

**The Holiness of Faith (Hebrews 12:14-29)**  
**Living by Faith pt. 5**  
Pastor Tim Peck

**THE BIG IDEA**

Living by faith will lead us into greater holiness. Greater holiness frees us to release our resentments, motivates us to steward our sexuality wisely, helps us establish godly priorities, invites us to draw closer to God, warns us not to disregard God's word, and leads us to worship God with awe.

**OPENING**

- What comes to mind when you hear the word "holy"?
- What is the difference between fear and awe?

**DIGGING DEEPER**

- Hebrews 12:15 warns about letting a bitter root grow in us. Bible scholar Mary Healy says, *"Even one person whose heart has become bitter through resentment...can poison others and thus have a devastating effect on the whole community, as one rotten apple can spoil the barrel."*<sup>1</sup> How have you seen this happen in your own life? How do you release your resentments?
- Read Deuteronomy 4:10-12.<sup>2</sup> How does Hebrews 12:18-22 use this same imagery? According to Tom Long, *"What is wrong with Sinai? It is a place of fear. Human beings come to Sinai as perpetually unclean sinners, and therefore the holiness of God at Sinai is a holy terror. To touch Sinai is fatal, and any animal that ventures out onto this holy ground is destroyed (see Exod. 19:12–13). Sinai is filled with sights and sounds that inject horror into the heart. Even though a fire blazes there, it is still a place of gloom and darkness."*<sup>3</sup> What impact does this have on God's people?
- Read Hebrews 4:16 and 10:22. How do these verses present a different image than that of Mt. Sinai?

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Healy, *Hebrews* (Baker Books), p. 270.

<sup>2</sup>Mt. Horeb in this passage is another name for Mt. Sinai.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas G. Long, *Hebrews, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. (Westminster John Knox Press), p. 137.

- Hebrews 12:28 says that Christians are in the process of receiving God's Kingdom. We already belong to God's kingdom, we are forgiven, we are citizens of this Kingdom, and its arrival is certain. However, this kingdom is not yet "on earth as it is in heaven" (see Matthew 6:10). How does living in this "in between" motivate us to be grateful?
- What do you think it means to worship God acceptably with reverence and awe (see Hebrews 12:28)? How can we "draw near" to God with confidence and assurance, while still doing so with reverence and awe?

## PUTTING IT TO WORK

- Spend time reflecting on God's holiness. Ask him to give you a greater vision of his greatness and goodness. Write down in a journal what you learn.
- Next time you attend a worship service, spend time beforehand asking God to help you enter worship from a posture of reverence and awe. Reflect afterwards on how this impacted your worship experience.

## PRAYER REQUESTS