

MAKE EVERY EFFORT

THE FINAL WORD: KNOWING CHRIST THROUGH HEBREWS | HEBREWS 12:12-29 | AUGUST 23, 2020 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

SERMON OUTLINE:

"Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14-29)

Make Every Effort and See To It (Hebrews 12:14-17)

- to live at peace
- to cultivate holiness
- that no one falls short of God's grace
- that no one falls into sexual immorality or godlessness

The Better of Two Mountains (Hebrews 12:18-24)

- not the mountain of fear-filled holiness
- but the true Mount Zion where God dwells

Hear the One who Speaks and Respond (Hebrews 12:25-29)

- Don't refuse to hear
- But listen
- Thank God
- Worship God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you encountered something in your life that has left you awestruck? What was it and how did you respond?
2. This week we continue our series on Hebrews, "The Final Word," by looking at Hebrews 12:14-29. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His Word. Then, whether you're alone or with a group, read that passage aloud.
3. Hebrews 12:14 begins with a strong word about the need for the community to live well together in peace and holiness. How do you think this relates to the description in verses 12-13 about weakness?
4. Given the situation of persecution, what would you say is the significance of verse 15 for the recipients of this exhortation?
5. In verses 16-17, sexual immorality and godlessness (epitomized by Esau) are highlighted as easy pathways for disobedience. Why do you think this is the case?
6. How do these verses relate to the theme found throughout Hebrews of responding obediently when we hear God's word (see 3:7-12; 6:4-8; 10:23-39; 12:4-7)?
7. In verses 18-24 the writer contrasts two different "mountains," one being the literal Mount Sinai where Moses received the Law from God (see Exodus 19) and the other being the true Mount Zion where God spiritually reigns. What is the difference between these two mountains according to the author? Why is this important?
8. The final verses of this section, 25-29, are a warning and exhortation to the hearers to truly hear what God is speaking and respond in kind. What is it that God has spoken and how are believers to respond?
9. Which part of this exhortation do you find most challenging personally? What do you think it means for you to live this out in your daily life?
10. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study of Hebrews 12:14-19? If you are on your own, write that down. If you are in a small group, discuss your answers with one another. Close in prayer. Choose one person in your life with whom you will share something you learned through this study.

DIG DEEPER

This week dig deeper into Hebrews 12:14-29. Here are some options for that:

- Memorize Hebrews 12:14 or 12:28-29 this week
- For background on the awe-inspiring encounter of Moses and the people with God at Mount Sinai read Exodus 19 and watch the Bible Project video on the second half of Exodus here: bibleproject.com/videos/torah-exodus-2/
- Take some time to reflect on the nature of the spiritual realities that we enjoy through Christ as outlined in Hebrews 12:22-24. As you reflect, respond by singing a song of worship, writing out a prayer, drawing or painting something, journaling, or some other creative response to this important text