

Hebrews 4:1-13

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. 2 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. 3 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. 4 For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.”

5 And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

*“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”*

8 For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. 9 So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, 10 for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Time is by nature finite. It runs out. It is a commodity that one day will no longer be in stock. We only have so much of it, and we are accountable for making the best use of it. We live in time now in order to find rest where time will no longer tick. We reach for God's rest now, therefore, so that when our time ends we have a firm grasp on it, so that the devil cannot pry our dying fingers off of it. How do we take hold of that rest? God offers it to us through His message of good news, the gospel. In fact, He places it into our hands—a free gift. Faith is that hand, open and grateful, while unbelief is a closed fist, hostile to God, unwilling to receive what He gives free of charge. *“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. 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.”*

Israel once again serves as our warning. Many who received God's promises in this life failed to wrap their hearts and minds around them, and so, like unprepared pilgrims, they were not ready to stand before their Maker and did not enter the Promised Land. This was not a failure on the Word's part. The Word was and is fully equipped for the task assigned it. The Word works. This was a failure on their part. They sheathed the sword of the Spirit. They kept it at bay from their hearts. They put attention to it off until a tomorrow that never came.

God's Word works. In other words, it accomplishes the purposes for which He sent it. *“The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* Yet like a cancer patient who refuses to let the skilled surgeon who could remove

his disease anywhere near him, we miss out on the Spirit's surgery when we refuse the Word access to our hearts and minds. All our thoughts and words are laid bare before our God. Nothing is hidden from Him. In His Word, God reveals His thoughts and words to us. He reveals what otherwise would remain hidden. He longs for us to know Him as we know Him, at least to some extent. His Word paints a picture of Him for us. We see in it the face of our Father and our Bridegroom. But we flip that picture facedown when we fail to consider it in detail as we would a picture of a departed loved.

Everything we need to know to reach our rest has been set forth for us in the Scriptures. Everything we need to enter into the eternal Sabbath is placed into our hands in the Word. *"Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience."* Let us attend to God's revelation in Christ Jesus, and let us teach it to our children, if God has entrusted little ones to us, not tomorrow, because tomorrow might never come, but today, *"while the promise of entering his rest still stands."* Amen.