

Urgent Warnings

17 November 2019 AM - Hebrews 12:12-29 - Heb19 - Scott Childs

Introduction: When I was a boy, we lived in an area that occasionally experienced tornadoes. During tornado season, we would listen to the radio during stormy weather. Whenever the weather bureau posted tornado warnings, we had a special crawl space under the house where we went for protection. For a young boy, those tornado warnings were exciting times, but for parents, they were fearful, praying times.

As the apostle starts to close the book of Hebrews, he announced three urgent warnings to his readers.

Transition: This morning, we are going to note those **three urgent warnings** that call the wavering to action.

1. Act Now!

a. Prompt action is needed (v.12-14)

- 1) Do not be spiritually slack.
 - a) Lift up [restore] the hands that hang down
 - b) Lift up [restore] the feeble knees
 - c) Straighten or level your path so you will not stumble.
- 2) Follow peace and holiness. Run swiftly in order to catch God's peace and holiness.
 - a) When a person places his faith in Christ alone, he receives peace with God and a holy standing before God. These are what the unbelieving world around us so desperately needs.
 - b) God is not running from people, making it difficult for them to receive His salvation. On the contrary, the human flesh runs from God. The sinner must turn and run to God to be saved and receive His peace and holiness.

b. Delay may be dreadful (v.15-17)

- 1) Looking diligently urges the unbeliever to inspect carefully this urgent warning to ACT NOW!
- 2) The undecided must do so lest he fail of the grace of God.
 - a) God's grace is the divine enabling of the Holy Spirit to do God's will.

b) On Judgment Day, not only will the earth shake, but also all that God created will shake. Here is how Peter described that coming day. (2 Peter 3:10) "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*" (2 Peter 3:11) "*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,*"

3) The one thing that will **not** be shaken and destroyed is God's eternal kingdom (v.28).

c. Hold God's Grace!

- 1) Paul urges us saying, "*Let us have grace*". The word "*have*" is often translated hold. We must take hold of God's grace and possess it. This refers to receiving Christ's payment for your sins by faith only. It has nothing to do with baptism. It has nothing to do with being good. It relies solely on Christ's propitiation for our sins.
- 2) Only then may we serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.
- 3) Beware! God is a consuming fire! (v.29) Only Christ can fireproof your soul.

Conclusion: We have looked at three urgent warnings that call the wavering to action (review). If you are not positive you have trusted Christ alone for salvation, I urge you to heed these warnings.

If you stood before God this morning and He asked you why He should let you into heaven, what answer would you give Him? If you are depending on Jesus plus ANYTHING else, you need to heed today's warnings and trust Jesus ONLY.

If your salvation is sure, then serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

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- b) The word “*fail*” means to come too late or to be so tardy as to miss out.
- c) If you have ever arrived at the train station just as the train was pulling out, you know what the apostle is saying here. Do not arrive too late!
- 3) Esau’s foolishness illustrates the dread of delay. Being hungry, he sold his priceless birthright for a bowl of soup. Later, he changed his mind, but it was too late.
- 4) Two events can make a person too late for God’s grace.
 - a) The first is if he dies before trusting Christ.
 - b) The second is if Christ returns to take the believers to heaven and he has not yet trusted Christ.
 - c) In both cases, the spiritually unprepared will fail of God’s grace. He will miss heaven.

2. Come to the Mount that is **NOT** fearful!

a. Coming to Mount Sinai was fearful (v.18-21)

- 1) Mount Sinai represents the Law because it was on that mount that God gave Israel the Law (Ex 19).
- 2) Meeting God on Mt. Sinai was a dreadfully fearful event as described in these verses. (Exodus 20:19) "*And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.*"
- 3) Why then did God give the fearful Law? (Romans 3:20) "*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*" (Galatians 3:24) "*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*"

b. Coming to Mount Sion is not fearful (v.22-24)

- 1) Mount Sion is the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. It represents God’s Grace.
- 2) Meeting God on Mt. Sion is not a fearful event.
 - a) Innumerable angels are there.
 - b) The general assembly and church of the firstborn (pl. firstborn ones, those who will be resurrected) will be there, whose names are written in heaven.
 - c) God the Judge is there.
 - d) The spirits of [OT] men made perfect are there.

- e) Jesus, our mediator, is there.
- f) The propitiating, redeeming blood of Christ is there, offering cleansing and eternal life.
- 3) Mount Sion is a *welcome centre*. In fact, at the end of the Bible, God closes Scripture with these words. (Revelation 22:17) "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"

3. Beware! No rejecter will escape judgment!

a. This was true when God spoke on earth

- 1) Those in the Old Testament who refused to obey God’s commands did not escape God’s judgment.
- 2) The commandments of the Law were harsh. There were 613 laws in the Old Testament. It was do right or die.
 - a) Remember, NO ONE was ever saved from hell by keeping the Law. The Law made no provision for salvation. It simply stated God’s righteous demands. (Galatians 2:16) "*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*"
 - b) Those today who think they can keep the Ten Commandments and earn heaven are sadly mistaken.
- 3) The Apostle James records this for us. (James 2:10) "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*" God’s words on Mount Sinai offer no hope, only judgment.

b. This is also true when God speaks from heaven

- 1) The apostle states in v.25, "*much more shall not we escape...*" If those in the OT dispensation did not escape when they refused to obey God, this is much truer today when God offers grace.
- 2) To turn away from God’s grace is to turn away from the only hope available.
 - a) When God spoke on Mt. Sinai, the earth shook.