

The One Who Speaks - Sunday, April 12th

I wish I was one of those guys who used props in their sermons.

I wish I had something that I could be like, bam!

This is the sermon today.

If I could do that, how many of you have good imaginations?

All right.

So I want you to mentally on Amazon, we can magically deliver right now into your hands.

Order a mouthpiece.

mouthpiece one of those things you put in that protects your teeth uh... because as i started digging into the sermon this week i realized those were safe this week teeth might not be safe this week

So, it's going to be a fun, fun day.

As I began to study this week and look into our scripture this week, I'm going to finish chapter 12 today.

I made a comment to the staff that this is going to be a sermon where boulders are being thrown, and it's not a very...

oh, it'll be okay type sermon, pat you on the back and send you out the door with warm fuzzies.

There's going to be some reckoning to deal with today.

And I say that because I have dealt with it.

What I love about what God does with sermons is typically I am the target that most of these aim for in my own study and in my own speaking.

And it's going to be exciting.

It's going to be really exciting this week.

A couple of great things happened this week.

We wrapped up our Alpha class and that was really exciting.

Some great testimonies.

But last week we finished up Easter.

We were in chapter 12.

And I really believe that God is moving on the hearts of men and women in the world today, not just in the church, but I think in the world there's some things going on.

There's this awakening that's happening.

There's this returning to faith and the Bible and trying to understand things that maybe for the past couple decades we thought were on the way out, but there's this turning back to faith.

And I'm not one of those doomsday kind of guys.

I'm not one of those, you know, get them scared and frenzied into taking Jesus up on and getting saved.

But I do believe Jesus is coming back.

I don't know when he's coming back, but I believe we are in the last days.

and I believe the Bible shares in those last days there would be a turning back to him, a spiritual awakening that's going to cross not just our land, but that's going to go across the world, and I believe, I'm praying that we are starting to see maybe the beginnings of that, but

Last week, we spoke about the two mountains of God, and we talked about Mount Sinai, we talked about Mount Zion.

And I want to be of the group of people that have an ear to hear the God of Mount Zion when He's speaking to me and calling to me.

And we spoke to those two mountains last week.

We're going to meet God on one of those two mountains.

And depending on which mountain you meet him on, it's the same God, but there's a different outcome.

If we've submitted our life to Jesus, if we have experienced his forgiveness, if we have kept the faith and we have endured to the end of our race of faith, we will find the city of God where grace and mercy abounds.

And his love is there and he invites us to spend eternity with him.

But there's another mountain we can meet God on, where we choose to reject the work of Jesus Christ, to attempt to stand upon our own righteousness and say, you know what, I'm good enough.

I don't need you.

And for those who make that choice, we will meet a very just and holy God and experience the full weight of His wrath against our sin.

The beauty about those who call upon Jesus is all of that wrath was poured out on Him.

And we have the ability to experience His forgiveness because of something He did for us.

Amen?

Amen.

Which is why as we open up our chapter this morning, Hebrews chapter 12, the admonition that starts out in verse 25 is vitally important to you and I. See, the writer with a very deep longing for our well-being pleads with humanity not to reject the one who speaks.

It is His words that lead us to life and to meet God on Mount Zion.

So, Hebrews chapter 12 says this.

And keep in mind, this is a continuation of the two mountains.

It's the same chapter.

And he is just pressing on from that thought of the two mountains.

But Hebrews chapter 12, verse 25 and verse 26 says this.

It says,

that you do not refuse to listen to the one who is speaking for if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses the earthly messenger we will certainly not escape if we reject the one who speaks to us from heaven

When God spoke from Mount Sinai, his voice shook the earth.

But now he makes another promise.

Once again, I will shake not only the earth, but the heavens also.

Amen.

Let's pray.

Father, I thank you for the opportunity to share this word this morning.

Amen.

And God, I want to ask that your presence be in this room.

Lord, we're going to cover some very difficult passages of Scripture this morning.

We're going to cover some very difficult moments of decision this morning.

And Lord, I want...

To be the messenger who is standing before you blameless, not throwing stones, not judging with unrighteous judgment, but first looking to the log in my own eye that I might deal with my own sin.

So, Lord, I ask that you would be with us this morning.

Father, I ask that you would anoint my lips and my words.

Father, that you would let me speak through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, and I pray that you would anoint our ears to hear the word that you would say.

Lord, let us not turn away from them.

Let us not refuse the one who is speaking to us this morning, as it can be a matter of life and death when eternity comes.

I ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Well, I want to give you a quick history lesson.

We started the book of Hebrews way back on January 12, 2025.

That was my first sermon on the book of Hebrews.

And so I decided I wanted to go back and read that sermon to see what I said.

Man, I don't know if that was a good idea or not, but that's okay, I did it.

And I want to read an excerpt from my opening monologue as we dove into Hebrews 1, verse 1, last year in January.

And this is what I said.

And this is a quote.

I just copy-pasted from my sermon.

For me, it took me a long time to come to the place to mentally agree to preach through this book.

If you remember, I was struggling with the idea.

I did not want to preach through the book of Hebrews.

There's very difficult passages, as you have known, as we've gone through this past year.

And I didn't want to do it.

Back to my quote.

Several reasons.

One, the personal struggle of wrestling with difficult passages to deal with my flesh and my hard-heartedness in my life.

Boy, that has been true every step of the way.

Number two, calling out those same difficult areas, speaking the hard and direct scriptures that will make most of us uncomfortable and face things we would rather not face.

That's what the book of Hebrews does.

That's what it's done for me for the past year and a half or however long it's been.

And this morning that all comes to a head in our passage.

See, the difficult truth of this statement is bound up in our passage this morning.

It is as if we have the whole book of Hebrews concentrated on four little verses at the end of chapter 12.

This is the author's last push to truly get the message he is trying to send throughout all of this book for us to hear right now.

It is one short, massive appeal

of the choice to receive or refuse the one who speaks.

It is that decision that affects eternity for every living person.

So as I began to dig into this, it would be very easy to think who would refuse God?

I mean, if we knew God was speaking to us, how many have prayed that prayer?

Lord, if you would just give me an audible voice from heaven right now, I will know it was you and we would be OK.

I'm there signing the dotted line.

But here's the problem.

Those two things I spoke of in my quote earlier, they're always with us.

And when we have to face difficult things, especially externally, we can get up the courage to be like, you know what?

I can do that.

I had to do it to myself yesterday.

I was staring down a very difficult situation and I wanted to turn tail and run.

I would feel like I just don't want to deal with this today.

And I had a meeting.

Anybody ever have a board meeting with yourself?

Come on, guys.

Go.

What do you think?

It's really bad.

Run away.

It's not good.

Don't do it.

What do you think?

Come on, bud.

Embrace the suck.

It's okay.

You're going to be all right.

Don't do that.

Just run.

I literally had this conversation with myself.

And I remember speaking out loud, embrace the hard.

Embrace the hard truth.

Yeah.

I fixed my hat, and I stepped into the situation.

It's always easier to deal with an external thing, but yet when that very same thing is turned back around and I have to start dealing with me in here, with my heart,

with my uncomfortableness, boy, that board meeting is a totally different meeting.

It's like, just don't worry about it.

It'll be okay.

It's fine.

Leave it alone.

We always are fighting our flesh.

Our hearts are always getting hard whenever it's looking at us saying, I need to work on something.

It's like everything in us pushes against us.

No, I am okay like I am right now.

We don't like to face the uncomfortable situations in our life.

Most of us would rather not deal with them and just plead the blood of Jesus and He'll have grace and mercy on me and it'll be okay.

If I had my choice this morning, I think I would just read the commentaries that I studied from.

I think they say it...

Well, they don't say it clear, but they make a very good, compelling argument.

And I struggled this week.

So I want to dig into this and discover some hard truths that you and I need to understand from the closing of the book of Hebrews.

So we're going to be in Exodus chapter 19.

I'm going to read some long scriptures.

They're not going to be up on the board.

I grabbed my Bible.

I think this is the translation I want.

Yes, I think it is.

So we're going to be in Exodus chapter 19.

We're going to start this morning.

And I'm sorry I don't have it on the screen, but that's why you have a Bible on your phone or a Bible in your lap.

One of the two things.

All right.

Exodus chapter 19.

We're going to start in verse 16.

I'm getting to that age where I need more light.

I don't have the light I need.

Jeez.

Verse 16, Exodus chapter 19.

Set up the scripture.

Moses and the children of Israel are sitting outside of Mount Sinai, and God wants to speak to the children of Israel.

So we're going to get the perspective from God in this first chapter, and we're going to switch over to the next chapter and get a different perspective.

So starting in verse 16 of chapter 19, it says, Then it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there were thunderings and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain, and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.

And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire.

Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.

And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.

Underline that, if you will.

This is that moment in the Israelites' life where God actually spoke to them audibly, out loud, from the mountain, full of fire and smoke.

And you would think most people would be like, yes.

Verse 20 says,

And the Lord came down upon the mountain, on the top of the mountain, and the Lord called to Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

So we have God descending upon Mount Sinai.

There's smoke, there's lightnings, there's thunder.

And there's God speaking to the children of Israel what He wants them to hear.

He's just talking to them.

Because He wants them to hear His voice.

If you will, flip over to the next chapter, chapter 20.

We're going to start reading in verse 18.

Now this is how the people, this is the people's perspective of what they saw and what they felt.

Verse 18 of chapter 20 of Exodus says, Now all the people witnessed, they were witness to this, they saw it, they heard it.

All the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, the mountain smoking.

And when the people saw it, they trembled and stood far away.

Verse 19.

Then they said to Moses, You speak to us.

We will hear you, but don't let God speak to us, lest we die.

And Moses said to the people, Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.

Man, guys, I think I could preach six months on these two passages of Scripture.

Verse 21, So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.

See, this is the vantage point that the author in Hebrews wraps up the book, the letter that he is sending to the Christians.

All of his thoughts are wrapped up into our passages in Hebrews 12 this morning.

Now, as I get ready to dive in, I want to make a quick little caveat to give some reference here.

Most of us would have the posture that I would never tell God, I don't want to be near you.

Most of us, we would think, man, that could never be me.

I would never say, God, don't speak to me.

But here's the beauty of Scripture.

Every person mentioned in the Word of God displays a shard of humanity that

That is common to all people.

And at any given moment, we could be on the opposite side of something saying, you know what?

I could never do that.

I could never be him.

I could never be her.

That is just beyond me.

I couldn't do it.

But the truth is we are still capable of falling to the same temptation and the same sin that is common to all man.

As you know, for those who attend this church regularly, we've just dealt with a difficult issue here in the church with James.

And I had the opportunity to go visit him last week in jail.

And I had several people ask, respectively and with understanding, how and why would I choose to go visit someone in jail who is charged with such despicable things?

It wasn't easy.

The righteousness that was in me wanted to go there and throw stones.

And me and my son Billy were talking about this.

And I told him about this quote that I have applied to my life for many years.

Now I'm going to read the quote to you.

It's going to be up on the screen, I think.

And this is from the headstone of a grave marker.

And you're going to probably know what it is.

But it says, stop, stranger, as you pass by.

As you are now, so once was I. As I am now, so you will be.

So be prepared to follow me.

Of course, the gentleman has died and he's in the grave.

And one day we'll all experience that.

We will follow him.

But I took this.

It's meant so much to me.

I took this and I changed it.

This is my version of it.

And this is how I applied going and visiting someone who had fallen into sin that is enough to turn your stomach.

And this is the truth of it.

As I am, so once was he free to walk about and move about and live life.

As he is, so I can become.

And you might say, no, I could never.

You know what?

He said that once too.

I could never.

You don't wake up one day with hate and murder somebody.

You don't wake up one day with this just change of life and say, you know what?

I'm leaving my wife and I'm going to go gallivanting.

You never make massive life decisions on the flip of a coin.

That statement to me is a warning to remain diligent.

See, we live this life in flesh.

Temptation is always seeking a caveat.

It's always seeking the smallest crack to get inside, to begin to flirt and to tempt and to woo.

It's okay.

And it doesn't start great.

It starts very small.

And little by little, bit by bit, until we erode that great wall of defense that we had, until it is just eroded away, and we remove the willingness to flee from sin.

So I look at it as I have to face it in others so that I could remind myself, that could be me.

That could be me if I let my defense down.

That could be me if I give in to temptation.

And it won't be a great thing all at once.

It's going to be a very small thing.

I let a text slip in and I don't deal with it.

I let a thought come into my mind and I don't surrender it.

Little bitty things.

So with that in your mind, I want to look at these Israelites standing before Mount Sinai.

The children of Israel were to be brought before the Lord

He was going to present himself, and he did.

And he did it with thunder.

He did it with lightning.

He did it with fire and smoke.

And then he spoke to the people audibly so that they could hear him.

And guess what happened when they heard the voice of God?

With one accord, they said, God, don't ever do that again.

Please never talk to me again.

And they tell Moses, you speak to us.

I can't do that.

A couple things we need to understand about the Israelites at this point.

They knew it was God.

There was no doubt.

So don't fool yourself thinking, boy, if I could just hear God speak to me.

They didn't like it.

They didn't like it one bit.

But they knew it was God.

There wasn't a doubt.

They didn't want to hear him speak to them.

I mean, this was the God that they verbally committed to following and serving.

We will serve the Lord.

They gave this commitment as they left Egypt.

They didn't want to hear his voice.

This is the God who rescued them, who brought them through the Red Sea, who gave them manna, who gave them quail, who gave them water, who led them with a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night.

He was constantly in their business.

And they're like, shut up.

You laugh, but we're going to get there.

They didn't want to hear this God they've chosen to follow.

Scripture says, he who has an ear, let him hear.

As they were, we can become.

The book of Hebrews opens with this thought.

that is echoed in our passage this morning chapter 1 verse 1 says God who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers in this instance he actually spoke audibly

And by the prophets has in these last days spoken to us by his son, whom he has appointed heir of all things.

Make sure to not refuse the one who speaks.

Hebrews open saying God is speaking to us.

Do you hear him?

We hear him.

He doesn't give up on it.

Hebrews chapter 2 opens up in verse 1.

Therefore, we must give more earnest heed to the things we've heard, lest we drift away.

Give heed to the things you hear, lest you drift away.

For if the spoken word through the angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how can you and I think we'll escape so great a salvation which was spoken to us by the Lord, confirmed by those who heard him?

He also gave them witness with signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

But they were still faced with the obligation to listen, to hear, to understand, to receive what God will speak to us.

The whole premise of the book of Hebrews is

is that God is speaking to us.

He's calling out to you and I to follow Him.

To make holy and righteous choices as we live this life.

To flee from sin.

Not to play patty cake with it.

Flee from sin.

To endure seasons of testing.

The whole purpose he spoke to them in the book of Exodus was to test their hearts.

You said you're going to serve me.

You said you love me.

You're going to follow me.

Can you even listen to my voice?

And they couldn't.

They couldn't bear to hear the one that they said that they would serve forever.

I think back to my own life and I think, man, yeah, I'm going to be a Christian forever.

There's no doubt at all.

How many people have you heard or knew said that that have drifted away?

Who are no longer walking with God.

Ones who were sold out.

Ones who were doing miracles.

Ones who were living a life that you thought, man, I want to be that kind of Christian.

And today you're like, man, I couldn't even think of being that kind of sinner.

See, the readers of this book of Hebrews were Christians just like you and I. They were going through difficult days of persecution.

They were struggling.

It was tough.

They were being thrown in jail.

They were being beaten.

They were being killed.

And all they wanted was just a little bit of relief.

Could I just... I mean, I'll follow Jesus, but I'm going to do the sacrifices.

I just want to go back to the old way.

Not because it's better, just to get a little bit of relief from the persecution.

I'm just tired of struggling.

I'm just tired of dealing with the stuff.

I'm just tired of having to put on the armor every day.

It's difficult.

And they wanted to go back to a life of ease.

They wanted to go back to the way that it always was and think that they still had eternal security, if you will.

See, but God is calling them and you and I to continue moving forward.

See, we're on this race.

We can't turn off to the right or to the left.

We have this race that we have to finish, and there's God who's up there.

We have all these witnesses up there we talked about in chapter 11 that are encouraging us to just keep going, just keep running.

Keep listening.

Put your mouthpieces in because this is where the hammer hits the metal.

Sometimes in life we recognize God's voice but we choose to ignore it because we don't like what He's saying.

We hear God speaking to us

And he's not speaking very nice things.

He might be asking something very difficult of us.

We might have gotten to the place where we're comfortable with our sin, so God should be too.

But God is speaking, you need to deal with that.

You need to deal with that.

but in that little boardroom meeting that we can have with ourselves.

But doing the right thing, man, that's hard.

It's so hard to do the right thing in some situations.

I mean, it's going to wreck the whole apple cart if I choose to be obedient to God.

Can't he just let this thing go?

It's going to throw my life into this crazy mess.

I don't have time for this, God.

Could we just go back to how it was?

Just let this slide.

I don't want to hear your voice.

Don't talk to me about this.

See you.

What he's speaking to us, if we were to make it right, it might cost us a lot of money.

I don't have the extra money, God.

It might cost us friendships.

God, if I do that, that's going to really mess up this relationship that I have going.

It may cost us luxuries that we have surrounded ourselves with.

Because, God, I can't really do life without this at the moment.

It could require us to move, to upend everything, work, homes, families, all of that stuff.

Do you know what that is in your life?

It's the shaking of the Lord.

The writer continues in verse 27.

He says, this means that all of creation will be shaken and removed so that only unshakable things remain.

See, if it can be shaken in your life, it needs to be removed.

See, I find in life, often we recognize when God is speaking to us because it's not what we would normally choose.

It's an extremely difficult thing, and it's going to cost a lot.

And so we might go through life thinking, well, I wish God was speaking to me, but he's speaking.

We're just like, no, God, no, please don't.

That's not what we want to talk about today, God.

That's not the object of conversation.

I want to be more comfortable today.

God says, no, we have to talk about this.

Ha, don't want to talk about that.

That's hard.

I'm stressed.

I just need an easy K, please.

Can I have a safe corner?

You want to know what you're really saying?

You're saying, God, be quiet.

I don't want to hear what you have to say in my life today.

Shut up, God.

I don't need this today.

This is off limits.

We ain't touching this.

I need you to be quiet for a moment.

I need to work something out.

Here's the problem I see.

You might be saying, well, I don't do that to God.

The problem I see is in life, this has become the norm in how we deal with people.

A stressful situation comes up and we're like, get out of my face.

Today's not the day.

And this is us.

This is people we're looking at.

And we come to the point where it's like, I've had too much.

We turn our phone off.

We yell.

We say, shut up.

Get out of the way.

I can't deal with this.

I need a safe spot.

Right?

They were mean.

Can you believe?

Of all days, they want to deal with that today.

We do that with one another.

I promise if we do it with one another, we do it with God because we don't see God standing around us.

There's not a person that we can have looking back at us, but there's a God who keeps speaking.

And we keep saying, God shut up.

Today's not the day.

I don't have time for this today.

You can just go back to heaven on your throne.

There's somebody else who's got more important issues than me.

Go deal with them.

Why would you and I ever do that to God?

Why would we choose to ignore God and tell Him, I don't want to hear what you have to say today?

Most of us, as we're thinking about it, it's a repulsive thought to even conjure up in our minds this standing before the throne of God saying, you know what, God?

As he presses the button and sends us straight to hell, you know.

Here's the answer.

Here's why you and I will do that.

Because the alternative is we have to deal with what we're refusing to expose to God.

Because we know it's sin.

We know that we know that we know it's wrong.

But it's okay.

God understands, man.

God is a God of grace.

He just keeps pouring grace on me all day long.

And He does.

But He's going to bring you to a day of recognition where you deal with the sin.

We often look at it, and this is what we do inside of our own hearts.

We say, you know what God understands?

He knows my heart.

You ever heard somebody say that?

God knows my heart.

Yeah, He does.

He wrote about it in Jeremiah chapter 29.

Your heart is such a wonderful place, just full of grace and goodness.

And yeah, just that's true.

Live your truth.

Heart is desperately wicked.

Your heart is flesh and it wants to lead you not to God's presence.

It wants to flee everything that's righteous and holy.

It wants to run away.

It doesn't want to deal with it.

It's the part of us that's telling God, shut up.

Not today, I'm not doing it.

When we refuse to surrender our will to God's voice, holding on to our desires and our actions, knowing that they are in direct conflict to what God requires of His children.

That's what sin is in our heart.

When we refuse to give it to Him, when we tell God to shut up, we don't want to deal with it.

It is keeping us in direct conflict with God.

I want to quote Andrew McLaren, I'm sorry, Alexander McLaren.

He makes a statement about this in his commentary about those who refuse to hear and change when God speaks.

This is his quote.

It says, what's even more dangerous is that this can happen while we still look outwardly faithful.

We can say the right stuff, can lift our hands in worship, can even shed a tear.

We can shout amen when the preacher's speaking.

And we can even deceive ourselves thinking we're willing to obey.

Amen.

just as long as God speaks comfortable words to me, words of peace, words of invitation, words of love.

The moment he starts speaking harsh things, like, no thanks, God.

That's not the God I serve.

I serve the God of love, and he loves me and understands me, even with all my flaws.

Hmm.

You're right, He does.

But He wants to change that in you.

He doesn't want you to live that out because, see, sin and God are diabolically opposed.

They can't be in each other's presence.

Sin doesn't last when it comes before a holy God.

We can't fool ourselves thinking, I have this sin in my heart and God's okay with it because, you know, God changes for me.

He loves me.

In essence, it's us telling God, I'm willing to follow you as long as you don't deal with that.

That's off the table.

You leave that area alone.

You just have to be okay with that.

And again, I go back to, we will do this to God because we do it with other people.

Don't you judge me.

You don't know.

You don't know what I've been through.

You don't know this.

You don't know that.

Tell me we don't do that to God.

Because we do it with each other.

I think that that lie about not judging people is one of the... That is not scriptural.

Because my Bible reads, be careful how you judge people.

Because you will be exposed to the same judgment yourself.

It goes back to the point I said, I want to be vigilant to watch because...

I can become like that which I judge.

I have the ability if I choose to let sin in to fall to the most atrocious sins imaginable.

We tell God, don't make this uncomfortable.

I will serve you as long as you don't make this uncomfortable.

I don't want to deal with it.

You're not going to deal with it.

Let's just drop it.

We will tell this to God about anything.

If God is speaking to our hearts about forgiveness.

Nope, God, not doing it.

I was wrong and I'm not forgiven.

Not until they make it right.

No.

God, don't talk to me about my anger.

It's mine.

I have a right to be mad.

I was wrong.

And you say you're the God of vengeance, but you ain't doing nothing.

Don't speak to me about lust.

Don't speak to me about adultery, lying, stealing, shacking up, idolatry, coveting, gluttony, pride, laziness, drunkenness, greed.

The list is exhaustive.

Whatever it is that we are hiding and dealing with in our heart that we refuse to let God touch us,

is in essence telling God, shut up, I don't want your opinion.

I don't want to hear your voice speak to me anymore.

Let Will do it.

That's fine.

I'm happy to hear Will.

That's okay.

He's an idiot anyway.

But I don't want you speaking to me, God.

See, God is going to begin to shake things up in your life.

So that he can get us to the point where all that we have left are unshakable things.

So what are the unshakable things?

It's a great question.

The unshakable things are those things which bring the kingdom of God near to us.

Everything that is in the kingdom of God is unshakable.

Hebrews 12, verse 28 says, Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace by which we may serve God acceptably, you can underline that word in your Bible, with reverence and godly fear.

You and I are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

That kingdom is received when we do these following things.

We have grace.

I'm going to talk about that here in just a second.

When we serve God acceptably, that's a big one.

And when we receive or accept the one who speaks to us.

So quickly as I begin to wind this down, let us have grace.

A better translation of this is according to the doctrine of grace, if you will, or the gospel.

The Ethiopic translation renders this statement this way.

Let us hold fast to the gospel and a profession of it.

That's what it means to let us have grace.

It's to have the doctrine of grace, the gospel of Jesus Christ living inside of us, coming out of us.

What we say, we do.

What we do, we say.

It's the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The kingdom...

obviously is received through the gospel of Jesus Christ that's how we get into it that's how our name gets registered into the book of life which is in heaven so that's what it means to let us have grace to hold fast to to cling to it's like when you get married and the the Bible says we are to leave and cleave

You leave the world and you cleave to your spouse.

When you hold fast to the gospel, you leave every other religion or thought or sin and you cleave to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's your ticket.

We are called to serve God acceptably.

This one is hard.

Scripture shows us what this looks like.

Jesus says in the Gospels, if you love me, live life like you want.

Grace, gotcha.

It's all fine.

I mean, I'll tally it up at the end.

It'll be okay.

If you love me, keep my commandments.

Nobody wanted to say that out loud.

It's hard.

It's a very difficult part of life.

acceptable service means obeying God listen to this acceptable service means obeying God the way he desires to be served not the way I'm willing to serve him I told we're talking about popes and I said I want one I can get behind just in case do I need to say that again

Acceptable service to God is serving Him the way He wants to be served, not how I'm willing to serve.

See, true devotion is shaped by His commands, not our preferences.

I'm okay with this one.

I don't like that one.

We serve God acceptably following His commands with fear and with awe of a holy God whose wrath is poured out against sin.

See, serving God how we choose and how we see fit exposes us to a very true

of God that isn't always pleasing the writer concludes part of this section in chapter 12 verse 29 for our God is a consuming fire see all that can be shaken will be shaken and consumed by the holy fire of God

Only that which is precious can endure the fire that is God.

Well, what's precious?

Anything attached to his kingdom.

Anything attached to Jesus Christ.

anything that cleaves to the gospel of Jesus Christ, anything that chooses to serve God how he wants to be served despite what we might think, feel, or want.

Another way to put this is, all who refuse to listen to the one who speaks will be shaken and consumed.

All who listen and believe and submit to the one who speaks will remain unshaken.

This morning the question isn't, is he speaking?

The question is, am I listening?

Because God is speaking.

Even now, he is dealing with something in your heart...

You might think it's super minor.

It's not that big a deal.

But God says, you know what?

We need to dig that out.

Maybe the real question for today isn't, am I a Christian?

Because most of us might raise our hand.

Yeah, I'm a Christian.

Maybe it's, is there something in my life where I have been telling God, shut up.

We're not talking about that.

That's off limits.

Because that's where this passage lands.

Right in the middle of your secret little garden in your heart that you've told God, we're not talking about that.

Here's the beauty of God though.

He's not speaking to condemn.

He's speaking to help us finish the race well.

He's speaking to help us lay aside the weights and the sins that distract us and pull us away from enduring to the end.

But make no mistake, guys.

the voice that's calling you, He's going to shake you.

He's going to rattle you.

He's going to get and take every opportunity He can to get sin out of your life.

Because as we spoke a couple weeks ago, there's no pain in this life that isn't worth it if it gets us to eternity with Him.

The shaking can get rough sometimes.

You know what the shaking's going to do?

It's going to cost you habits.

Might even cost you relationships.

It's probably going to cost you something you've held on to way longer than you're supposed to.

But guys, here's the truth that you've got to write down.

Everything he removes is so that something better can remain.

Everything that's shaken free can be replaced by something that's unshakable.

The writer of Hebrews leaves us no middle ground.

We either listen or we refuse.

That's the ballgame.

Scripture tells us in this passage that if those who refuse him on earth did not escape his wrath, how can you and I think that we'll escape it when he's speaking from heaven?

Don't silence his voice.

Don't tell him to shut up.

Invite him in to deal with it.

I know it's going to be hard.

but he's wanting to bring life where death reigns.

See, with everything that was shaken, God is not trying to destroy you.

It might feel like that in the moment.

Whatever that shaking is costing us might feel like God is destroying everything that we have built and live today.

But what he's trying to do is establish your faith to remain to the end so that you can endure and continue the race of faith.

That's the only goal he has.

So today if you hear his voice, don't harden your heart.

Don't push it aside.

Don't push it aside.

Just because it's uncomfortable, just because it's costly, we have to press into it.

Kind of like I did with my board meeting.

I was like, all right, we're going to do the hard thing.

Get yourself pumped for it.

It's going to be difficult.

Press into it.

Press into it.

Listen to his voice.

Let him search your heart.

Give him access to every part.

Because at the end of the day, we have to choose to listen to the one who speaks.

We have to let God do whatever it is he needs to do in you.

So that when he's finished, all that remains...

is an unshakable faith in Him.

The whole book of Hebrews comes down to that point.

Will you let Him in and shake the things out of your life you don't need?

Because if you don't, you're going to meet God on Mount Sinai.

And it's not going to be a pleasant meeting.

You can choose to let go of the things that separate Him from you today.

And it's only in that choosing, facing all of those things, the uncomfortableness, the difficulty, it's only in that do we find life and salvation through Jesus Christ.

It's all or nothing.

It's all or nothing.

Stand with me this morning.

I would close with this.

Is there someone this morning maybe who would be interested in prayer?

Maybe you're the one who has told God, shut up, God, I don't need you.

I don't want you.

I don't want to deal with this.

We're not talking about this.

Maybe as you've listened this morning and the Holy Spirit has worked in your heart, there's some shaking going on that threatens to crumble the comfortable faith you've created.

Maybe you want prayer.

Maybe you need prayer.

Scripture is very clear.

It says don't harden your hearts towards the Word of God.

Everything He does, no matter how painful, is to bring salvation and an eternity with Him.

So if we would all bow our heads this morning, as you begin to search your heart, this is the process of beginning to lay aside weights and sins.

It's calling them out.

It's listening to the Word of God.

It's saying, you know what, God?

I've resisted you a lot in this area.

And it's been tough.

But I think I'm ready to deal with it.

If there's anyone who's like that here this morning, I'd just like for you to raise your hand.

Today is the day of salvation.

Today is the day to make it right.

Today is the day to let God in, to deal with the sin that we've hidden.

Today is the day to listen and turn to the God who loves you.

Several hands were raised.

So Father, we just lift those who raised their hands.

Father, we also lift up those who are still searching, still trying to make the choice of, I don't know.

I don't know if I can do this.

Lord, I pray that you would move by the power of your Holy Spirit this morning.

God, that you would touch us.

Give us strength.

Lord, put someone in our life we could talk to just to share what's going on.

Someone that would lead us in righteous counsel to listen to your voice.

God, I wish there was a better way.

I wish there was another way.

But I read Scripture and see that my refusal to listen to you leaves me

In a very shaken and destroyed state.

With nothing to stand upon.

With sand beneath my feet.

And waves beginning to crash around.

Father, help me to listen to your voice.

No matter the pain that it causes.

No matter the choices that have to be made.

Father, it's in calling out to you, it's in listening to your response that I find salvation.

Be with us this morning, God.

Lord, as we go about our week, Lord, I pray that you would use this word to trouble our heart.

Bring it to our memory.

Let it speak to us.

Father, even as when we spoke of Gomer, Lord, let it be like thorns until we choose to do what is right and listen to your voice.

I ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

I sure love you guys.

I know it was a difficult word this morning, but I think God is doing some great things.

Alpha's over, so this week we'll have prayer Tuesday night here at the church.

Love to have you join us.

There's a Sunday, I'm sorry, there's a nursery meeting we're going to have real quick, and then we have council today, so God bless you.