

I. Introduction and review.

II. Fear falling short of God's rest through unbelief. v. 1-2

A. In what sense should we fear?

1. The gospel sets us free from fear (of man and of death). 2:15 11:23,27 13:6
Ps. 118:6 Pr. 29:25
2. The gospel warns us to fear God. 4:1 Pr. 1:7 Luke 12:4-5 Phil. 2:12-13 Ro. 11:20
I Pe. 2:17 Rev. 14

B. Fear coming short of God's rest through unbelief and disobedience. v. 1

1. Spiritual privileges and experiences will not save you!
2. The Israelites who perished had witnessed miraculous signs and deliverance.
3. In the day of judgment, multitudes who called themselves Christians will not enter heaven. Mt. 7:20-23

C. Fear hearing the Word of God without profiting from it. v. 2,6

1. In what sense did the Israelites have the good news (gospel) preached to them?
3:16 Ex. 34:6-7 Num. 14:8-9 Deut. 12:9-10 Gal. 3:6,8 Gen. 15:6
2. We have received the better gospel promises of the New Covenant. 1:1-2 2:3-4
3. The promise alone will not save you. You must put your faith in God's promise.

D. Fear because many have fallen short of God's rest. I Co 10:11 I Jo. 2:19 Mt. 7:21-23

1. Fear complacency! 4:11 6:12 12:1f I Cor. 10:12 Rom. 3:18
2. Fear because greater gospel blessings are accompanied by more severe punishments for those who fall short through unbelief. 10:29-31

E. We should be concerned for one another, fearing that any would fall short. v. 1b 3:13

III. God's rest is offered to you today. v. 3-10

**A. God's rest at creation sets the pattern of the rest He offers His people. v. 3b-5
Ge. 2:2 Ex. 20:11 31:17**

1. Our author makes an important connection between God's rest from creation, the rest offered in Canaan, and our everlasting rest in Christ.
2. The Seventh Day is unique and ongoing.
3. God's promised rest has been prepared and available since creation.
4. God's rest is not inactivity, but satisfied delight in His completed work. Jo. 5:17
5. In the garden, man forfeited this rest due to sin and unbelief. Gen. 3:1f
6. God promised a restoration of rest through the Messiah. Gen. 3:15 Heb. 2:9

B. In spite of Israel's failure in the wilderness, God still offers His rest. v. 6-7

1. Some will enter God's rest. v. 6
2. There is another "today" in which you can hear His voice in faith. v. 7a

C. The rest in Canaan was merely a type of God's heavenly rest. v. 8-10

1. Joshua led the next generation of Israel into the land. v. 8a Josh. 21:44 22:4
2. If the rest were merely earthly, the promise of rest would not have been repeated in David's day. v. 8b Ps. 95:11 II Sam. 7:1
3. The New Covenant offers God's people a better rest. v. 9 11:13f 13:14 7:11 8:7

4. Of what rest does verse 10 speak?
 - a. Christ's rest from His work of saving us?
 - b. Our rest from trusting in our works?
 - c. Our rest from the toils of living in this fallen world? 6:10 10:24

- D. When do we enter God's rest?
 1. There is a sense in which we have already entered God's rest through faith. v. 3
 2. We will not fully enter God's rest until we enter heaven. v. 10 Rev. 14:13 7:15-17

- E. Does the rest spoken of here have anything to do with Sabbath observation?
 1. Verse 9 speaks of spiritual rest, not Sabbath observance.
 2. The Mosaic Sabbath was a taste and reminder of God's creation rest. Ex. 20:8-11
 3. The Sabbath also points to God's redemption of His people. Lev. 16:29-31 Dt. 5:15
 4. Some argue that because our rest has been fulfilled in Christ, weekly Sabbath observance is no longer necessary for God's people. Col. 2:16-17 Rom. 14:5
 5. Others believe that the Sabbath is a creation ordinance which continues to remind us of our future heavenly rest.

IV. Conclusion: Be diligent to enter God's rest. v. 11

- A. Enter God's rest by faith. v. 3a 3:19 10:38-11:1 Eph. 2:8-9 Ro. 10:13,14,17 I Th. 3:13
 1. It is not enough to hear God's Word.
 2. It is not even enough to intellectually agree that God's Word is true.
 3. You must fully trust in God's Word (Christ).

- B. Continue to exert effort to enter God's rest. v. 11a 12:5 Phil. 2:12-13 3:7f II Pe. 1:5f
 1. This in no way contradicts salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ.
 2. Continue to trust God on your pilgrimage.
 3. Fix your hope on the rest that is yet to come and press on with all your might .

- C. Watch out for one another. v. 11b .

- D. If you don't heed God's Word you will fall. v. 11c-13

- E. Today is the day of opportunity. Mt. 11:28-30

Discussion questions

1. In what sense should we be fearful? In what sense should we not be fearful? v. 1
2. In what way did the Exodus generation have the gospel preached to them?
3. Why didn't the gospel do them any good?
4. What do we learn about our rest from God's rest at creation?
5. Why doesn't the occupation of Canaan in Joshua's day fulfill the promise of rest?
6. What rest still remains for the people of God?
7. When do we enter into God's rest?
8. How do we enter into God's rest?
9. Why is it urgent for us to be diligent to enter God's rest?
10. How does the Word of God motivate us to fear and urgency?