

A HABITAT FOR DIVINITY

May 25, 2008

Pastor Cynthia L. Hale

Psalms 107; Ephesians 2:19-22

We live in a transient world. Every day people move into and out of Metro Atlanta leaving their homes, churches, and jobs. In this day and time, people take the church for granted only attending church when they feel they need it. Nevertheless, as the old adage states, you don't miss your water until your well runs dry. Paul writes to help us understand the uniqueness and importance of the church. In the text, the Gentiles were without Christ but through his blood they had become reconciled with God and with each other. God made the two (Gentiles and Jews) one. The Gentiles were now one with God's people.

The church is God's city. We are fellow citizens of God's city. When someone asks you where you are from, you take pride in telling them you are from Chicago, Atlanta, LA, etc. Even if you are from a small town, you tell them you are from the next big city. You should be proud of where you come from. Be proud of your city and/or town.

There are literally thousands of people who are wandering around lost in life. They are our family and friends. They are the people we work with. They are the people we meet on the street. These people are not just the down and out, they are the up and coming. You should know that having a lot of material things cannot bring you meaning. You can still be down and out with all the money in the world. Too many people are only going through the motions. They have tried everything; clubbing, drinking, drugging, sleeping around, and moving from place to place. A restless heart is a reckless heart. You have been there. You have been lost wandering around looking for someone to love you and to care. You were lost until God found you and brought you into a city called Hope.

God is the city planner. The city is the place where His presence is keenly felt. The city is the place where His will is done. The city is the place in which to dwell when you have been wandering around aimlessly. It is a place where you know you are unconditionally loved and accepted. Elite-ism is not allowed in the city. We all got here by grace. It was by grace that we were welcomed into the city. The city is the place to settle down. We live in a transient world where people are constantly moving around without commitment. When things are going crazy in our lives, we disconnect from God and the one place where you can find hope. God is your present help in times of trouble.

All of us desire to know our basic and spiritual needs will be met. In the city, God has already provided for us so that we not only survive in life but we also thrive. Everything you need should be right here. In the city of Hope, we should be able to help others who are going through or who are without. **Acts 4:32** There are some basics that you have to have in the city. We all believe that

the Spirit has come to live in us and make us one. We all should believe that if one is without in the city another person in the city should help them. The world says, "I got mine. You have to get yours." God says we belong to one another. **I Timothy 5:1** We ought to relate to each other as brother and sisters. We can't keep coming and going. We can't just keep living in our close-knit communities. For instance, you can't just fellowship with the choir because that's your ministry. The way to be friendly is to make yourself friendly. People will hurt your feelings. People will make you mad. People will make you feel as though they have all the sense and you don't. We have a strange mix in this church. However, we are the family of the living God. God has told us that as his family we ought to love one another, help one another, accept one another, show affection to one another, etc. We like to come to church, listen to the Word, and go back to business as usual. However, we are the temple of the living God.

The foundation of the temple is the Word of God. It gives us our direction and instructions for living. As we build the church, the Word is building our lives. The word of the world is sinking sand. The Word of our God is living and life. It is firm. It is like a seed within our hearts. The Word of God has power to lighten our darkness. It will fill us with strength and courage. When we put it into faith and practice, nothing will be impossible to us. That's why Paul told Timothy to preach the Word. In every church the Word needs to be preached without compromise. Too many churches are preaching what people want to hear. Too many churches are preaching church-free spirituality meaning you don't have to go to church. Too many churches are preaching many paths to God. The Bible tells you there is only way to the Father. You can't think your way into holiness. You can't live any kind of life and see God. It is in Christ Jesus when we are saved that we become the righteousness of God. You have to test the Spirit by the Spirit. You have to test what the world says by the Word of God. You have to know that you know. It is so important for us to know what we know and stand on it. Situations and people in the world will test you, your faith, and your faithfulness everyday. You wonder what to do. Do you have a Bible? Read your Bible. If you live holy it speaks volumes to those in the world.

Peace