

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

May 2014

## *Hebrews*

The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

### **Lesson #17: God's Grace Refused?**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Would you respect someone who is "at peace with all men?" Why or why not?

#### **OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION**

##### **Read Hebrews 12:12-28**

*Note: A "root of bitterness" (v.15) has been described as a poisonous fruit or wormwood which infects the healthy life around it. In today's terms we might call it a form of cancer. Mt Zion was the site of a fortress that King David conquered and made his home. 2 Sam 5:6-9 Later it became the site of the temple (home of the arc) and symbolically represented God's place of residence.*

1. What is the relationship between peace with God and peace with man?
  2. What is the relationship between holiness and peace with God?
  3. How might one church member's lack of holiness prevent people from accepting God?
- Note: Faith without the pursuit of holiness is only intellectual assent; holiness without faith is self-righteousness." Serendipity Interactive Study Bible*
4. What improper activities seemed to be occurring in the Hebrew church? V. 16
  5. Since we don't stone sinners today, how could a person in the church (or discipleship group) be prevented from "infecting" those around him?
  6. What was so terrible about Mt Sinai (representing the Old Covenant)? Ex 19; Gal 3:10
  7. Why is the New Covenant and Mount Zion (the heavenly Jerusalem) better? Ps 132:13-14
  8. What are the consequences of refusing either the Old or New Covenant?

*Note: Divine grace never encourages us to live in ungodly ways, but instead motivates us to fear and obey God in a healthy and reverent way. Grace enables us to serve, not to sin.<sup>1</sup>*

9. Why aren't "fire and brimstone" sermons as common today?

#### **APPLICATION**

Who or what might help you stay on the right path when considering moral relativism?

*In contrasting the old and new covenants, Mount Sinai serves as a symbol of law under the old covenant and Mount Zion serves as a symbol of grace under the new covenant. The implicit question is, "Do you want to return to the old?" The "assembly of God's firstborn children" referred to believers who belonged to the body of Christ. They were on earth, but their names were registered in heaven. The "spirits of the redeemed in heaven who have now been made perfect" was a reference to Old Testament saints who were yet to be raised (Dan. 12:2). The "blood of Abel" referred to Abel's blood sacrifice (Gen. 4:3-5). Abel's sacrifice was good, but Christ's is better.*

*The writer pictured the history of God's grace from his speaking at Mount Sinai through Moses to his speaking from the heavenly mountain of Zion through his Son (cf. Heb. 1:1-2). Israel had only come as far as Sinai. To stay at Sinai was to fall short of God's revealed grace in Christ.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Heb 12:28). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.

<sup>2</sup>Hughes, Robert B. ; Laney, J. Carl ; Hughes, Robert B.: *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Tyndale House Publishers, 2001 (The Tyndale Reference Library), S. 673