Lives That Can't Be Shaken — Delivery Transcript

Hebrews 12:18–29 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, April 13, 2025 · *Neglecting Salvation*

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It's always amazing how the worship service pans itself out in terms of what is said, what's prayed, what's sung. If you have your Bibles we're going to be in Hebrews chapter twelve. And so much of what we have already seen and heard today will be a continuation of what we have in our text. One of my favorite philosophers, probably my favorite Catholic in the whole world, is a guy by the name of G. K. Chesterton. Has anybody ever heard of G. K. Chesterton before? A couple of you. He wrote a great book called Orthodoxy.

And in that book called Orthodoxy, he said that Christian doctrine needs a defense for a lot of people for a lot of things. But the one Christian doctrine that needs no defense, for you see the evidence of it every single day in the headlines, is the doctrine of original sin. Because every time you read the newspaper or, God forbid, watch cable news you see just how drastically wrong our world has gone. And it's like a roller coaster, especially over the last couple of weeks, if you have any kind of money and any kind of retirement account, you've watched that.

Then go like this. Some of y'all went like that. Some of y'all are doing this. And there's all kinds of debates and pundits commenting, this is how you fix it, this is how you fix it. There is a lot of disagreement on how to fix what's wrong with the world. There's not a lot of disagreement that the world is in fact gone wrong. And the thing about Christianity, and one of the things I really appreciate about the Scripture, one reason I think the Scripture is true and inspired by God is unlike a lot of world religions, it doesn't pretend as though the suffering is illusory or that you just need to kind of pray some kind of judo mind trick and transcend the suffering through mental, you know, nirvana, but it acknowledges that your suffering is real and that this world is broke.

And that the pain that brokenness causes is not right. It is not the way that it is meant to be. But instead of putting our hopes for fixing what's wrong in a particular person or a few small tweaks to the status quo, it puts our hope and dreams in something different, something that

is yet to come. A totally different kind of system, a totally different kind of kingdom. And according to the New Testament, a kingdom that Jesus inaugurated when he came into this world. Preaching the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel, but a kingdom that will be consummated and fully brought about at his second coming.

And the reason I mention that is because the book of Hebrews is written by a guy who is writing to people who were themselves in a very shook-up kind of world. Their world was incredibly unstable. And he was writing to them that their temptation to drift back into what was. That old first century Judaism thinking maybe I can have my cake and eat it too. I can believe in Jesus, but depend on these old religious habits to give me comfort and peace. He's saying that drifting is not going to make your life better, it's going to make it worse, it's not going to make what's unstable stable, it's going to make it less reliable, and so just keep believing in Jesus.

So if you've been with us through the book of Hebrews, we've been looking at the warnings, and this last warning in Hebrews chapter 12 is a warning that's rooted in that better kingdom that Jesus is building. The kingdom that has begun now in part but will be consummated when Jesus comes again. And he is going to say to these struggling Christians, don't stop believing because by faith you will inherit a kingdom that will not be shaken. So let's start in chapter 12, verse 18. By the way, if you got a Bible today, you might want to put a thumb in Exodus chapter 19 and 20, the Ten Commandments, because we are going to go back there in just a minute.

Verse 18 of chapter 12 says, for you have not come to what could be touched, to a blazing fire, to darkness, gloom, and storm. To the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words. Those who heard it begged that not another word be spoken to them, for they could not bear what was commanded. If even an animal touches the mountain it must be stoned. The appearance was so terrifying that Moses said, I'm trembling with fear. Instead, you've come to Mount Zion, to the city of the heavenly Jerusalem. I'm sorry, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.

To myriads of angels, a festive gathering, to the assembly of the firstborn, to a judge who is God of all, to the spirits of righteous people made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkle blood which says better things than the blood of Abel. See to it that you do not reject the one who speaks, for if they did not escape, when they rejected him who warned them on earth even less will we escape if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven.

His voice shook the earth at that time. But now he has promised yet once more I will shake. Not only the earth, but also the heavens. And this expression yet once more indicates the removal of what can be shaken, that is, created things, so that what is not shaken might remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be

thankful, and by it we may serve God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. Receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, written to Christians who are in a world extremely unstable.

Everything that could be shaken was being shaken in their life. And the author of Hebrews says, if you'll just keep believing. Jesus can build in you an unshakable life. An unshakable life that whether now or certainly when Jesus comes again will survive the judgment that's coming. And if you stop believing and you stagnate in your faith, your life will become fragile, unprepared. And devastated by the shaking that is coming on the earth, and that indeed is on the earth even now, as you can see. That's the message, that's the warning of Hebrews chapter 12.

Every warning we've looked at had a command to obey, a warning to heed, and a judgment if the warning wasn't heeded. And the command in this passage is to not disregard the better kingdom that Jesus is building, lest you experience the punishment of God at his second coming. The mountain that he's describing, Mount Zion, is being contrasted with another mountain. He doesn't actually call it a mountain in verses 18 to 20, but it's obviously a mountain in the Old Testament. And if you are steeped in the Old Testament, you'll know which mountain he's talking about.

But if you're not, that's okay. A lot of people aren't. But this audience would have been deeply steeped in the Old Testament because they were all Jewish. The mountain he's talking about is the mountain called Sinai in Exodus chapter 19 and 20. You guys ever heard of Mount Sinai? The Charlton Heston movie. Some of you have seen that. And God chose Mount Sinai as the mountain on which He was going to manifest his presence and through which he was going to give to Moses and the people of Israel what are called the Ten Commandments.

And the events surrounding the giving of that law are exactly what the author of Hebrews describes in verses 18 to 20. And it was really incredible. Just because some of us are not familiar with the Old Testament, I want to show you the description of this in Exodus chapter 19, you'll see all of the same language that the author of Hebrews is using, almost as if Hebrews was written by a preacher preparing a sermon from the book of Exodus to preach to his congregation. But in Exodus chapter 19, verses 12 to 14, you see God give Moses these instructions for how the mountain is supposed to be treated.

They're at Mount Sinai, and God says to Moses, I want you to put boundaries for the people all around the mountain, and I want you to tell them, be careful that you do not go up on the mountain. Or touch its base. That's why the author of Hebrews says you haven't come to what could be touched, because God said if you touch that mountain, anyone who touches the mountain must be put to death. And then the person who's being put to death, no hand

may touch him. Instead, he's got to be stoned or shot with arrows and not live, whether animal or human.

And when the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they may go up the mountain. Now I know that sounds extreme, and for all the little kids who don't even know any better and they go to touching things, you can imagine every little mama was like, no, no, no, honey, stay away from the mountain don't touch the boundary because if you touch the mountain, you're going to be stoned to death. You're going to be executed from an arrow because we can't even touch the people who've touched the mountain. Not because, you know, God is vindictive or likes to punish people, but because God was trying to communicate a message to the people of Israel that he is holy.

And they are not. And when God who is holy brings his presence down among people who are not holy, they will die. If they are not prepared. And so they were to prepare themselves by a process called consecration, where they would do these ritual washings and rigmarole to make themselves ready to experience God's holy presence on the mountain. So Moses comes down to the people, he tells them the instructions. They listen to him. I don't know that anybody touched the mountain. He consecrates them, gets them ready on the mountain, and then they go up on the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments.

Because the Lord came down on it in fire. A lot of people, when they think the Ten Commandments, they think of Moses in the burning bush, and that's pretty interesting, a bush that burns but never burns up. This time the Ten Commandments is not a burning bush, it's actually a burning mountain. The Lord lit the mountain like a match. And it's not just that the Lord is present through the fire, the Lord was in the fire, verse 18. The Lord came down on it in fire. Its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently.

There's our phrase for shaking. And as the sound of the ram's horn grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him in the thunder. This is a terrifying ordeal. I think of a West Texas violent thunderstorm. You guys ever been in a violent West Texas thunderstorm? Tornado watch. I'll never forget when my mom was eating hot dogs in the living room when I thought we were all going to die because the tornado sound wouldn't stop ringing. Most people are not weird like that and they get a little nervous when that kind of signs and wonders are in the sky.

The reason Moses, I'm sorry, the reason God said to Moses, I'm doing it this way, is because I don't want anyone to doubt. That who is speaking is the Lord. And I don't want anyone to doubt that you are my representative, Moses, so that they never doubt your words are my words. When I give you my words, I'm going to do it in front of everybody in such a spectacular fashion that no one will doubt it. And he does. He gives the Ten Commandments. The mountain's on fire. It's enveloped in smoke.

The earth is shaking. It is traumatizing. And he gives the Ten Commandments, one of which we heard this morning, and the response of the people, if you'll turn to Exodus chapter 20, verse 18, the response of the people all of them who witnessed it, the thunder, the lightning, the sound of the ram's horn, the mountains surrounded by smoke, when the people saw it, they trembled and they stood at the distance. In other words, I don't think so. I'm not getting anywhere close to that. And then they say to Moses, you speak to us, Moses, and we'll listen.

But don't let God speak to us anymore, or we will die. It was such a terrifying demonstration of God's presence. That they didn't dare draw near and they pleaded with Moses, please let God stop talking and you talk to us instead because his presence is so overwhelming and so terrifying that I can't bear to be around it anymore. Now we talk about all the time about being in the presence of God. We just sang a song about it today. Let us become more aware of your presence.

Every time God's presence manifested itself in the Old Testament, the people said, stop! I can't take it anymore. It's too much. He's too holy. He's too great. And that's exactly what you see in God's presence on Mount Sinai. And that's exactly what the author of Hebrews is describing under the old covenant. Under the old covenant, God's presence. Broke you, unraveled you, unmade you. It was like something that could not be touched. It's unattainable. It was like fire, it's too hot. It was like darkness, gloom, and storm, despairing, overwhelming, like a blast of a trumpet that just cuts right through you, and the sound of words that you cannot maintain or you cannot bear the weight underneath, and so those who heard it begged, not another word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded.

That's the old covenant. And for unholy people, under that old covenant, God's presence was unbearable. An unbearable presence that made Isaiah in Isaiah 6 say, Lord, woe is me, I'm undone. A presence that even Peter, when Jesus got in his boat and did the miracle of fish, said, Lord, depart from me, I'm a sinful man, I'm unworthy. Gideon, Moses, we could go on and on and down the line. Every time God manifested his presence under the old covenant, it destroyed people, it unraveled them because they could not bear the weight of God's standard, the weight of God's holiness and holy presence.

And so they said to Moses, let it be you, not him. Anything but the presence of God. And the author of Hebrews is saying, you want to go back to that? You want to go back to that mediator? You want to go back to that system because your world is a little shaky right now? You think that's not going to unravel you even more? You've come to a different kind of mountain. Don't go back to that mountain. The mountain of Sinai, if you're taking notes, is the mountain of God's law.

It's a mountain of God's law. And the author of Hebrews is saying, if you live your life under the law, or if you orient your relationship with God around law, your life will fall apart. It will

create a fragile life that cannot bear underneath the weight of the world as it is. There's so many examples that we could give of this. For those of you who are students, imagine being a straight A student. Some of you don't have to imagine, some of you, that's kind of a nice thing to think.

You're a straight-A student. I got straight A's in Roby, not because I was so smart, but because the standard was so low. Felt really good about myself. Graduated Roby, went to Cisco Junior College, a little bit harder, but still did pretty good. Go, what is Cisco Junior College? I don't remember. Cubs, Wranglers. After Cisco Junior College, I did my basics. I went to Southwestern Seminary, the college of Southwestern Seminary. And it was like undergrad on steroids. All of a sudden I had teachers that had demands about papers and formatting, and they would talk words I had no idea what they meant.

And they were like strict teachers. They weren't like, oh, you tried hard, here's an A. No, you tried hard, that's cute, here's a C, here's a B. I went from being one of the smartest kids in my class to one of the dumbest. And I remember being unsettled by that. And thinking to myself, I guess I'm not as smart as I thought I was, obviously. And that's just that's just me. You can imagine someone who goes their whole life to get that valedictorian status. They get it, they're the top of their class, they get to the pristine colleges, you know, whatever those are these days.

It's obviously not Harvard or all the others; they're getting kind of bad press, but you get into that pristine, high class, and you go from being the smartest kid in the room to being surrounded by other equally smart people, and the standard goes from what it was to crater, and you go from making straight A's to making B's and C's, and it unravels you. You can't stand underneath the weight. That's what life is like under the law. It's fine so long as the standard is something you can bear. But as soon as you get in the presence of God, you begin to realize, no, the standard is infinitely beyond what I thought it was.

And I am nowhere as strong as I imagined myself to be. And it's not just about morality, it's about all the things that we tend to do in life to make ourselves feel like life is good. Imagine a mom who her identity is found in taking care of everything. And happily married, kids are growing up happy and healthy, and then all of a sudden one of their children loses their brain and gets arrested for drugs. Or happily married and thought everything was fine, and then the husband shows up one day and says, I've fallen in love with another woman.

I don't love you anymore. I'd like to get a divorce. And all of a sudden the thing that she used to cling to be happy and whole and okay in life has been pulled out from underneath her and she's unraveled and destroyed. And the words that she hears is the words that Israel heard. You're not enough. You're not sufficient. You can't measure up. You'll never attain what you need to attain. That's life under the law. And we could go we could use example after

example, men who need a certain kind of status, a certain kind of income, a certain level of respect as soon as the standard changes.

Or even worse, you fail to meet the standard, or maybe even worse than that, the thing that you were leaning on begins to fail you, then you're unraveled and destroyed. A life under the law eventually falls apart. And that's what these Christian converts were wanting to slip back into. And the author of Hebrews is saying, don't go back to that old covenant. That old covenant is dead, it's passing away, and you've been brought to a different mountain. You don't have to be on Mount Sinai, you can be on Mount Zion.

And that's what he describes in verses 22 and following. If you'll turn back to Hebrews. Hebrews 12. Instead, you've come to Mount Zion, not Sinai, but Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to myriads of angels, a festive gathering. To the assembly of the firstborn, whose names have been written in heaven, to a judge who is God of all, to the spirits of righteous people made perfect. And to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which says better things than the blood of Abel.

Do you notice the differences between the two mountains? One mountain, Sinai, is physical, the other is spiritual. One mountain is a desolated mountain with nothing there. It's all bare. No one can go on it. The other mountain is a populated city. In the heavenly Jerusalem. Both mountains are surrounded by angels, right? But with Sinai, the angels were there to create holy dread and the severity of sinful people in the presence of a holy God. This mountain, Mount Zion, the angels are having a party. Festive gathering. Let's go. This is awesome.

Both mountains, God was speaking to his firstborn people. Israel was called God's firstborn in Exodus chapter 4. This time God's people also have firstborn status, but their firstborn status isn't because of God choosing Abraham and your biological lineage in the house of Judah. But your firstborn status is through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God's one and only Son. Which means God is not just judge of Israel, but he is God of all. The Lord Jesus Christ and their union with him and they sing salvation belongs to our God.

And instead of being consumed and destroyed by the presence of God, they are glad, they are celebrating, they are rejoicing in Jesus who is the mediator of a new and better covenant and blood that speaks a better word. You see the difference between the two mountains. One mountain is a mountain of God's law that is unbearable for unholy people. Those that live under law have a fragile life that eventually falls apart. But this mountain called Zion is a new mountain, a better mountain, a spiritual mountain through Jesus, who is the mediator of a new and better covenant, so that those who live under that covenant aren't having a life that falls apart.

They're not unbearable. They're not burdens that are unbearable. Rather, they experience a relationship with God in which they are made righteous and their righteousness is made complete and they rejoice with the angels under the God who is their judge. God's judgment doesn't create fear, it creates boldness and confidence. That's your mountain, the author of Hebrews is saying. So don't go back to Sinai, press on to Zion. Now why is it better? The new covenant through Jesus is better in every way. In fact the phrase Jesus is the mediator of a new and better covenant.

I would circle that phrase new covenant because that's really what the text is about. It's about Jesus being the mediator of a new covenant. And we don't use the word covenant around much today, but we think of a marriage covenant. A marriage covenant is like the terms of the relationship. But when you give your vows at a wedding ceremony, you're saying I'm going to do this and I'm going to do that, and if I don't, then actually I don't think they say if I don't. But they should. If I don't, you know, you slap me in the face, you can take all my money and do whatever you want to do.

The point is the terms of the relationship are established in the covenant, and there are blessings when the covenant participants do what they say, and then there are curses when the covenant participants don't do what they say. There are all kinds of covenants in the Bible. There's the Davidic covenant, there's the Abrahamic covenant, but the two covenants that are in view in Hebrews twelve are the Mosaic covenant and the new covenant. The Mosaic covenant is the giving of the Ten Commandments. God said, you're my special people, and here's how everyone's going to know.

Do my law. My law shows you my holiness. You'll be holy if you'll do my law. And they did the law and they were blessed. And if they didn't, they were cursed. That's the old Mosaic covenant, the new covenant, prophesied about by Jeremiah first and foremost in Jeremiah 31, but then inaugurated through the person and work of Jesus. And this covenant's terms are that God will never again remember our sins. I will write my law on your hearts, not on tablets of stone, and I will write your names in the book of life, and no one can blot them out of my book.

It's a new covenant, and because it's a covenant of grace, it's a better covenant. The mountain of Zion is a mountain of God's grace, and the new covenant is better because Jesus is better. In every way. There's a better mediator. Now, how does Jesus mediate the covenant? Well, in the Old Testament, the covenant mediator first was Moses, right? He gave them the Ten Commandments, but Moses died. And he also didn't go into the promised land. So one of the things that Moses did is he wrote books called Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy.

He established a standard by which the covenant would be mediated through a line of priests. They were called the Levitical priests. They had to come from the line of Aaron. And

these priests would act as a mediator between sinful people and a holy God. And the way that they would do that is they would make atonement. This is explained a lot of places in the Old Testament, but just to show you one example, in Exodus, I'm sorry, in Leviticus chapter 16. It lays out the framework for how the high priest on the day of atonement was to make atonement for the sins of the people of Israel so that God's judgment would not fall on them.

It says in Leviticus 16, verse 8, that the high priest would first make an atonement for himself. He would take a bull, he would sacrifice the bull, and then use the blood of the bull to make atonement for his sin and the sin of his family. But then after that, verse 15 of Leviticus 16 says that when he makes the offering for the sin of the people, he's not going to offer a bull but a goat. When he slaughters the male goat for the people's sin offering, and he brings its blood inside the curtain, he'll do the same with its blood as he did with the bull's blood.

He is to sprinkle it. There's our word, the sprinkled blood. He's to sprinkle it against the mercy seat, which was a flat surface in the Holy of Holies that housed the ark of the covenant, which had the Ten Commandments. Moses' staff and a couple of other things. He is to sprinkle it on that mercy seat, which was where God's presence would come and dwell, and in front of it. That was the mediating process for the people of God through the high priest under the old covenant.

He'd kill a bull for his own sin, because he was a sinful human, and then a goat for the sins of the people, and he would take a hyssop branch and he would throw blood on that golden mercy seat in the temple. And God would say, I'm holy, you're sinful, but I'll wait. Now, why blood? Does anyone ever ask the question? What's up with all the blood? Well, if you keep reading in Leviticus 17, the reason God says I use the blood is because the life of a thing is in the blood.

Now is the life of a thing in the blood? I don't know. If you like vampires, you can yeah, I guess so. But that's the way God explained it. The life of a thing is in the blood. So he wasn't saying I need blood. What he's saying is I need a life. Because I'm holy and you're sinful. The wages of sin is death. And if I am not going to take your life, then someone else's life needs to be taken in order for the demands to be met. And so instead of taking your life, God graciously said, I'll take the life of this animal.

Because the life of the thing is in the blood, and there needs to be a life for a life. Jesus is greater than those mediators. Why? Well, number one, Jesus did not offer a bull because he had no sin. Jesus was God in the flesh, and in the flesh He fulfilled every demand of God's law. He did what you and I can never do. He perfectly obeyed his heavenly father in every arena of his life. He never sinned, no not once, not little ones, not big ones, not omission, not commission, no sin at all whatsoever.

He was perfect. So he's a better priest because unlike the Old Testament priest, he didn't offer a bull for his own sin, but he's also a better priest because the offering he makes is not the blood of a bull. Or a goat. It's the offering of his life. Because remember, why blood? The blood is the life of a thing is in the blood. And so Jesus is essentially saying. If God's holiness demands their life, in place of their life, I will give my own. And in giving his life, he was actually giving on the altar a perfect, sinless life of love.

And obedience to God the Father. This is how Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, that he made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us. His life was in place of our life. Why? So that in him, and how do you get in Jesus? By faith. So that through faith in Jesus we might become the righteousness of God. The law revealed the righteousness of God. And because it revealed the righteousness of God, everyone who lived under the law had their sins exposed. Jesus is the only one who exposed under the weight of the law did not expose sin but exposed the righteousness of God because he perfectly obeyed the law in every respect.

Then he took that sinless, perfect, glorious life. And he said, I'll stand in their place. And it's not just on the cross that Jesus forgives us of sin, gives us a second chance. Go again and try harder. It's so much better than that. The gospel is that Jesus stood in our place for our sin, and not only does he receive the penalty for all of our sin, past, present, and future. But he graciously gives us all of his righteousness. So that from this point forward, when God the Father sees us as sinful human beings.

He does not see us. He does not see our sin. He sees his son and his perfect righteousness, which is why God's presence does not have to destroy us. It's why Hebrews said you can draw near to the throne of grace, a throne that when anybody else before Jesus drew near said, stop it's too much, I can't take it, I'm undone. The reason you can draw near is not because of what you've done, it's because of what Jesus has done. For you under the new covenant. It's his sprinkled blood that makes you righteous.

And that's why this mountain is so much better. Because it's full of the spirit of righteous people who've been made perfect. Because there's a better mediator who sprinkled his blood. He's a sinless, eternal priest who makes an offering. Of the same. Which leads to the last thing and then we're done. That's this business about the blood of Abel. Some people don't read the Old Testament. It's all right. But even people who don't read the Old Testament, very often they've probably heard of Cain and Abel. Yeah. If you're not familiar with the story of Cain and Abel, two brothers, sons of Adam and Eve, both of them made an offering to God.

God accepted the offering of Abel. He rejected the offering of Cain. Some would say Abel offered his first and his best to God, whereas Cain offered something less than that. Cain, seeing God's preference of Abel, got angry, envious, allowed his heart to become full of a

murderous rage. And God pleaded with Cain, don't go down this road. The sin that is in your heart is crouching. At the door and it wants to devour you. It wants to have you. So please repent. Don't keep moving down this road. It's going to hurt you.

It's going to hurt you, it's going to destroy you. But instead of heeding God's counsel, Cain took his brother out into the field and he murdered him. And I don't know if you know this, but once you murder someone, there's no going back. You can't unmurder. And so God calls out to Cain and He says, what have you done? Look at what you've done. I told you, I pleaded with you, I tried to tell you. Now look at what you've done. The blood of your brother cries out to me from the ground.

That's what the blood of Abel speaks. It's a blood that says you're guilty. How dare you! You're insufficient. You're unforgivable. It's too late. It's the word that every person who lives under the law eventually hears. You're too small, you're too weak, you're too poor, you're unworthy, you're insufficient, the standard's too high, you're too low, and that's what makes our life fall apart. But the blood of Jesus speaks a better word. What does the blood of Jesus say? Well, unlike the blood of Abel, which says, what have you done? The blood of Jesus says, look what I've done.

Look at what I've done for you. I took what you could not do, a sinless life of love before your heavenly Father. And even though you are too small and too weak and too poor and unholy, and even though all those things are true, I love you anyway. Just like a father or a mother loves their children even when they mess up. And not only do I love you, I did the one thing you could not do, I met the demands. I fulfilled the law, and then I made atonement for your life with my life on the cross so that you could not just be forgiven, but have my record apply to you.

Look at what I've done. And that's a better word. That's a word when you receive it can change your life forever. You can go from being a person who's easily angered, always defending yourself, anxious about everything, because what if, to a person who is not easily angered because I've got nothing to defend. And not very anxious because if I can trust God with my salvation, how much more so can I trust him with this unknown future? A person who is marked by peace and contentment, not greed and envy and an insatiable appetite for more.

The blood of Jesus speaks a better word, and because it speaks a better word, it invites you into a better covenant, a covenant where you can have a relationship with God based on what He has done and not what you do. And it creates an unshakable life. And that's the gift that Hebrews is offering to us this morning. Verse 25, see to it that you do not reject the one who speaks. For if they didn't escape when they rejected him who warned them on earth, even less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven. His voice shook the

earth at that time, but now he's promised, yet once more I will shake not only the earth but the heavens.

This expression yet once more indicates the removal of what can be shaken, that is, created things, so that what is not shaken. Might remain. Here's the warning. God is giving you an unshakable life in Jesus, but it is inherited by faith. So if you don't keep believing, if your faith becomes stagnant, your life will become fragile and it will not survive the judgment that's coming. Just like God shook the mountain and all the people said, too much for me, I can't handle, God is going to shake not only the mountain, but the heavens.

It's going to be so big. It's going to be so infinitely beyond anything you can imagine. And if you are a person who has a fragile life because you have responded to Jesus with stagnant faith or unbelief, you will be destroyed. And you don't even have to wait for judgment day. A life that does not have faith in Jesus is a life that falls apart. And those of you who struggle in your faith, or much less maybe have no faith in Jesus, will be able to testify yes and amen.

That's why I'm here today. My life is falling apart, and I need something better. I need something solid, dependable, steady, and sure. And the author of Hebrews is saying, that better life is given to you in Jesus. So don't reject him. He's speaking. He's speaking a better word. You are loved, you are forgiven, you are accepted, you are safe, you are secure, you are adopted, you are mine. But you can only receive those promises through repentance and faith. And if you stop believing. If you don't believe, you won't survive what's coming.

So therefore, verse 28, since we're receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful. For by it we may serve God acceptably and with reverence and awe. For our God is a consuming fire. So contrast, you got stagnant faith that will not survive the judgment that's coming. You have saving faith not because the faith is so special, but because the object of the faith is in the only one who is stable. And through a saving faith, you can have a forever future life that will survive. Not only the coming of God's judgment through Jesus, but that financial disaster that you saw last week.

Or that prodigal son or daughter who has your world upended, or a husband who said, I don't love you anymore, and I think I'd do my own thing instead. Or any other manner of life falling apart, the world is broken. It is not the way it's meant to be. And our hope is not in fixing this and fixing that and finding the perfect person or the perfect circumstances that'll never disappoint. Those things don't exist, but there is something better that is coming. And it is that better kingdom that you and I can inherit by faith if you'll just keep believing.

And so as we enter into this time of invitation, I think there's a twofold way you can respond. Obviously the first response is to be thankful. If you're a Christian, be thankful for the kingdom that has been given to you by grace through faith, that you can have a life that will not be shaken. And if you feel like you're in a spot right now where your life is all shaken up

out of sorts, I think the response this morning is to take your eyes back to the cross of Jesus Christ, to be reminded of who he is, what he's done, and what is coming.

And to let it fill your heart with gratitude afresh and anew, because a critical angry spirit can blind you to the things you need to see, namely the kingdom that is better that Jesus is building. Let reverence and awe re-invigorate your heart and be thankful through which you can serve God acceptably. The other response this morning is to let God be that consuming fire that he always has been. That fire that you avoided when you were without the new covenant, because it exposed your weaknesses and brokenness, and who wants to be judged for those things.

So instead of running and hiding or avoiding God's fire, open up your heart and allow his fire to purge and to cleanse within. Because his love for you is not dependent on you doing or not doing that sin that you're so ashamed of. His love for you is grounded in what Jesus has done for you. And so you can be vulnerable. You can be honest. You can be not okay in front of the Lord because your relationship with God is determined by what Jesus has done and not what you do or do not do.

And so let the fire burn and let it address those areas of your life that are keeping you from having a life that can't be shaken. And so let's bow our head and close our eyes and we'll enter into a time of response. Just right there where you're seated, would you ask the Lord what repentance looks like for you? And if there's a specific prayer or a specific decision that you need to make, I want to invite you to indicate that. In your worship guide. I'm sorry, in your connection card on the chair in the seat in front of you if there's something big in your life, something that you need a long conversation, maybe a series of conversations, be an opportunity for you to indicate that on the connect card and turn it in the boxes on the way out this morning.

And then if you're here this morning and you're not a Christian and your life is fragile and it's not ready for the judgment that's coming. Would you let today be the day where you address that deficit of faith and decide to put your faith in Jesus? There's no magic words, it's just an act of faith. Jesus, I believe that you are king of a greater kingdom and that I have been living for a different king and a different kingdom, and I'm done with that. I repent of my sin. I put my trust in you.

I make you not only my savior but my Lord. And I confess with my mouth that you not only were raised from the dead, not only did you die for my sins, but that you will come again in glory. So I'm living for that kingdom. And I give you my life. I invite you into my heart. If you pray that prayer or something adjacent to it, then the Bible says calling on the name of the Lord is what brings salvation. It's not the quality of your prayer or the quality of your faith.

It's the object. And the faith that you put into Jesus today, you can keep on putting in until he calls you home. Because saving faith will persevere to the end. And so, Father, as we enter into this time of response, the application, I'm sure, is different for each and every one of us. But your word is the same. Do not reject the one who speaks. So help us to have ears to hear and hearts to receive. And that we would not harden our heart or fail to believe the great salvation and unshakable life you desperately desire to give.

So we give you this time and we pray for you to use it for your people, for your glory, for our good, and we pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.