

How Can We Find True Rest?

Hebrews 3:7-19

Hebrews, Day 11

⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,

“Today, if you hear his voice,

⁸ do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
on the day of testing in the wilderness,

⁹ where your fathers put me to the test
and saw my works for forty years.

¹⁰ Therefore I was provoked with that generation,
and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart;
they have not known my ways.’

¹¹ As I swore in my wrath,
‘They shall not enter my rest.’”

¹² Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. ¹⁵ As it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

¹⁶ For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? ¹⁷ And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? ¹⁹ So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. – Hebrews 3:7-19, ESV

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to really rest? Most days, I feel like I am rushing from one task to the next, from one responsibility, obligation or appointment to another. The word rest sounds very inviting. In Scripture, God extends to His people a wonderful invitation to enter His rest. Hebrews deals with this invitation to rest in 3:6 – 4:13.

What is this rest into which God invites us to enter? How can we enter into it? Much of our lives are spent busily trying to earn something or create something. Whether we're aware of it or not, most of us are constantly striving after approval, acceptance, validation and worth. We're trying to earn or create some version of salvation for ourselves, through our work, our parenting, our worship, our

creativity, our social lives or our social media lives. How many likes, how many followers, how many views, how much money, how many toys, how many promotions, how many awards and accolades must we win before we can breathe and feel like we've finally arrived, finally earned or created what our hearts deeply desire?

The answer, if we're honest, is always, "Just a little bit more." And so we find ourselves always living for the next thing – the next promotion, pay raise, event, relationship, stage of life, weekend, vacation, or whatever. Real life and real rest remains always just beyond our grasp.

In *The Problem of Pain*, C.S. Lewis said, "All your life an unattainable ecstasy has hovered just beyond the grasp of your consciousness. The day is coming when you will wake to find, beyond all hope, that you have attained it, or else, that it was within your reach and you have lost it forever."

It turns out, the "unattainable ecstasy" we have all been striving after is God's rest, which He extends to us in Jesus Christ. We were created to find our identity, worth and ecstasy in God alone. Why can't we find it apart from God? Why won't God just give it to us in a job or in music or in creativity or earthly pleasures? Again, in the words of C.S. Lewis, "*God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there.*"

So, how do we enter into God's rest? As Hebrews will unpack and make very clear in the coming verses, we enter into God's rest through faith in Jesus Christ alone. And the true and saving faith which joins us to Christ and draws us into the promise of God's rest is a persevering faith, a faith which holds onto Jesus throughout all the tumult of this too-brief-and-too-long life.

In the coming days, we'll unpack what it looks like to enter God's rest in Christ, how we can help each other persevere in faith, and what the dangers and consequences are of turning aside from this rest. For today, it is enough to note this: You were created to find your rest in God, and God draws you into His rest through the unique person and finished work Jesus Christ.