

Hebrews 12:25-29
"Heed the Voice of God"

I want to warn us this morning against fashioning our own understanding of God. For one, it is not possible. We are the creation and God is the creator. We could never know God's mind apart from what God has made known in scripture. Second, when we fashion God according to our own understanding, I dare say it is not God, at all. For a god, little g, fashioned according to our understanding will always suit our sensibilities. And God says, emphatically, His thoughts are not our thoughts, and our ways are not His ways, Isaiah 55:8. See, when we fashion God according to our understanding that god, little g, is nothing more than a puppet and we the puppeteers. And when this is the case, we speak for that god, little g, and become deaf to the voice of the true God. The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the God of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And if we are to hear so that we will heed, we must be sure it is God speaking and not us. With this said, three very important things regarding heeding God's voice.

First, God has made no one deaf to His voice. V 25a, "Be careful that you do not refuse to listen to the One who is speaking." When one does not heed the voice of God; that is to internalize, to believe, to adhere, and to apply what God has spoken, it is because one has chosen to do so. It is not because God has made him/her deaf to His voice. God may turn one over to one's hard, selfish, and lustful heart because one's willful unwillingness to listen to Him, but God has not made one deaf to His voice. It is always by choice. And wherever the unadulterated word of God

is being preached and taught, there you will find the voice of God. God's word is God's voice and God's Holy Spirit always speaks to us in harmony with God's word, Christ's gospel.

John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

Matt 11:15, 13:9,43; Mark 4:9, 23, 7:16; Luke 8:8, 14:35 "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Rom 1:28-32 ²⁸ "Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done."

John 16:13-14 "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

Second, the consequence for refusing to heed God's voice has not changed. V25b, "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!" Let's be clear. We all would be deserving of God's eternal wrath apart from our trust in what Jesus accomplished for us by his death and resurrection. No one comes to God with clean hands. I cannot say this enough. And this statement is not an excuse for sin or cause for continued disobedience. It is simply fact. Now, if one rejects what God has offered as our propitiation- Jesus crucified and resurrected for the sins of the world, then one has refused to hear the One who speaks from heaven and when judgment comes, that person will face God's eternal wrath. This is not me condemning anyone, it

is biblical fact. If God punished Israel when they refused to listen to the law of Moses, God will certainly punish all who reject Jesus.

Duet 13:6-11 ⁶“Suppose someone secretly entices you—even your brother, your son or daughter, your beloved wife, or your closest friend—and says, ‘Let us go worship other gods’—gods that neither you nor your ancestors have known.⁷ They might suggest that you worship the gods of peoples who live nearby or who come from the ends of the earth. ⁸But do not give in or listen. Have no pity, and do not spare or protect them. ⁹You must put them to death! Strike the first blow yourself, and then all the people must join in. ¹⁰Stone the guilty ones to death because they have tried to draw you away from the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of slavery.¹¹ Then all Israel will hear about it and be afraid, and no one will act so wickedly again.”

John 3:18 “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”

Rev. 20:15 “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Finally, God’s character demands that He punish offenders of His holy word. V.26-27, 29, ²⁶When 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.” ²⁷This means that all of creation will be shaken and removed, so that only unshakable things will remain. ²⁹For our God is a devouring fire.” There are many images of God communicated by scripture that we are very comfortable with.

God of grace, God of mercy, God of love are a few. However, this image of God we are not so comfortable with, God of wrath, or as the writer coins it a devouring fire (a consuming fire, NKJV). The Hebrew writer is describing the “day of the Lord”. That future day in which God will render final judgement upon all creation. Write these texts down for homework this week: **Isaiah 2:12, 13:6, 9; Acts 2:20; 1 Cor 5:5; 2 Cor 1:14; 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10**. Church, in the day of the Lord, no one will be able to stand outside of Jesus Christ. Jesus is our peace. No Jesus, no peace with God. If you are outside, you may very well be doing just find in this life but remember all that this life offers is transient and there is a day of accounting coming. Let us take seriously the warning of this text. “Be careful that you do not refuse to listen to the One who is speaking.” Head the voice of God while you still can. In the name of the Father, Son, and holy Spirit.