

# Jesus is Better – Hebrews

Hebrews 4:1-13

“Strive to Rest” – February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018



## Introduction

God's word is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword ([Heb. 4:12](#)). As such it *always* accomplishes the purposes for which it was sent. God's word can bring life, health and rest; or it can bring judgment. It all depends on how we approach and respond to it. Those who trust God in his gracious word of salvation through Christ find rest. Those who refuse, who assume they can go it alone, will find themselves in trouble. They will be held accountable. Behind the question of how we respond to God's word is a struggle for rest. We all long for rest, but we will either trust Christ and His promises to get there, or we will trust what the world offers for rest and the promises of sin.

## Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:17-24](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## Sermon Outline

- I. The 'rest' God's scalpel can bring (4:1-11)
- II. The judgment God's sword can bring (4:12-13)

## Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [Hebrews 4:1-11](#)

Building off of the discussion of the wilderness generation that failed to enter the Promised Land because of unbelief (see Hebrews 3:7-11), chapter 4 urges the reader to not make the same mistake. We enter God's rest by believing, and the author reminds us that believing is not just agreeing something is true but acting in obedience to what God has said. In other words, the biblical idea of belief is *trust*.

The rest we're called to enter is first pictured in the *creation rest* – the perfect world without sin pictured in Genesis 1-2 where Adam and Eve had unhindered access to God. Because of sin, this *creation rest* was lost, but God did not give up on His people. Raising up a people through Abraham ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)). Eventually, God's people reached the land God had promised. Though they failed at first to enter because of unbelief, Joshua led the next generation. This *Canaan rest* was a picture of God's full and final rest. The full and final rest would be the *rest in Christ*. Jesus is a new and better Joshua. He's the One whom Moses and Joshua pointed forward to because only He can bring God's people into that rest.

How does Jesus do it? Remember in [Hebrews 1:3](#), after He made purification for sin, He 'sat down'? He sat down because the work of redemption was finished. The way

[Hebrews 4:10](#) puts it is that he rested from his work. Those who trust in Christ are able to rest because of who Jesus is and what He's done for us. How does the future hope of heaven change the way we live in the present? What are ways we can strive to enter and maintain the rest we have in Christ? What are things you're tempted to find rest in other than in Christ?

Additional reading: James 2:19, Joshua 21:44, Matthew 11:28-29

2) Read [Hebrews 4:12-13](#)

When we read, hear, sing, or study God's word it discerns our hearts. We don't stand over it as the authority, we stand under it as it assesses *us*. Not only does Scripture cut through our external religious practices and pretending to show the true condition of our heart, it also exposes the lies of sin and this world for what they are. How can you use God's word to encourage and warn each other to avoid such deception in your own life and to help others?

Additional Reading: Hebrews 3:13, 1 Tim. 6:12

**Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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