

Connection to Hebrews 12:18-24

The community described in Hebrews 12:22-24 is one of permanence. People (along with the angels) may dwell with God for all of eternity because He has made the provision for us, but only if we listen to His voice.

Introduction/Opening:

Illustration: Invite people to remember what they received as a gift (birthday, Christmas, etc.) ten years ago...five years ago...etc. For any items remembered, ask if the items are still in use/on display/etc. today. Use this approach to share that almost everything we ask for, purchase, etc. will not last, and is often soon forgotten.

Because of unforgettable gift of Jesus, we can look forward to the promise of God's unshakeable Kingdom – a kingdom made available to those whose faith is true, strong, and enduring.

The focus is not on the people who have endured, but rather about that which truly endures. Much of what we know as creation wasn't meant to be permanent. God had a plan for something better all along.

Outline

1. The Permanence of God's Power (Hebrews 12:25-27)
God spoke Creation into existence. God will once again speak and the foundations of Creation will be destroyed (Hebrews 1:10-12 (Psalm 102:25-27)). We must heed His voice unlike those who refused his warnings (v. 25) and beg to hear no more (v. 19 – see Exodus 20:18-21).
2. The Permanence of God's Purpose (Hebrews 12:27-28)
God's purposes can't be thwarted. Verse 27 says "what is not shaken might remain" Verse 28 says the kingdom cannot be shaken. God is unshakeable. His Kingdom is unshakeable. His Word is unshakeable. Each will remain because they're a part of His purpose. We, as His people, are to be unshakeable in our faith, having heard His promises and then enduring because of our trust in Him.
3. The Permanence of God's People (Hebrews 12:22-24,28)
We've been given the choice to listen to His call to join with Him forever. Jesus now speaks on our behalf (v. 24), but we must each take hold of the grace that has been extended to each of us. It is only by His grace that we will be in His eternal presence serving Him in reverence and awe.

Conclusion

The passage closes with an ominous thought – God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:29). This thought may cause confusion that God is always out to consume everyone. He could choose to consume each person because we're all sinners (Romans 3:23). Yet, Peter when writing about a

coming destruction (by fire) said that God is patient, not wanting anyone to perish. (2 Peter 3:9) So, a God who's a consuming fire, doesn't have to consume.

We've seen this before. Moses stood before the Lord who was in the burning bush, yet it wasn't consumed (Exodus 3). If the Lord was careful to preserve a bush, think about how much more He cares for you and me? (See Matthew 6:30.) Certainly, the Lord may refine us with His fire – conforming us to the image of His Son. But, like the burning bush, we need not be consumed.

Yet the choice is ours. God has spoken in the past (Hebrews 1). God is still speaking today. Unlike everything we see around us, His words will remain. So, let us respond favorably to His truth while there is still time (Hebrews 3:12-15).

Andy Braams serves as pastor at Fairfax Baptist Church in Fairfax, MO. He is pursuing his doctorate in educational ministry from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to Susan (20 years) and the father of Nicole and Andrew.