

# Hebrews 4:1-5

*Entering God's Rest*



REST

# Entering God's rest is a corporate concern (4:1)

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.*

- ▶ Psalm 95 warns the people during the time of King David not to be complainers nor hesitant to obey
- ▶ The two events referenced are part of the history of the nation of Israel
  - ▶ Exodus 17 – Although delivered from captivity in Egypt and fed quail because they craved meat, the people of Israel complain that they are now in the wilderness without water
  - ▶ Numbers 14 – The spies returned from assessing the Promised Land
  - ▶ In both circumstances, the people rebel against God, put Him to the test, and find Him wanting
- ▶ The Scriptural truths that applied to the people of God who were blessed by the exodus also apply to the people of God who were blessed in the kingdom through King David's reign



# Entering God's rest is a corporate concern (4:1)

- ▶ *"<sup>1</sup> Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands..."* – These same truths are now applied to the ethnic Jews who believed the New Covenant gospel of Jesus Christ
- ▶ The offer of freedom from slavery to sin is offered to all who will trust and obey Jesus as Savior and Lord
- ▶ Those entering the rest Jesus offers experience forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life
  - ▶ Matthew 11:28–30
- ▶ Accepting the rule and reign of King Jesus brings those who walk in the will and ways of the Lord into opposition with the people of this world who serve a different master
- ▶ The reality that people enter God's rest is confirmed by the grace of perseverance
- ▶ Perseverance is made evident by their obeying and honoring of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life throughout their lives, even while experiencing suffering and affliction
  - ▶ Hebrews 3:14
- ▶ The rest we enter is God's and we are invited to reap the benefit of it in life and eternity
- ▶ The promise of the benefits of God's rest still stands, because defiance and apostasy have not yet occurred

# Entering God's rest is a corporate concern (4:1)

- ▶ *"...let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it."* – Once again, the writer of Hebrews calls the people of this local church to action
  - ▶ *"Let us fear"* shows that we are our brother's keeper
  - ▶ James 5:20
  - ▶ We are to fear God because the wavering, complaining, and disobedience of other people in the church sets them at odds with the Lord, and that impacts the church
- ▶ Those who compromise obeying the truth to satisfy the desires and expectations of others fail to reach God's rest
  - ▶ That meant ethnically Jewish Christians trying to gain the acceptance of Jews practicing Judaism
  - ▶ This applies to any of us softening the teaching of Jesus in Scripture in an attempt to win the favor of the woke or the LGBTQ+ crowds
  - ▶ In the face of hateful and hostile enemies of the gospel, unity on essential matters is a priority
- ▶ Compromise is cowardice, and we should all be fearful of God's judgment for those who are compromised

## Entering God's rest is the fruit of faith (4:2-4)

*<sup>2</sup> For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.*

- ▶ The message of good news came to the wilderness generation and the recipients of this letter
- ▶ Hearing the good news of God's provision didn't benefit the wilderness generation
  - ▶ The good news must be trusted to benefit the hearers (Trust leads to transformation)
  - ▶ The writer of Hebrews emphasizes the fact that the people didn't unite with faith in God with Caleb and Joshua

# Entering God's rest is the fruit of faith (4:2-4)

<sup>3</sup> *For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,' " although his works were finished from the foundation of the world.*

## ▶ How do we enter the Lord's rest?

- ▶ It is the Lord's rest, and He enables us to enter His rest by giving us faith to trust His promises
- ▶ Those walking consistently in unbelief and disobedience show that they have not entered God's rest
- ▶ Some are brought into His rest, while others will never enter His rest

## ▶ The rest God supplies is that of His absolute sovereignty

- ▶ The work is accomplished completely by God and He brings people into it
  - ▶ Isaiah 46:8-11
- ▶ God's rest is His sovereign power to do all that He wills
  - ▶ God doesn't try to save people
  - ▶ God actually saves people
  - ▶ We enter His rest and enjoy His work

## Entering God's rest is the fruit of faith (4:2-4)

*<sup>4</sup> For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."*

- ▶ The writer of Hebrews refers to a passage in Genesis 2:2
- ▶ The word "somewhere" is not a confession of the absence of recall
- ▶ The word "somewhere" is definitive, and the quote is from Genesis
  - ▶ Genesis 2:2
- ▶ God doesn't rest because He's tired and needs a vacation
- ▶ God rests because His lasting work is completed



# Not entering God's rest is disastrous (4:5)

<sup>5</sup> *And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest."*

- ▶ The writer of Hebrews returns to the passage of Psalm 95
- ▶ By way of stressing the significance of their decision, he knows they are deliberating whether or not they will keep pressing on
- ▶ The Israelites in the wilderness, with unbelief and disobedience, determined that going into the Promised Land would be too daunting and demanding
- ▶ The faithless decide disobeying God is better than trusting God for victory over their enemies
  - ▶ They determined their enemies were superior to them, and their abilities
  - ▶ Instead, they chose to defy the all-powerful Creator God
  - ▶ The result was death in the wilderness instead of life in the Promised Land
  - ▶ By application, our failure to believe and obey (sanctification and advancing the gospel) means we have not entered the eternal rest of God
  - ▶ The ultimate result is eternal death and separation from God because of unbelief and disobedience



# Questions to Consider

- In what ways do you need to display that entering God's rest is a corporate concern?
- What is the fruit you see in your life of entering God's rest?
- What fruit of entering God's rest do you see in the lives of others in your church?
- How does God need to increase your faith so that you have the courage to battle the enemies of the Lord?

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