<u>The Letter To The Hebrews</u>
How Not To Be Like Esau
Hebrews 12:18-24

<u>Introduction</u>

Some of us are being tempted to sin against God. But in Hebrews 12 God gives us a weapon which — if we will use it — will always enable us to overcome temptation.
In vv.15-17 the author tells us about Esau, who traded his inheritance for a single meal of stew.
The point is — when we sin we risk trading salvation for a single meal of sin.
So the author tells us — *Don't be like Esau! Don't risk trading salvation for a single meal of sin!*
But the question is HOW? How do we avoid this risk?
The answer is given in vv.18-24 (note that v.18 begins with "for," or "because").
That shows that vv.18-24 gives us a reason which will persuade us to not be like Esau.
The reason is because of the worth of our salvation.
To show this to us the author contrasts what Israel experienced on Mt. Sinai (what we have NOT come to, vv.18-21), with what we have in salvation (what we HAVE come to, vv.22-24).

<u>What have we NOT come to</u>? (vv.18-21)

God wanted to show Israel what it would be like for sinful people to approach a holy God.
When the people saw God's perfect glory, and their sinfulness, they rightly were filled with fear.
But that's NOT a picture of our salvation; that's NOT what we have come to.

<u>What HAVE we come to</u>? (vv.22-24)

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem

And to innumerable angels in festal gathering

And to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven

And to God, the judge of all

And to the spirits of the righteous made perfect

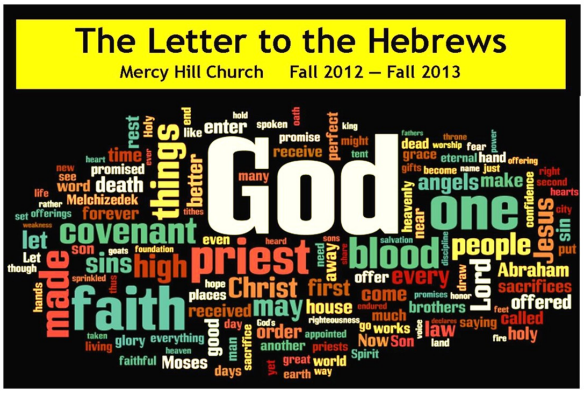
And to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant

And to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel

<u>How does this help us overcome temptation</u>?

If we will take time to compare our salvation with the temporary pleasures of sin, we won't risk trading our salvation for a meal of sin.

But if we have risked salvation for a meal of sin, all is not lost. Turn back to Christ now. Repent now. Trust Him now. He will run to you and assure you of complete forgiveness and everlasting salvation.



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)

Are any of us facing major temptations right now? What are they?

Does it make sense that, like Esau, sin means risking salvation for a meal of sin? Why or why not?

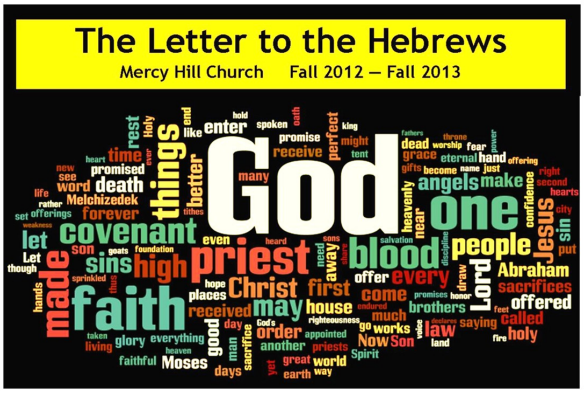
Do you know anyone whose sin so hardened their heart that it appears they are no longer willing to repent? How should this possibility affect us?

How do you think the author wants the description of Israel with Mt. Sinai affect you (vv.18-21)?

Which of the seven descriptions of salvation (see other side of this page) impacted you the most? Why?

Do you agree that if we would stop and compare salvation with sin, we would not risk trading salvation for a meal of sin? Why or why not?

Can you think of times in your life when you DID make this comparison? What happened?

What are some ways you have found it most helpful to make this comparison so that it deeply impacts you and enables you to turn from sin. Share them with the group.

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.