

Seeking the Coming City

You may think this a silly question. However, do you know anyone who talks about going to heaven that does not follow the authority of Jesus Christ in the New Testament? Right away, those in the denominational world probably pop into your mind. But folks, [Matthew 7:21](#) applies to those in the Lord's church as well.

The main purpose of the epistle to the Hebrews was to stem the tide of the deathly backslide of the Hebrews to Judaism. Why? The Hebrew writer knew that going back into Judaism would be to forfeit the heavenly hope.

Judaism was once the religion of Jehovah God but only for the purpose of bringing the Messiah to the lost world. Judaism was fulfilled in Jesus Christ ([Matthew 5:17](#)) and abolished Judaism could not then or ever offer man the redemption of sins that would lead him to heaven. It is only through Jesus Christ and His precious blood which was shed "**outside the gate**" that will bring redemption to mankind ([Hebrew 13:12](#)). Therefore, one must "**go forth therefore unto him without the camp,**" that is, one had to leave Judaism behind. Those who would follow Christ could not be ashamed to stand by Him "**without the camp**" in His humiliation upon the cross. This is the only way one could take joy in sharing His reproach. The same is true of the followers of Christ today!

We often look at the Hebrews of the Bible and see a fickle and wavering people in their faith, faith that went up and down like a roller coaster. They relied on things such as Jerusalem, the Holy City and "**The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord,**" ([Jeremiah 7:4](#)). But the city of Jerusalem would soon be made desolate and the temple of the Lord would soon be toppled and then their gross error would be made manifest.

But, are we any different? The things written about the Jews in the Old Testament were written for our learning and admonition ([Romans 15:4](#); [1 Corinthians 10:1-12](#)). Therefore, let us not put our sole trust in such things as crying out "*The church of Christ, the church of Christ, the church of Christ.*" The body of Christ is most important but it will not redeem our souls. Just attending church will not bring redemption. Seeking heaven is much more.

Our hope is upward and lies in seeking the "**new Jerusalem**" ([Revelation 21:2](#)) and seeking implies activity. One cannot be passive. Every Christian has a great part to play no matter the number of his talents ([Matthew 25:14-30](#)). The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men but that grace teaches that we must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and that we are to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ([Titus 2:11,12](#)). God's grace toward us is great but grace alone, as some contend, will not redeem us. Christians cannot be passive but must actively seek the heavenly city to come ([Hebrews 13:14](#)). [2 Peter 2:5](#) tells us that we are "**lively stones**" in the church of our Lord and "**lively**" implies activity.

Therefore brethren, we must attend worship and worship our God in spirit and in truth ([John 4:24](#)). But beyond that, we must read, study, and learn of God's will for us. We must live it and teach it by our example and by our words ([1 John 3:18](#)) at every opportunity. Then, we must seek opportunities to do good unto all men ([Galatians 6:10](#)). So, let us put Christ first in our lives and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness ([Matthew 6:33](#)) before all else. Let us be crucified with Christ, put away self, and let the world see Christ in us ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

God's grace will save only those who are submissive, active seeker's of the kingdom of God. We must give all to seeking that kingdom now ([Matthew 22:37](#)) looking forward, with earnest expectation, to the kingdom to come ([Romans 8:16-19](#)).

Do you really want to go to heaven - *really*?

What Is Awaiting the Faithful Child of God? John 14:1-3

The singing and Scripture readings last night during the worship service made me think of the wonderful things that are waiting for the faithful child of God once this life is over. As I read [John 14:1-3](#), I can see a loving and concerned Savior seeking to console troubled hearts by directing these hearts to simply believe in Jehovah God and believe in His Christ. The Father in heaven could not be seen but the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was standing right in front of them as He fulfilled prophecy after prophecy before them.

How many of the world's ills could be solved today if people would only believe in the Creator and the great and gracious sacrifice He made on their behalf ([John 3:16](#))?

But our Lord did not stop there. He also gave His hearers two other directives to cure their troubled hearts. They were instructed to believe that heaven was real and that Jesus was coming again. How many people put their trust in the here and now, the things that they can see and neglect that great reality that cannot be seen? The Hebrew writer wrote, **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him"** ([Hebrews 11:6](#)). The reason that many make no effort to come to God is that they do not believe in heaven, that is, they do not believe in the reward that God has for His people ([2 Peter 3:1-7](#)).

Some believe that the Father's house referred to here is the church. However, there are several reasons why it cannot be.

1. When Jesus spoke that of [John 14](#), the Father's house was then in existence as Jesus spoke of it in present tense. The church had not yet been established.
2. Our Lord had to leave the earth to go to the Father's house. One does not have to leave the earth in order to become a member of the church. (One must leave the world but that is a different matter). The church is now on the earth and available to all who obey the Gospel.
3. Our Lord went to prepare a place for the faithful when He left the earth and He left the earth to go to His Father's house.

Therefore, the church and the Father's house are indeed different and one does not refer to the other.

The songs we sang last night told us of the wonders and beauties of heaven. [John 14:1-3](#) tells us that it is spacious and has many mansions and will be more than simply adequate for all who go there. The New Testament is not a book of vain and hollow hope and our Lord does not hold before us a vain and hollow hope of heaven. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people and those people can only be prepared by obeying the Word of God.

Where is Jesus? He is in His Father's house in heaven. But one day, one great day, He is coming back to take His faithful ones with Him so that we can be where He is in His Father's house in heaven. Are you prepared for that day? Have you obeyed the Gospel? And if so, are you faithful to it?

Do you really want to go to heaven - *really*?