

Rest for the People of God

Hebrews 3-4

Introduction:

What will it be like to be in eternity?

Without the confines and restrictions of time. Without wondering who is saying what in the last hour or 15 min. on social media.

That means no schedules - school teachers just after the school year before they fill their calendars up and become just as busy as they were during the school year.

- When they can sleep in and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea on the patio without having to rush
- This Rest – not just sleeping in or taking a break after you completed a project.

Revelation 4

- People and creatures just being who and what they were created to be.

Not having to work at worship to make it fit into a schedule of events

God has a rest that he desires for us to experience in Him.

- In His word there are things that He tells us about that have more than one fulfillment.
- This rest is one of those things.

As we will see today God both had and has a rest for His people.

We can choose in faith to walk in it or to reject it and do our own thing.

Hebrews 3

VS 1 Chapter three starts off by challenging us (holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling) to consider (contemplate or ponder) Christ Jesus (who the writer addresses as the **Apostle** and **High Priest** of our confession.

- Apostle – Sent out one with a mission
- High Priest – Performed a specific sacrifice for the sin of the nation on a singular specific day – Yom Kippur- The day of atonement.

VS 2-6 tells us Jesus was faithful to God who appointed Him as was Moses faithful.

- Moses was faithful as a servant in God's house
- But Jesus is worthy of more glory than Moses as a Son over His own house, whose house **we are if** we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope.
 - Michael Washer – living stones – We are the house He is building
 - Can you see yourself as part of that house?

VS 7-11 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, 9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years. 10 Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.'

11 So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.' "

- It is not as if they had not seen God move over and over in very visible ways to protect and preserve them.
 - But watching miracles does not necessarily translate into faith that will change you.
 - How many miracles did people see Jesus perform and they still called for His crucifixion?
- Verse 7-11 quotes Psalm 95:7-11 – Tells us two things
 1. Why and how the Children of Israel did not enter the rest offered to them.
 2. There is **still** a rest offered to the people of God **TODAY**.

VS 12-13 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

- Both a warning and an encouragement
 - Warning – be watchful just in case a heart of unbelief would cause some to turn from “the living God”.

- Encouragement – Believers in Christ need to encourage each other **in the faith**
 - The deceitfulness of sin has the ability to harden our heart against God.
 - As brothers and sisters in the Lord we need to help each other to continue walking with the Lord.
 - WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?
 - EXAMPLE - Seniors pouring into the middle aged
 - Middle aged pouring into the young adults
 - Young adults pouring into the youth
 - Youth pouring into the kids

VS 14-15 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

- Partakers – That word is a combination of “with” and “to have”
 - One who shares in something or a partner or companion
 - To be a partaker with Christ we need to continue to place our trust in Him (daily).
 - Salvation comes when we dedicate our life to Him and come under the covenant He put into place with His crucifixion and resurrection.
 - But if we are to experience the fullness of what God has for us we need to continue to place our trust in Jesus Christ in every circumstance and situation.
- What does that look like or how do I do that?
 - We need to live by the kingdom of God principals laid out in His Word
 - Even and especially when our mind and flesh want to take another route.

VS 16-18 For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

- What did that rebellion look like? Was it just not entering in the promised land at Kadesh Barnea?
 - Numbers 14
 - They started to pick new leaders to take them back to Egypt.
 - They started to get ready to stone Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb
 - This was an all-out rebellion

These three verses ask some very important questions

1. Who were the ones who heard Moses and yet rebelled?
 - a. The adults of the Children of Israel (Numbers14)
2. Did Moses lead all the children of Israel out of Egypt?
 - a. Yes (Exodus 13)
3. Who was the Lord angry with for forty years?
 - a. Those who rebelled in unbelief (Numbers14)
4. To whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest?
 - a. Those who did not obey. Everyone 20 years old and older (Numbers 14:29)
 - i. Except Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 14:30)

Hebrews 4

VS 1-2 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.

- The promise of the rest is still there to lay hold of.
 - It was more than entering the promise land of Canaan?
 - Puritan Commentator John Owen (1616-1683) described 5 features of this rest for the believer.

1. Rest means peace with God
 2. Rest means freedom from a servile (groveling), bondage-like spirit in the worship and service of God.
 3. Rest means deliverance from the burden of Mosaic observance
 4. Rest means the freedom of worship according to the gospel
 5. Rest means the rest that God Himself enjoys
- So how can we grab hold of this rest in our own life? What are we struggling at that we need to lay down and just by faith enter the rest of God?
- For the children of Israel the good news was the land flowing with milk and honey as well as the Lord promising to give them victory over those who would oppose them.
 - Moses preached to the Children of Israel and they rebelled in unbelief because they did not allow faith to develop with the words they heard. The result was the word which they heard did not profit them.
 - The next generation inherited the land but they did not enter the rest.
 1. It was anything but rest for them.

VS 3-5 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest,' " although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works";

5 and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest."

- We who believe are granted the opportunity to enter that rest by faith
- This rest for the Jews was and is more than the Sabbath rest that mirrored the rest God took after He finished creation in Genesis 2

VS 6-10 Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, 7 again He designates a certain day, saying

in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts."

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. 10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

- No need to add to it, to improve it or complete it.
 - Just as the work of creation was done and God ceased from His work
 - The work Jesus did to make us righteous before His Father was done when He (Jesus) uttered the words from the cross "it is finished " (John 19:30)
 - The Resurrection would prove it but the work was completed.

VS 11-13 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

- The Word of God is living - at work and has a supernatural power
- Think about how powerful and accurate it is to split the difference between
 - soul and spirit, joints and marrow
 - and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
- The Word of God is able to **drill down** into the very depths of our subconscious to the center of who we are and what we struggle with and arrange that in a way that glorifies God by giving us the mind of Christ.
- Chew on that for a minute. Will we surrender to it?

VS 14-15 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

- In Ancient Judaism they had a High Priest that would pass through the veil into the Holy of Holies or most holy place. Only he could go there. No other human could go. Just as Jesus was the only one who could go before God in heaven.
 - This was a shadow of our High Priest Jesus passing through the heavens
 - The High Priest of Ancient Judaism would make sacrifice and confess first his sins and then the sins of the nation to make atonement once a year but every year .
 - Jesus made the **One sacrifice** for everyone but had no need to make confession for Himself. And it was a onetime sacrifice never needing to be repeated,
 - I wish I had time to deal with the Scapegoat that was released into the wilderness
 - One of the big differences between the High Priest of Ancient Judaism and our High Priest Jesus is Jesus changed His form and appeared as a human being. The great advantage we have in Jesus is that He (Jesus) was tempted in every as we are but yet did not sin.
 - When it says “we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses” it is telling us He can relate to what we go through and struggle with. But He did not give in to it or He was not overcome by it.
 - Despite what the song writer Joan Osborne wrote “ What if god was one of us, just a slob like one of us”
 - He can relate to us and our struggles but Thank God He is just not one of us.
 - So we need to hold fast to our confession of who He Jesus Christ is.

VS 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Throne of Grace

Terry Clark

There is a special place
The most beautiful place I've ever seen
There's a throne surrounded by the angels singing
Singing Halleluia's to the King of kings

I invite you to the throne room
And the King Himself has bid you to come
In this room there is a rainbow
And the splendor in the rising of the sun

Let the Lord's light shine upon you
Let His Spirit have His precious way
Let His loving arms surround you
Let Him lead you to His throne of grace

There's no tears or fear of dying
All is joy forever more
There's no end to life eternal
There is always more in store

To get in there's no requirements
Jesus' blood has paid the way
All you have to do is love Him
Only trust and then obey