

Sovereign Grace Church

“Reality” outline

October 1, 2017

Hebrews 12: 18-24

Hebrews is a book of both confrontation and preparation. The writer is making an effort to prepare his people for hard times of suffering and persecution that seemed to be “just around the corner.” Christians in other locals had already suffered persecution and it seemed to be just a matter of time before they would as well.

The writer is attempting to prepare his people for these dark times by confronting them with reality. The reality of consequences. If they choose to relinquish the blessings of union with Christ they may earn a short term deliverance from persecution but at the consequence of long term suffering as they re-join a world in opposition to the Creator . On the other hand, if they persevere in faith in Christ, they may indeed be persecuted by His enemies, but only for a time, and that whereby their faith will be strengthened and they will be more prepared to enjoy the fruits of life with their Creator and Redeemer forever.

This morning the contrast is presented under the picture of two mountains: Mt. Sinai and Mt. Zion or life in the Flesh vs. life in the Spirit. It is ultimately a question of what is real and what is not.

1. What is Reality?

Jn. 1: 3; Gen. 3: 5-6

2. Mt. Sinai: Reality apart from Christ vv. 18-21; Ex. 19: 10-19; 20: 18-21

- **The Mountain**
- **The People Deut. 5: 25**
- **Moses Ex. 19: 16; Deut. 9: 19**

3. Mt. Zion: Reality with Christ vv. 22-24

Rev. 21: 2-3, 22-27

- **angels**
- **the Church Col. 1: 13-15**

- **God the Judge Rom. 8: 31-34**

- **just men made perfect**

- **Jesus the Mediator Gen. 4: 10**

- **Contrast of Covenants: Gal. 4: 24-26, 31. 5: 1-6**

4. Conclusion

Questions for Discussion

- 1. These Hebrew Christians were tempted, because of the possibility of very real persecution, to return to the Old Covenant shadows for safety and protection. What would be an equivalent temptation for us today? What are the “shadows” that tempt you with their security when things get a little “dicey” with professing Christ?**

- 2. What does today's society consider to be “ultimate reality.” How might such a notion pose a problem for people who consider the unseen God as ultimate reality? What does it mean to claim that something is real? What follows from this in our conversations with those who differ from us?**

- 3. How can we better present the teachings of the Christian faith as real? Must we emphasize Scriptural knowledge or Scriptural belief? What is the difference in the public square? Does society speak of scientific knowledge? Or scientific belief? Why is this difference so fundamental? How might relying on biblical belief instead of biblical knowledge be a return to the “shadows?”**