

WRITE IT DOWN!

A People Worshipping

What in the World is the Church?

Hebrews 12:18-29, 13:15-16

December 2, 2007

LISTEN UP!

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I. Where We've Come . . .

A. We have not come to Mount Sinai

1. To Fear
2. To Separation
3. To Judgment

B. But we have come to Mount Zion

1. To Unshakable Security (12:22)
2. To Unshakable Joy (12:23)
3. To Unshakable Identity (12:23)
4. To Unshakable Intimacy (12:23)

II. How We've Come . . .

A. Through Jesus, the Mediator of a new covenant.

B. Through the blood of Jesus, which speaks better than the blood of Abel

III. The Way We Keep Coming . . .

A. How does worship work?

B. What is worship about?

1. Our worship is an offering to God.
2. Our worship should reflect what God likes.
3. Our worship should reflect what God is like.
4. Our worship should be a thanksgiving for all we are and have in the Gospel.
5. Our "lip" worship is interconnected and inseparable with our "life" worship.

THINK IT OVER!

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1. Read Hebrews 12:18-19 again. What are some of the features that make this text so mysterious, intriguing and tricky? Why must we use our imaginations to really understand this text?
2. Read Exodus 19 and 20 and compare with Hebrews 12:18-21. Describe what the people experienced when they approached God at Mount Sinai. Who could go to the mount? Who spoke to God? What did the people say after this experience?
3. In contrast to Mount Sinai, what have we come to and what do we receive there? In other words, what do the various phrases piled together in Hebrews 12:22-24 communicate to us?
4. How in the world do we come to God the Judge without being fearful like at Mount Sinai? What happens in Matthew 27:51 that gives us a giant hint?
5. How does the blood of Jesus speak better than the blood of Abel?
6. What do we make of this past perfect "have come" language? After all, we aren't there yet, are we?

WORK IT OUT!

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1. What did you like about this text and message? What moved you? What challenged you? What didn't you understand?
2. Why is it that apart from Jesus, we all stand at the foot of Mount Sinai? Why is it that so few know and understand that reality?
3. Where do we tend to look for our security? Our joy? Our identity? Or intimacy? What does the fact that the heavenly Jerusalem will provide these indicate about these longings?
4. In what ways does God come down and shake our lives to show us our true state before him? What has God done or how is God doing that now in your life?
5. How does worship work and take us to where we really are in Christ? Why doesn't "worship" work this way?
6. Look closely again at Hebrews 12:28-29 and 13:15-16. What do we learn about the nature of true worship from these verses? (How many of the 5 principles highlighted in the message can you recall without looking?) How does this view of worship compare/contrast with how we moderns and post-moderns view and think about worship?