

Hebrews #12
Hebrews 4:11-16
Striving to Rest?
16055-A July 17, 2016

I. **Jn.16:25-33. Jesus overcomes the World on our behalf.**

- A. You will have direct personal access to the Father.
 - A.1. Prayer in Christ
- B. You will have intense personal pressure in the world.
 - B.1. Thlipsis = tribulation, painful experience in this age, trouble, suffering.
- C. You will have genuine peace and courage as you remain in me.
 - C.1. I have overcome the world (death and sin).
 - C.1.a) Nikao = defeat in a struggle.
 - C.2. There is a to-the-death struggle between WorldThink and Jesus
 - C.3. Victory relies on Me, so hang on to Me.
- D. *Hebrews was written to Christians who had lost sight of these things due to the pressure/trouble they were facing.*

II. **What is the Warning Hebrews is bringing? 5 thoughts in 3:7-4:16**

- A. If you hear His voice through the gospel, keep listening. 3:7-11
 - A.1. Unlike the hard-hearted Exodus generation. Numb.13-14
 - A.2. Psalm 95:7-11 is God's commentary on these events. (500 years later)
- B. Because the true Rest is only in Christ. 3:12-19
 - B.1. *Take a lesson from faithless Israel at Kadesh Barnea* (Num. 13-14)
 - B.1.a) They rebelled because they didn't actually know or trust the Lord. Num. 13:27-33
 - B.1.b) Their hearts never trusted Him personally.
- C. So take care not to miss that Promise through unbelief. 4:1-10
 - C.1. Take a lesson from the Creation Rest (Sabbath Rest)
 - C.2. Don't stop having faith in Jesus Christ as your Saving Lord.
- D. Because God's Word examines all hearts. 4:11-13
 - D.1. Like a scalpel.
- E. Which is why we must come to the Gracious High Priest. 4:14-16
 - E.1. The One who understands us completely and forgives us totally.

III. **What is the Rest he's talking about?**

- A. **First: What it is not: Four false ideas about resting.**
 - A.1. Effortless sleeping. A religious nap?
 - A.1.a) Now that I'm a Christian I never do anything that would be considered "effort"
 - A.2. Stressless drifting
 - A.2.a) Jesus had stress and promised stress in this age. Jn.16:33
 - A.2.b) Paul did, too. 2 Cor.1:8
 - A.3. Painless medicating
 - A.3.a) Medications usually reduce our awareness of the world.
 - A.3.b) Spiritual rest increases our awareness, which sometimes is uncomfortable.
 - A.4. Sorrowless singing.
 - A.4.a) Sorrow is part of this life almost from beginning to end.
 - A.4.b) There is goodness to experience in this life, but if you think this is the ultimate good, you will never rest, because it's all temporary (2 Cor.4:16-18)
 - A.5. *Remember that the yoke that brings rest (Matt. 11:29) is an implement of purpose. It is a working structure.*
 - A.5.a) A yoked ox was an incredibly valuable and productive animal.
 - A.5.b) An un-yoked ox was just a great beast whose primary goal was to die fat.

B. **What it is—Gospel Rest. 4:1, 3, 11**

B.1. **A relationship with God in which a person has let their full moral, physical, spiritual weight down solely on the Lord Jesus Christ for all of life, including eternal life.**

B.1.a) Present reality: An Experience of Rest today (already having confidence in our salvation) based on...

B.1.b) Future reality: A Promise of Rest in the Next Age (looking forward to resurrection) based on...

B.1.c) Past Reality: An Assurance of Rest in the Work of the Cross (looking back to the finished work of Christ Jn.19:30)

B.2. **It was always the plan of redemption**

B.2.a) Canaan Rest pointed to it. 3:7-19/Ps.95:7-11 Home.

(B.2.a.1) *The Promised Land as it pointed to Greater Rest later a Home. 4:8-10*

(B.2.a.2) *The picture of our rest in Christ now and in the next age*

B.2.b) Sabbath Rest pointed to it. 4:4-10 (Gen.2:1-3). Accomplishment.

(B.2.b.1) *The rest that God experienced after Creation as it points to a later rest, a new creation based on the Work of redemption.*

(B.2.b.2) *The sense that it is good and the work is done.*

B.3. **We enter it by simply believing in Jesus's Person and Work on a personal level. 4:3**

B.3.a) *It is rest because you don't earn it or "deserve" it. It's a gift.*

IV. **Then, What is the Striving he's talking about? 4:11-16**

A. **Striving is the effort we put in as we interpret and respond to all of life in light of the gospel.**

A.1. Spoudadzo = be diligent (NAS), make every effort (NIV), labor (KJV)

A.2. The gospel is not against effort, but against earning. Jn.6:28-29; Matt.11:29.

B. **Three elements of "striving" and none of them are effortless. They happen in the heart**

B.1. **Decide to trust God's Word. . 4:11-13 (Volition/Will)**

B.1.a) The effort is to purposely privilege the Word as the source of eternal knowledge of reality

(B.1.a.1) 1 Tim. 6:20-21. ...what is *falsely labeled "Knowledge"* -- which some have professed, and strayed away from the faith.

(B.1.a.2) 2 Cor. 10:5. Destroying speculations (mental arguments and calculations)

B.1.b) The Word of God = the gospel (the Word made Flesh) as it is revealed in the written Word (the Word made Text). God's Voice through the Gospel in the Scriptures

(B.1.b.1) Jesus, the living Word, speaking through the Father's written Word, by the Spirit's living presence and voice.

(B.1.b.2) Note the shift between the Word and Him in 4:13

B.1.c) WorldThink says our minds are ultimate. KingdomThink says God's mind is.

(B.1.c.1) We say I Think, Therefore I Am (Rene Descartes 1637)

(B.1.c.2) God says, I Am, Therefore you Think (Gen.1:1; Ex.3:14)

B.2. Let him change your mind. 12-13 (Cognition/Thinking)

- B.2.a) The effort is that we don't like to let someone change our mind—even God.
- B.2.b) But Word is Living and Active. Bringing life, but pushing out death
(B.2.b.1) It's alive. **1 Peter 1:23**. Seed is living, even when it doesn't look it. But when it germinates in the mind, it grows into what he seed is. Acorns make oak trees. Gospel makes Christians.
(B.2.b.2) It's doing something (energes)
(B.2.b.2.a) Effective, active, powerful. It accomplishes stuff.
(B.2.b.2.b) Jesus spoke the words of God and Lazarus arose (Jn. 11), and cursed a fig tree Matt. 21:19
(B.2.b.3) The mind of God at work in your soul.
- B.2.c) It's Piercing and discerning. Takes our thoughts apart
(B.2.c.1) Two-edged sword (machaira), but used here as a scalpel
(B.2.c.1.a) The Word is sharper. Like razor sharp.
(B.2.c.2) **Acts 2:36-37**. This is Jesus ... and they were pierced
(B.2.c.2.a) Deep discernment -- slice into your soul and spirit, separate joints and marrow
(B.2.c.2.b) Accurate judgment -- of the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- B.2.d) It's Universal and Convicting. We can run, but we cannot hide
(B.2.d.1) No creature is hidden from His sight.
(B.2.d.1.a) Nothing in the creation is the least bit mysterious to the Lord. He sees through us like glass.
(B.2.d.1.b) Humans hate scrutiny, ever since the fall, we all have things to hide.
(B.2.d.2) But all are laid bare and exposed before Him with whom we have to reckon.
(B.2.d.2.a) Laid bare = gumna = naked
(B.2.d.2.b) Exposed = from trachalidzo = to lay bare. Trachia, throat.
- B.2.e) This should sober us up and bring us back to safety in His Grace
(B.2.e.1) *That's the point...so come to the High Priest...*

B.3. Sense his compassion and sacrifice for you. 14-16 (intuition/feeling)

- B.3.a) The effort here is that we must preach the gospel to ourselves and each other all the time and stay under the teaching of the gospel.
(B.3.a.1) Keep coming back to him in prayer, repentance, confidence.
(B.3.a.2) This is why worship, fellowship and the Word are so important.
(B.3.a.3) Thinking like Jesus means knowing the Father loves you like Jesus.
- B.3.b) He is the ultimate High Priest (mediator) because
(B.3.b.1) He understands us better than we understand ourselves
(B.3.b.2) He offers mercy = eleos = the holding back of deserved judgment
(B.3.b.2.a) God is not looking for a reason to destroy you. If he wanted to do that, there is plenty of reason already.
(B.3.b.2.b) He is giving you time to repent
(B.3.b.3) He gives grace to help = the bestowing of undeserved blessing
(B.3.b.3.a) more than forensic forgiveness, practical assistance to do what it right,
(B.3.b.4) He knows the timing. In time = "at exactly the right time" "timely help".
(B.3.b.4.a) His sympathy with our weakness does not mean he "accepts" our sin.

V. *John 16:33. Come to the One who has overcome the World.*

A. It is never too late to come to this High Priest.