Have you ever had a difficult week, where you all you’ve wanted to do is **REST** and then you’re asked to rearrange a room in the house?

**I’m pretty sure that wasn’t on my “bucket list”!!**

It ranks about as high as a root canal…

**So here’s a scary life truth…**

* Other people have “to do” lists!!
* And your on them!!
* And most of the time they don’t tell you!!
* Until you need **REST!!!**

The goal of our study so far, in Hebrews 4 has been to try to answer the **EXCELLENT** question submitted by someone in our congregation

(of which there are others that will be addressed eventually); **“How can I know that my friends and relatives that I pray for, are REALLY saved”?**

It is a sobering question that both **their,** and **our,** entire **destiny**, **future** and **eternity** hangs on.

The writer of Hebrews began chapter 4 by telling followers of Jesus that they need to be **REALLY** **REALLY** careful and **VERY SURE** that they don’t miss the “rest” that God has promised them…

We were given the example where many of the Israelites (God’s chosen people) missed the “rest” that God had promised and waiting for them, in a good land…

A land described as “flowing with milk & honey”…

Finally able to **REST...** after God had delivered them from slavery in Egypt.

Has God delivered any of you from anything?

If you’re a follower of Jesus He **has** and **is…,** and He has plans for greater improvement… greater freedom from the things that can & often do enslave us. Things that cause us stress, pain & problems…

We’re on His “to do” list… **and He wants us to know that…**

We were told that the Israelites forfeited the “rest” promised to them because their faith in God was found lacking.

They chose to **MAKE THE CIRCUMSTANCE THEY WERE FACING** (i.e. the giants in the land) **BIGGER** than **GOD… above God…**

Sometimes followers of Jesus **allow**:

* Addictions
* Problems with their **attitude**, **spouse**, **children**, **parents**, **friends**, **work**, **money**, **health**, **cars**…

you name it… sometimes the issue is made **BIGGER than GOD… who knows the way out…**

The children of Israel chose fear over faith in what God had instructed them to do (It wasn’t logical…)

anyone in their right mind could see they would get CREAMED if they did what God was instructing them to do…

So, because their faith was rooted in fear & logic…, **rather than in God…** and how He had helped & blessed them in the past…

It led them to disobey God. **And they missed out BIG TIME on the REST that He had promised them!!**

**The writer of Hebrews says; “don’t let this happen to you!”**

* Why should we?
* Shouldn’t we be different?
* Shouldn’t we be better?
* Shouldn’t we possess a **GREATER faith** that looks forward to the **VICTORY** that God has **promised** and is **WAITING** for us?

**Why not!! Be delivered!! Come up out of the wilderness of fear and disobedience!**

**Live in the Land of the FAITHFUL & TRUSTING… possessing**

**GENUINE FAITH** in God… that produces

**GENUINE LOVE** for God… that produces

**GENUINE OBEDIENCE** to God…, that produces

**GENUINE CERTAINTY** about one’s Salvation in Christ… that leads us to…

**GENUINELY SHARING** our faith in Christ **(Real Christianity)…** with our friends and relatives…,

and… oh why not… **even our enemies)** helping them possess the same **(Real Christianity)…**

That brings “REST” into the lives of others… making the world **that we share** a better place…

That is God’s will… that none should perish… and it’s also the Mission Statement of the church.

For that reason, we should all desire to serve as God has gifted and called us…

working with your pastor to accomplish our God given Mission together.

But notice now in **V4…** the writer suddenly brings the **“days of the week”** into this talk about “REST”…, specifically he mentions the **SEVENTH** day **(Saturday)**… which should interest us greatly.

**Exodus 35:1-2**

Moses assembles the “whole” community..., so the instructions to work are clearly for all of the Israelites.

**All** are to work 6 days (Sunday thru Friday) and then cease from all work on the **SEVENTH DAY (Sabbath - Saturday)**.

That day **(Saturday)** is to be set aside (consecrated) made holy, by God’s people as the Sabbath **(“rest”)** unto the Lord.

**If anyone works on the Sabbath, they are to receive:**

* Slap on the wrist…
* 500 Shekel fine…
* No, DEATH!! **For working on the WRONG DAY!!**

**Let’s clarify the kind of work God is talking about… V3**

* Chopping the wood…
* Lighting the fireplace…
* Heating the home…

**Bettered not do it… or you’re TOAST!**

* If your thinking that God is using hyperbole and is exaggerating…
* That He wasn’t really serious about what He said…
* That He was just trying to strike some fear in the hearts of His children like any good dad would do…

Turn to the book of Numbers… let’s see if this was just a law that God has on the books… **that isn’t enforced…** kind of like the littering laws in AZ…

**Numbers 15:32 – Uh oh!!!**

**V33-36**

Some pretty serious instruction about the Seventh day of the week **(Saturday).**

**As we transport back to Hebrews 4 now… I can only speak for me…**

* I want to be found acceptable in God’s sight.
* I want to be someone who’s life represents Christ well.

Where God looks at me and;

* He smiles, and
* He’s pleased, and
* He’s Happy

Because I am using the “good grace of God” to live as **His** “good & faithful servant.”

My prayer is that you want that as well!

**Because Hebrews 4:5 warns us that not all Christians do… and they miss the “REST” that God has for them…**

**Let’s untangle the “rest”…** There’s so much rest mentioned in the Bible, **I find it miraculous that anything got done!**

The writer has told us about the:

1. **V2 Physical rest (Canaan)** – That the Israelites failing to trust & obey God to enter the land, until the older “unbelieving” generation died off…

then Joshua and Caleb entered the land **with only the faithful Israelite children (20 & younger).**

1. **V3 Eternal Rest (Heaven)** – The promise & hope extended all faithful believers of Christ. Regardless of age… If you’re glad about that say amen!! John 6:47 “He who believes has everlasting life.”
2. **V4 Sabbath Rest** – It’s God’s work in creation that has given us the seven day cycle that we call one “week”.

**Genesis 2:2-3** - God Himself gave us the example of… working hard **for the benefit of others for 6 days** and then…

“Resting”… ceasing from work on the seventh day **(Saturday)** and reflecting on all of the “good” that has been done thru the previous 6 days work.

1. **V6-8 Believer’s Rest (**not heaven… **now… today)**

How can believers enter this “rest” before their “eternal rest” in heaven? V6 –**After** we receive Jesus as our Savior, we make Him our Lord…

Possess a faith in God that isn’t led by **fear**, **logic**, **tradition**, **religion** or **self-desire or self-fulfilment**, but a faith that is led by the Holy Spirit.

How do we do that? **I’m glad you asked!**

**Luke 11:9-13**

Seek the Lord (“TODAY” V7) for the power needed to live intentional lives that productively serve Him, His will, and benefit others 6 days a week.

Guess what He wants us to do on the 7th day (Saturday)? **Rest & Reflect** On how God has used us to benefit His kingdom & bless others over the last 6 days…

Then when you come to church and the pastor asks for testimony about the great things God has done in your life over the last week… **your encouraging testimonies become the sermon…**

This rest that God has for the believer TODAY is just a **foretaste** of “glory divine”… **and the “rest” that we will share in together!**

But notice that “TODAY’S” rest (peace) comes only from a believers heart, mind & will **that is surrendered to God… Genuine Faith**

not by being hardened (or stubborn) towards God & His Word… As was the case when mankind fell in Genesis 3…

V9-11 The writer makes it clear that the promise of God has not failed…

His people were the ones who failed…

The Gospel itself is useless, until it is received (not with tears or excitement)… **it is useless until it is combined with OBEDIENT FAITH.**

It’s not the **hearers**, but the **doers** of God’s Word that receive the promised blessing of His “rest” both **TODAY** and **throughout eternity**…

**You have nothing to fear… Doing what God’s Word says will bring an end to:**

* Many of the struggles within yourself…
* The double-mindedness of a “self-seeking”, carnal heart…
* Ending the **false belief** that “rest” in Christ means **inactivity**…

There are some great answers in this passage to know if not only our family & friends are REALLY saved… but ourselves as well…

What will you do with God’s Word today?

Do you long for **“sweet peace and for faith to increase”?**

If so, I invite you come to one of our altar’s of prayer and do business with God as we sing… Is your all on the altar…