

## The Blessedness of Rest Series: 6

### Be Diligent To Enter The Rest

#### Hebrews 4.9-16

We have already seen in this series of teaching that to enter the rest we must enter by faith.

God's people failed to enter their rest because of unbelief (Hebrews 3.19). Their unbelief and mistrust in God, after all He had done for them and brought them through, grieved God's heart.

Faith pleases God, unbelief displeases God. God is looking for people of faith. The Bible says "*when the Son of Man comes will He find faith on earth?*" (Luke 18.8). God is looking for people of faith, people that will trust Him, people that have learned to trust Him and believe His Word no matter what they feel like or what their circumstances look like. That type of faith will bring us into the rest.

Then we have seen that we need to hold fast to our confidence. This confidence comes out of that faith in the Word of God. When we believe that God and His Word cannot fail that gives us confidence, assurance, so we can say with Abraham "I am FULLY PERSUADED that what God has promised He will perform"

#### Ceased from His Works

Hebrews 4.10 tells us what rest is. He says "*he who has entered God's rest, has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His*"

God rested on the Seventh Day (Sabbath) after He had finished His work. We need to come to that place where we rest from our work – not necessarily our daily jobs (although it is vitally important and Scriptural that we take a rest, holiday etc) but the labour, toil and pressures of daily living – cares of living eg paying the bills, buying food & clothing, concerns over wayward children, or a number of other pressures that we may face, schooling, work, health issues etc.

*"for he who has once entered [God's] rest also has ceased from [the weariness and pain] of human labours"* (v10, Amp)

We spend far too much time pondering (worrying) over these things – we are working at worrying, we are toiling in trying to solve problems ourselves. Rest is letting go of all that work and letting God take over.

#### Be Diligent

v11. It's not going to be easy. This verse says we need to "*be diligent*" to enter into rest.

Diligence here means '*(i) to put in great effort, labour; (ii) be prompt; (iii) to study*'.

All our effort should be directed at entering the place of rest, rather than into worrying over the problems.

Let us substitute these meanings into the text of the verse and see what revelation we get:

'Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest...'

- 'Let us therefore *put in great effort* to enter that rest...'
- 'Let us therefore *be prompt* to enter that rest...' - don't put it off, do it quickly
- 'Let us therefore *study* to enter that rest...'

I believe this last understanding to be of great importance here as the next verse goes on to say “for the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...”

### **Holding Fast Our Confession**

It is the Word of God that makes the difference, it is the Word of God that is effective and energises us. The Word of God is able to penetrate our innermost being, discern, expose and change our thoughts and our hearts.

When under pressure we speak only those things we truly believe in our hearts.

“**Out of the abundance [overflow] of our hearts our mouth speaks**” (Matthew 12.34).

When the going is good and we are not under pressure we can say all the right words and fool everyone. But when the pressure is on, what is truly in our hearts is made known.

There is something else we need to do to keep our faith strong - “**let us hold fast our confession**” (v14)

We make confession with our mouths. Many people confess [talk about, rehearse] the problems, the difficulties, the sickness – this just keeps on enforcing them, so that they become so big in our lives. Think of them as seeds – **everytime you talk about them, you water them. We need to rather water the seed of God's word.**

We need to be confessing what God says about our problems, situations and difficulties. That comes from studying the Word of God and finding out what He says.

What does it mean to hold fast our confession? - to keep on confessing what God says even when everything else says opposite. Our situations may change, our bodies may change, our circumstances may change – but our confession should remain the same.

Putting our effort into studying the Word of God, and confessing that Word with our mouths plants it deep in our hearts. It is the Word of God that produces faith in us (Romans 10.17). when we speak God's Word with our mouths, we hear it and faith comes. That faith breeds confidence, which brings us into rest.

The battlefield is our minds, the devil wants to fill it with things for us to think over. We need to take control over that and meditate on the Word, confess the Word, believe the Word.

God went to great lengths in the Scriptures to tell His people to keep the Word in front of the eyes, in their mouths – why? It will bring you into the place of rest!