

Session 5,... THE “REST” WE DO NOT WANT TO MISS!

How many of you would like to REST FROM YOUR LABOR?

Hebrews 4:1-11, “Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.² For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.³ Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, ‘So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ And yet his works have been finished since the creation of the world.⁴ For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “On the seventh day God rested from all his works.”⁵ And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.”⁶ Therefore since it still remains for some to enter that rest, and since those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience,⁷ God again set a certain day, calling it “Today.” This he did when a long time later he spoke through David, as in the passage 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 later about another day.⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God;¹⁰ for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.”

What does this passage mean?

Rest...katapausis (Greek)

Has three (3) different meanings:

1. *The peace of God*
2. *The promised land (Hebrews 3:11)*
3. *The rest of God....such as after the 6th day of creation (when all God’s work was complete).*

Sabbath Rest...What does it mean?

Seven (7) facts that will help us understand the remarkable truth of the establishment of the Sabbath:

1. *On the seventh day of creation (the Sabbath); there is no evening and morning (Genesis 2:1-2). The evening and morning were indicative of a developing process, beginning in a rather incomplete state and moving toward light. The work of God is complete on the seventh day, and therefore no evening or morning is mentioned.*

The Sabbath is a perfect thing.

It is not something to grow into; it is something to step into and to discover it to be exactly what it always is perfect, finished.

2. *The supreme meaning of the Sabbath is “rest”..*

The word "seven," the word "sabbath," and the word "rest," are all the same basic word in Hebrew, Shabat.. Therefore, the heart of the meaning of sabbath is “rest.” Simply means the ending of activity, the cessation of effort.

He did not stop because he was fatigued; he stopped because he was through.

The true Sabbath is not the keeping of a special day but the ending of a specific effort.

3. *The specific effort from which God rested was creation.*

The text says, "So God rested from all his work which he had done in creation" (Gen 2:3). This is the last account of any creative activity. Man was made and then God rested, and there has been no creation since. Man is the last effort of God in creation, on the physical level. Therefore this sabbath, this rest upon which God entered, is still continuing today. God is not creating physically today. God is ceaselessly active in many, many ways, but not in creation.

4. *The Weekly Sabbath, i.e., Saturday, Is Not The Real Sabbath.*

It never was, and it is not now. It is a picture or a reminder of the real sabbath. The true sabbath is a rest; the Jewish sabbath is a shadow, a picture of that rest. All the Old Testament shadows pointed to Christ. They were predictions, fore views, of the coming of the One who would fulfill all these remarkable things. Every lamb that was brought as an offering was a shadow of the work of Christ. Every burnt offering, every bit of incense that was offered, was a picture of the fragrance of Jesus Christ. The tabernacle was a shadow of him. The high priest, in his garments and his office, was a shadow of Christ as our High Priest. When the work of Jesus Christ was finished the shadows were no longer needed. When the Lord came, and his work was ended, making possible the true fulfillment of God's intention in the Sabbath, the picture was no longer needed. The weekly sabbath ended at the cross.

“And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it [not him; it, the cross].

Therefore, let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ” (Colossians 2:13-17).

5. *The True Sabbath is, to Cease from Your Own Labors, your own work/efforts, your own activity.... and Depend on the Work of Another (another One is going to work through you).*

6. *God’s Rest Is Designed to Produce Fruitfulness...the blessing in Genesis is connected with fruitfulness and dominion. God blessed the animals and said, "Be fruitful and multiply." But...He said to man, "Be fruitful and multiply and have dominion over all the earth." That is what blessing means, to make possible both fruitfulness and dominion. Thus God designated the true sabbath to the*

function of producing blessing (fruitfulness and dominion) for man. This is why the Lord Jesus declared, "the sabbath is made for man; not man for the sabbath," (Mark 2:27). So the true sabbath rest is to rest on Another, and this is the divine provision to produce fruitfulness and abundance of victory in a Christian's life.

Are you filled with fruitfulness, fragrance, abundance? God's rest is designed to produce that. God said it would.

He makes it available for that purpose and it is the only thing that will do it; there is no substitute.

7. Count on His Working...Enter Into His Rest!

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

Notice that twice in that passage is the word rest. One rest is given, the other is found.

Christ paid it all; you were freely forgiven. What a sense of rest that was! He gave it to you.

But as you went on as a Christian you found that problems began to return and failures came. You ended up bored and disillusioned, disenchanted, discouraged.

What is the answer?

Well, it is what our Lord said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and you will find rest," (Matt 11:29-30a)

The promise of the rest of God for His people still stands; the danger is that we fail to reach it.