

(2) For the good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them...because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as He has said,

“As I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest,’”

(3b) although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works.” And again in this passage He said,

“They shall not enter My rest.”

(6) Since, therefore, it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again He appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”

(8) For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His.

(11) Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning of thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account.

Think on these things:

- 1) V. 2 begins by saying the “good news” (Gospel) ‘came to us just as to them.’ Some people get saved, and some people don’t. Why is this true according to v. 2b? See Romans 10:16-18

People don't combine (unite) what they've heard with faith (belief). They are unmoved and unaffected by the message. Romans quotes Isaiah asking, “Lord, who has believed our message?” The Israelites heard the good news but would not accept it!

- 2) Remember that Jesus shared a parable on this in Luke 8:1-15. Who is it that snatches away God's Word so that it can't be believed? And why do some people believe for just a short time and then walk away?

Who snatches away? – **The “evil one” (i.e., the Devil)**

Why do some walk away? – **Soil 2 says some quick responses only last as long as they are trouble-free. As soon as difficulties and persecutions arise from living in their faith, or full commitment becomes inconvenient, they quit. Soil 3 is a lasting faith that goes nowhere because these believers get caught up with life's worries and the pursuit of wealth. For God's purposes here, they are fruitless and useless.**

- 3) According to v. 3, what is the condition to enter into God's rest? See the contrast with Hebrews 3:19. Experiencing God's rest is always about one key thing. What is it?

We have to “believe,” i.e., have faith. The key thing has always been about faith.

- 4) To convey the concept of God’s rest, the writer refers back to God’s work at creation (vs. 3-4). On the 7th day, God rested “from all His work.” Now look ahead to vs. 9-10 where it talks about a Sabbath rest for the people of God. According to v. 10, what must a believer do to enter God’s rest? Consider Romans 4:4-5 and 11:5-6, Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:4-5. So to enter into God’s rest, what is the decision a Christian man or woman is weighing about their faith?

Do to enter God’s rest? **Believers must rest from their own works. In context, this aligns with the admonition of trying to gain heaven by good works. We don’t get to heaven that way. Especially from Ephesians, we must understand that salvation is an issue of grace and faith.**

What is the issue being weighed? **Am I willing to accept God’s grace and receive my salvation from God by faith or will I try to prove myself to God I’m worthy by my good works?**

- 5) What does v. 8 refer to? What we learn is that God’s rest does not mean the Promised Land.

Joshua led them into the Promised Land (Canaan) from Egypt after all their desert wanderings.

- 6) To avoid being disobedient to God, what are we encouraged to understand and do? (v. 11)

We need to understand that God’s rest is not works-based, and make every effort to enter into it by faith and belief.

- 7) What does God’s Word do to in the lives of people? (vs. 12-13)? When it comes to being accountable to God, will we be able to hide anything from God? How does Paul describe for Timothy the value of God’s Word in 2 Timothy 3:16-17? Knowing these things, why should you subject yourself to God’s Word regularly?

God’s Word & accountability – **God’s Word is living and active. It penetrates our souls like a double-edged, sharp sword. God uses it to address our thoughts and attitudes, and nothing is hidden from His sight. He sees everything about us clearly, and we will have to give Him an accounting of ourselves.**

Value of God’s Word – **God’s Word is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training so that the man (or woman) of God may be thoroughly equipped for Christian living in this life.**

Why subject ourselves to God’s Word? **Unchecked, a man is prone to pursue things in his own best interests. But ALL men are accountable to God. It is awareness of this accountability that compels us to see ourselves truly in the mirror of God’s word. God’s revelations to us about ourselves keep us humble and obedient. We are sinners just like everyone else. His Word keeps us honest, and genuine believers will want to pursue God’s truths, confessing sin as God reveals its presence within.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: