

Looking Unto Jesus

Vision Baptist College

Looking Unto Jesus

Studies in Hebrews

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Chapter Four – *Let Us*

Memory Verse – Hebrews 4:12



For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Introduction

Four times in this chapter we will see the little phrase, “let us”:

1 Let us therefore fear (v. 1)

There are times when we are to fear:

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." (Psalm 111:10)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." (Proverbs 1:7)

Yet, God says that we are not to be afraid:

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7)

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15)

The fear that is dealt with here in verse 1 has to do with making sure that we do not miss out on the blessing of rest that God wants for all of His children.

2 Let us labour therefore (v. 11)

You will notice in this verse a strange statement – “let us **labour** therefore to enter into that **rest**.”

3 Let us hold fast *our* profession (v. 14)

4 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace (v. 16)

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We will see this phrase several more times in the epistle, but these are the first four. Paul will present a truth, and then he will encourage us to practically apply that truth.

I Christ's Rest (vs. 1 – 11)

You will note in verses 8 the name “Jesus”. This is a reference to Joshua who lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land. “Jesus” is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name “Joshua”. Both names mean “savior”. In this section we will see that Jesus Christ is superior to Joshua.

A Canaan Rest

This is the rest that was first developed in the previous chapter (3:11 – 19). This rest has to do with the children of Israel entering into the land of Canaan. (Deuteronomy 12:9 – 12) Most of the people could not enter in because of their unbelief. This rest is a picture of the Christian who is living in the will of God, controlled by the Spirit of God.

Canaan was not Heaven. There were still battles to be fought in Canaan, and there was still sin; both of which will not be a part of our experience in Heaven. But, only those who believed God and trusted in His ability to deliver the land of Canaan into their hands were permitted to enter in. (See 1 Corinthians 10:1 – 13; Numbers 13 – Numbers 14:38)

Note – The children of Israel under the leadership of Moses had enough faith to leave Egypt, but they lacked the faith to enter into the Promised Land. Later, under the leadership of Joshua, Israel overcame their fear of the Giants and trusted God to deliver Canaan into their hand, but they failed to finish the job. They didn't drive out all of the inhabitants as they were instructed to do. Israel seemed to have difficulty completely finishing the job that God had given them to do.

The Hebrew believers that Paul was writing to also struggled with their faith and were in danger of not fully entering into the rest that God wanted for them. They were still holding on to their past instead of completely embracing their future “in Christ”.

Believers today also have similar struggles with faith. We may have had enough faith to trust Jesus for salvation, yet we lack the faith to trust God in other areas of our lives. We also disobey God, not because of a lack of faith, but because of downright rebellion. Faithlessness and rebellion will hinder us from experiencing the rest and blessing of a Spirit-filled life.

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Note – although there are some Bible experts that have equated “Canaan rest” with salvation, most are in agreement that Canaan rest is a picture of sanctification, not salvation.

Warren Wiersbe says this:

The Canaan rest for Israel is a picture of the spiritual rest we find in Christ when we surrender to Him. When we come to Christ by faith, we find *salvation* rest (Matt. 11:28). When we yield and learn of Him and obey Him by faith, we enjoy *submission* rest (Matt. 11:29–30). The first is “peace with God” (Rom. 5:1); the second is the “peace of God” (Phil. 4:6–8). It is by believing that we enter into rest (Heb. 4:3); it is by obeying God by faith and surrendering to His will that the rest enters into us.¹

B Creation Rest

God rested or ceased from His labors on the seventh day. God required Israel to cease from all of their labors on the seventh day also. This Sabbath rest was given to man to refresh his body and to re-focus his attention on God. It is a good practice for us today to take a day out of the week and to spend it refreshing ourselves spiritually and physically. However, we are not mandated to do this.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

(Genesis 2:1-3)

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:8-11)

Also Exodus 31:12 – 17, 35:1 - 3; Leviticus 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:12 - 15

C Christian Rest

1 Salvation Rest (v. 10)

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 289). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

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God rested after His work of creation. Christ said after He finished His work of redemption, "It is finished". The Christian who has rested in Christ has also rested from trying to earn his salvation.

2 Spirit-Filled Life Rest

This is a rest for believers. This is the person who is surrendered to God. They have given up on doing things their way and have given control of their life to God. This is the rest that we have to labor to enter into. The nation of Israel had to battle in order to enter the land of Canaan. We also will have to win the battle with the flesh in order to enter into the rest of a Spirit-Filled Life.

II Christ's Reach (vs. 12 - 13)

The idea here is that the Word of God is the tool that the Lord uses to reveal to the unbeliever whether he is truly resting in Christ or not. It also reveals to the believer whether or not he is truly Spirit-Filled. God sees us completely, and through the Word of God, we can see ourselves. The Word of God strips away the superficial coverings that veil the true character inside.

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:21-25)

III Christ's Reward (vs. 14 - 16)

Verse 14 starts a new comparison of Christ to the Old Testament high priest. Christ is our high priest and is superior to Aaron and the high priests that have followed him. Our High Priest was tempted like us, but He has never yielded to any temptation. This is something that Aaron could not do, which is why he had to offer every year for his own sins as well as for the sins of the people. Because we have a great high priest we can therefore have:

A Confidence (v. 14)

B Boldness (v. 16)

Notice mercy and grace are both mentioned here. Mercy is not getting what we truly deserve, which is judgment. Grace is receiving that which we don't deserve, which is a relationship with God ultimately bringing us into Heaven.