there were the apostles and prophets He gave us who were directed by Him to establish worship under the New Covenant.

- Jesus used them to establish worship under the New Covenant in obedience to what He commanded them...
 - And He appointed them to leave us with a sufficient record of what they did and of the gospel message in the Scriptures of the New Testament.
 - The record is complete, and we are not to add to or take away from it, just as those in the Old Testament were not add or take away from the worship that Moses appointed.
 - The New Testament gives the pattern of how we are to conduct ourselves in the house of God, which is His church.
- 2) Second, in those New Testament Scriptures, Jesus has also given us a pattern of church government to follow.
- He tells us how to select ministers of the word to lead us in worship and to preach the word,
 - And He tells us that we are to continue to have elders in the church to oversee the worship and to receive and remove members according to His directions in the Word.
 - In other words, they maintain the rolls of the church and help the members to obey Christ's commandments so they can continue in God's worship.
 - Jesus leads the church through these servants, and they are to be chosen in accordance with the directives of His word.
 - The ministers are not priests, as Jesus is, but they are those who declare the gospel and pronounce God's blessing on those who believe, and His curse on those who do not, in Jesus' name.

C. We are to carefully follow Him as our head.

- This has been one of the greatest failings of the church through the ages.
 - The Old Testament leaders did not follow the directives that God had given them through Moses, and now the New Testament leaders do not follow the directives that Christ has given us in the New Covenant.
 - We are not to add to or take away from what He has appointed.
1. No prelate has authority to modify what Christ has instituted.
- Over the centuries, there are those churches that have added things that cannot be found in the New Testament—prayers to the saints, altars made with men's hands, the offering of sacrifices, processions and vestments, the use of musical instruments and choirs, holy days and ceremonies that are nowhere found in the scriptures.
 - And very often in these places, the very thing that is emphasised by Jesus and His apostles, the preaching of the word, is given a diminished place in the liturgy.
 - And besides that, the elders very often fail to exercise church discipline—they fail as gatekeepers in removing those who refuse to repent of their sins and live contrary to Christ.
 - In fact, the elders are often replaced by proud prelates who take the responsibility to ordain and to receive and excommunicate members to themselves—a responsibility Christ gave to presbyteries—or bodies of elders...

- Longstanding tradition no more makes these additions acceptable to God than the longstanding traditions of the Jews were acceptable to Jesus.
 - It is not the traditions instituted by prelates, but the traditions instituted by the apostles that are to be kept.
 - The reformation was an attempt to return to the worship instituted by Christ through His apostles and prophets.
- No prelate or so-called bishop has authority to modify what God has appointed, but also...
- 2. No congregation has authority to modify it either.
 - There are those traditional churches we spoke about who departed from the traditions of the apostles long ago over the course of the first seven or eight centuries...and now they are entrenched in those traditions...
 - But there are also those churches today that take it to themselves to introduce new innovations.
 - Some of them modify the worship Christ appointed in an effort to make church more relevant—
 - In an effort to embrace the culture they end up taking away the church’s message to the culture.
 - If the songs reflect the culture and the way it thinks about God, soon the worshippers will no longer revere God.
 - He becomes an idolatrous product of the culture rather than the God we find in Hebrews 12 who is to be worshipped in reverence and awe.
 - Soon, all the confusions that characterise the present age begin to be confusions in the church which is supposed to be above such things with God’s unchangeable truth.
 - Thus we find feminism, gender confusion, misunderstanding of authority, sexual immorality, denial of the doctrine of Hell, rejection of Christ being the only way of salvation—and the list goes on.

TRANS> Brothers and sisters, we must carefully follow Jesus our worship leader!

- He is the one who brings us to the Father.
 - If we follow other leaders instead of Him, they will lead us away from the Father little by little until we are no church at all but a synagogue of Satan.
 - The great assembly we must come to is the one where Jesus is the head, not the people and not some prelate.

III. The church is enabled to grasp the awesomeness of what it is to be gathered before the Father by the help of the Holy Spirit.

- A. He is the one that the Father and the Son sent to be with us to us—to enable us to “get it,”
 - 1. When Jesus went away, He promised to send Him.
 - In John 16:7, Jesus says to His disciples, **“I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”**

2. Jesus leads the worship, and the Spirit works in us so that we can engage in the glorious realities of the gospel and of what it reveals about God.
 - He takes the things of Christ and of the Father and makes them real to us.
 - He works in our hearts so that we see the glory and majesty of God, not by symbols as in the Old Testament, but by belief of the truth that is preached to us.
 - We are convicted of sin, we are persuaded that God is righteous and that He is indeed a God of judgment that we dare not challenge.
 - His work in us gives us a deeper and deeper love for Christ, a fuller gratitude for the glorious gospel, an understanding of God's commandments and...
 - a burden for prayer—seeing our need of God's help and of the ministry of Christ and His saving work...
 - We cannot pray or praise God without His work in us.
3. Now that the shadows are gone, His work is indispensable. Without it, our worship is humdrum.
 - When He is not at work among us, the truth of Christ and the beauty and glory of God is dull and uninteresting to us—we are detached from faith in the message...it is distant and unable to move our hearts.
 - That is what makes us yearn for the shadows of the high church—we want to see visible representations to stir our senses...
 - or we want the innovations of the church that changes with the culture.
 - Without the Spirit's work, we are empty and unfulfilled by New Testament worship.

TRANS> But instead of turning to traditions or to innovations to feel connected with God,

B. We need to pray earnestly for the blessing of the Spirit.

1. We cannot expect to praise God as we ought without His work in us.
 - We will yawn in the presence of majesty instead of being overwhelmed with reverence and awe, with joy and adoration of His glorious works.
2. Nor can we expect to receive anything from God without His work in us.
 - The word will not transform our lives.
 - We will not have God's word in our soul to convict us of the changes we need to make in our lives.
 - We will not learn of God through it.
 - We will find the world and its deceitful lusts to be more attractive to us than our glorious creator—our porn, our own beauty, our own achievements, riches, honours—
 - We will live in poverty of soul, feeding on the husks of the world.
 - We will not be comforted in God's promises and thrilled with the work of Christ for us...
 - A pay raise or a new car or a new romance will be more appealing than Christ and His work.
3. Pray that the Spirit will enable us to bask in the awe of God via NT revelation.
 - And if there is no change, we need to keep on praying and waiting patiently for the Lord until He visits us.
 - We will be tempted to turn aside to idolatry because idolatry will seem more interesting and exciting.
 - But if we wait on the Lord and return to Him, He will meet with us in the way it speaks about in Hebrews 12.