

SERMON

Grace Street Fellowship, Dr. Jim Burgin, pastor

Sunday, September 2nd, 2018

Sermon Series: "Heartbeat"

Sermon # 1 – **The Rest of Your Life** – Hebrews 4:7b-10

TEXT

^{7b} "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 his own work, just as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

OPENING

1. A photographer was snapping pictures of first graders at an elementary school, making small talk to put them at ease. "What are you going to be when you grow up?" he asked one little girl. "Tired", she said. (J. R. Love, Rushton, Louisiana; www. PreachingToday.com) Evidently, she had been watching all the adults in her life, working long hours, busy with a million things, and running around from place to place, and concluded that she was going to be just like them: tired.
2. On Jan 25, 1990, Avianca Flight 52 from Colombia crashed just 15 miles short of New York's Kennedy International Airport, killing 73 passengers. Reason: the plane just ran out of gas. Under international regulations, an airliner must carry enough fuel to reach its destination as well as its assigned alternate, plus enough extra to handle at least 45 minutes of delays. Due to low fuel condition, the Avianca pilots had requested "priority" (not "emergency") landing. Because the exact word "emergency" was not used, and due to heavy traffic and bad weather conditions, the ill-fated plane was placed on a holding pattern...until it simply ran out of gas.
3. Billy Graham has said that we are one of the most entertained generations in history. Just think of the numbers of television stations available, Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, and so on. Think about the kick off of college football this weekend and the massive amount of money spent on sports. Money in the billion-dollar range has been spent in our own town on Texas Live to provide something to do, to eat, before or after a sports experience with the Rangers or cowboys.
4. Interestingly, Graham claims also that we are one of the most bored generations. There is an empty place in our hearts, a restlessness, a search for inner peace and tranquility that will not go away. The irony is that the more people try to satisfy themselves, the less content they become. A survey this week reveals that the average office worker receives 121 e-mails a day and sends out 40. Another report argues for comp time when workers send and respond to their e-mails before or after work. We're never off work, it seems.
5. We all know that our bodies fail when they don't get enough rest. The same is true for our souls when we don't find spiritual rest
6. Let's take a look at Hebrews 4 to see what the Lord says about spiritual rest.

THIS REST ISN'T FOUND HERE ON EARTH

1. Don't look for faith in the wrong places. Look to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. (Hebrews 12:2)
2. Our text reminds us that Joshua couldn't give them this rest. Joshua was a good leader, a God-appointed leader, a man of faith and courage, but he couldn't open the door to the rest God's people needed. Only God can do that.
3. Notice that this is God's "Rest" to give. Verse 9 calls it a "Sabbath-rest," and "God's rest. This is a "Rest" that you enter into, a place to stay, a ground to stand upon.
4. Notice, that it is a "Rest" which brings about a rest from earthly work.
5. Dictionary defines rest in multiple ways:
 - a. "To cease action or motion." Action & motion is over. Stop from labor or exertion. When you enter God's rest in Jesus, there is no more self-effort. No more trying to please God with our feeble works. When you enter into God's rest, work ceases as a way to please God. Rest involves the cessation of legalistic activity. It is rest in God's free Grace.
 - b. "To be free from what worries or disturbs." Some can't rest mentally, because they are generally bugged by everything. Every little thing pounds their brain. To rest means to be free from whatever hassles us. From what creates worries in your mind. To be quiet, still, free from guilt. God's rest is to be at peace with God. You can possess perfect peace.
 - c. "To lie down." To be settled or fixed. No more flux, flow, shifting ground. God's rest means that you have a place to stand. You are stable, steady, strong, not blown about by every wind of doctrine. Established, rooted, grounded, and immovable.
 - d. "Confidence in what you want or trust." God's rest means security. "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness.
6. When you find this kind of rest, you have it for the rest of your life.
7. Transition: So, how can we find, receive, and enjoy God's rest.

OPEN YOUR HEART TO THE LORD

1. Our "Rest" is found in the Lord. This requires trust, an open heart.
2. Our text offers this advice as an admonition; A warning is issued to believers – "Don't harden your hearts." In other words, keep your hearts soft and receptive to His presence, His voice, His leading in your life. This loving advice/challenge is repeated multiple times;
3. Another way to say this is don't let unbelief creep into your heart to harden it. The context for this warning is the people of Israel who believed man's voice over Gods. Twelve spies went into the land God had promised to investigate God's plan for receiving what He had promised them, and they came back saying, "There are giants in the land." Fear hardened their hearts to God's voice, so they wandered in the wilderness for another 40 years.
4. They do not believe God. They do not trust in God, so they missed the Promised Land. They can't receive the rest of Canaan.
5. The warning of God's Spirit in this passage therefore is don't do what Israel did. You've seen God's miracles. You have evidence all around you, but you can't trust his promises, because your faith is weak, and your heart is hardened to respond to his voice.
6. Unbelief forfeits rest. So, open your heart to Him. Place your trust in Him, and you will receive your rest. This is a choice, and it is often made against all odds. Consider this hymn by John Stockton, hampered by health

problems, but called into the ministry when he was 44. God used this originally as an invitation hymn in revivals which were sweeping America.

Come, every soul by sin oppressed
 There's mercy with the Lord
 And He will surely give you rest
 By trusting in His Word
 Only trust Him, only trust Him
 Only trust Him now
 He will save you, He will save you
 He will save you now
 For Jesus shed His precious blood
 Rich blessings to bestow

Plunge now into the crimson flood
 That washes white as snow
 Only trust Him, only trust Him,
 Only trust Him now
 He will save you, He will save you,
 He will save you now
 Yes, Jesus is the truth, the way
 That leads you into rest
 Believe in Him without delay
 And...

BELONG TO AND PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

1. By community of faith, I mean the church.
2. By church here, I mean the people of God, not the building.
3. The Church is both fuel and Guardrail for your faith - Let's look back a chapter to Hebrews 3:12-13 to see what I mean;
4. Hebrews 3:12-13: "Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is called 'Today,' lest anyone of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."
5. We must care enough about each other that every day we get in each other's lives and exhort each other not to let distrust in God creep in and destroy our lives.
6. So one conclusion to draw from the warning is that unbelief is such a constant and dangerous temptation that we must help each other fight it off. Persevering in faith to the end is a community project. Small groups at Grace Street will have a tremendous seriousness about them, if you believe what this says. We meet and form relationships of mutual accountability and love because our faith depends on it. And our entering into God's rest depends on our faith.
7. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God is a powerful shaping force, an antidote to the powerful cancerous forces which want to trip up your faith, and to breakdown your rest.

BE INTENTIONAL

1. The fourth commandment from the Lord says that we are to "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.
2. Holy means set apart, sacred, protected, different.
3. Verse 9 says that there remains a "Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his.
4. Therefore, let us make every effort to enter that rest. – This means that we set aside a day for the Lord, and we make it a priority. God is saying that "your Rest" here is connected to the way you prioritize the worship of God.
5. We are not to forsake the assembly together, as is the habit of some. Hebrews 10:25.

REST COMES THROUGH WORSHIP

1. We worship the Lord on Sabbath.
2. When we lift him up, he inhabits the praises of his people, and all will be drawn to him;
3. When we lift him up, we lay down our idols
4. When we worship Him, we enter His Rest;
5. That rest transforms the rest of our life.

INVITATION