

II. THE INVITATION TO REST (Hebrews 4:11-16)

A. The Call to Rest (Hebrews 4:11)

1. The entrance to the rest
 - a. Let us labour
 - (1) By all appearances, this would lead us to believe that the apostle spoke of a works based salvation.
 - (2) However, other passages use similar terminology yet obviously do not speak of works salvation.
 - a) “This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” (John 6:29).
 - b) “A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).
 - c) “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?” (Romans 10:16)
 - (3) At the same time, the word *labour* has a broader scope historically often including to take pains or to endeavour.
 - b. To enter into that rest
2. The concern presented
 - a. Lest any man fall
 - b. After the same example of unbelief
 - (1) This is again a reminder that entering into the rest appointed of the Lord is not a reward of faithful works, but of faith.
 - (2) This is commonly stated throughout the section addressing the appointed rests (Hebrews 3:12, 18, 19; Hebrews 4:2, 3, 6).

B. The Ministry of the Word of God (Hebrews 4:12-13)

1. The attributes of the word of God (Hebrews 4:12a)
 - a. The word of God is quick.
 - (1) Historically, the word *quick* was said to mean living persons.
 - (2) Scripturally speaking, the word *quick* seems to speak of that which is living or made alive (Numbers 16:30; Acts 10:42; Ephesians 2:1-5; 2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Peter 4:5).
 - (3) That being said, the apostle Paul testified that the word of God was alive (see also John 6:63; 1 Peter 1:23).
 - a) As such, it has personality.
 - b) As such, it has a work.
 - (4) The life of scripture is demonstrated in several aspects:
 - a) The types of scripture
 - i) Seed (Luke 8:11)
 - ii) Water (Ephesians 5:29); Note: Most consider water to be inanimate, but confess that it often contains living organisms. The Bible seems to indicate something greater than this when it speaks of living water(s) (Jeremiah 2:13; John 4:10, 11; John 7:38).

- b) The connection between the living and written word
 - i) Both are expressions of the mind of God (Hebrews 1:3; Leviticus 24:12-13; 1 Corinthians 2:16).
 - ii) Both have eternal existence (Hebrews 13:8; 1 Peter 1:23).
 - iii) Both came to bless (Acts 3:26; Luke 11:28).
 - iv) Both partook of the human and the divine (1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
 - v) Both are faultless (1 John 3:5; Proverbs 30:5).
 - vi) Both are life (John 14:6; Hebrew 4:12).
 - vii) Both are light (John 8:12; Proverbs 6:23).
 - viii) Both are truth (John 14:6; John 17:17).
 - ix) Both are food (John 6:35; Deuteronomy 8:3).
 - x) Both must be received before one can be saved (John 1:12; James 1:21).
 - xi) If a man rejects either, he will be condemned to hell (John 8:24; Luke 16:31).
 - xii) Both are despised and rejected by men (Isaiah 53:3; Mark 7:9).
- c) The uniformity of the scripture and God
 - i) Did the scripture speak, or did God?
 - (a) According to Romans 9:17, the scripture spoke to Pharaoh.
 - (b) In Exodus 9:1, 8, 13, and 16, it was the Lord who spoke to Pharaoh.
 - ii) Did the scripture preach, or did God?
 - (a) According to Galatians 3:8, the scripture preached to Abraham.
 - (b) Yet, Genesis 12:1; Genesis 18:18; and Genesis 22:18 all teach that it was God who dealt with Abraham.
- b. The word of God is powerful.
 - (1) To testify of Christ (John 5:39)
 - (2) To save the lost (Psalm 19:7; 2 Timothy 3:15; James 1:18-21; 1 Peter 1:23)
 - (3) To produce faith (Romans 10:17)
 - (4) To discern (Hebrews 4:12)
 - (5) To convince (Titus 1:9)
 - (6) To sanctify (Psalm 119:9, 11; John 15:3; John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26)
 - (7) To teach (Psalm 119:130; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - (8) To guide (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 6:23)
 - (9) To encourage (Psalm 119:49; Romans 15:4)
 - (10) To strengthen (Acts 20:32)
 - (11) To rejoice (Psalm 19:8; Psalm 119:111)
 - (12) To accomplish (Isaiah 55:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 2:13)
- c. The word of God is sharp (Psalm 149:6; Ephesians 6:17).

2. The work of the word of God (Hebrews 4:12b)
 - a. It pierces
 - (1) To the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit
 - a) A couple of truths should be understood based on this statement.
 - i) The soul and the spirit are obviously not the same.
 - ii) The soul and the spirit are so closely related that there are times when they might appear to be one and the same.
 - b) These are the first two of three of the identified parts of man (1 Thessalonians 5:23). They are those which are closest to the Lord.
 - (2) To the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow; Note: Both of these are within man's flesh and speak of the word's ability to divide within man's flesh (1 Thessalonians 5:23).
 - a) A *joint* is a part of the body where two bones meet and move with one another.
 - b) *Marrow* is a soft fatty substance in the cavities of the bones where blood cells are produced.
 - b. It discerns (see 1 Chronicles 28:9; Psalm 44:21; Psalm 139:23; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Romans 8:27; Revelation 2:23)
 - (1) Of the thoughts of the heart—the nature of the considerations of the heart
 - (2) Of the intents of the heart—the motive or purpose of the considerations of the heart
 - c. Though these truths generally apply, it must appear within the given context with cause.
 - (1) These Hebrews were in danger of trying to feign faith in and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ while maintaining their allegiance to their Judaism.
 - (2) They were admonished to ensure that they would enter into the intended and offered rest.
 - (3) Hebrews 4:12 begins with the word *for* suggesting that verse 12 is connected to and the purpose for which the admonition in Hebrews 4:11 was given.
 - (4) All that being considered, it should be of no surprise that the focus of Hebrews 4:12 is the scope of the word of God's work within man's heart.
 - (5) The word of God could cut through a man's outward acts and understand the true nature of his heart.
 - a) It was quick.
 - b) It was powerful.
 - c) It was sharper than any twoedged sword.
 - d) It could divide the soul and spirit.
 - e) It could divide the joints and marrow.
 - f) It could discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

3. The personality of the word of God (Hebrews 4:13)
 - a. Demonstrated in pronouns
 - (1) His
 - (2) Him
 - b. Demonstrated in attributes
 - (1) He has sight.
 - (2) He has eyes.
 4. The reach of the word of God (Hebrews 4:13)
 - a. Concerning man
 - (1) “Neither is there any creature”
 - (2) “That is not manifest in his sight:”
 - b. Concerning things
 - (1) “All things”
 - (2) Are naked and opened unto the eyes of him”
 - c. Concerning accountability—“with whom we have to do” (Romans 2:16)
- C. The Ministry of the Great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16)
1. The identity of the priest (Hebrews 4:14)
 - a. His superiority—“great high priest”
 - (1) Eighty-three times the Bible uses the phrase, “high priest.”
 - (2) Of those uses, Christ is identified as a “high priest” eleven times (Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 3:1; Hebrews 4:14, 15; Hebrews 5:5, 10; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 9:11; Hebrews 10:21).
 - (3) However, only once does the scripture speak of a “great high priest” and that is reserved for Christ.
 - b. His dwelling—“that is passed into the heavens” (see Hebrews 8:1)
 - c. His name and rank (see Hebrews 7:28; see also 1 Timothy 2:5)
 - (1) His name—“Jesus”
 - (2) His rank—“the Son of God”
 2. The admonition of the priest (Hebrews 4:14)
 - a. The cause of the admonition—“Seeing then that we have a great high priest”
 - b. The content of the admonition—“let us hold fast our profession” (see 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9; Hebrews 3:6, 14; Hebrews 10:23; Revelation 2:25; Revelation 3:3, 11)
 3. The example of the priest (Hebrews 4:15)
 - a. The understanding of the priest
 - (1) “For we have **not** an high priest”
 - (2) “Which **cannot** be touched”
 - (3) “With the feeling of **our** infirmities”
 - b. The temptation of the priest
 - (1) The extent of His temptation—“in all points” (see 1 John 2:16)
 - a) The three areas of temptation
 - i) The lust of the flesh

- ii) The lust of the eyes
 - iii) The pride of life
 - b) The sin in the garden (Genesis 3:6)
 - i) The tree was good for food—lust of the flesh
 - ii) It was pleasant to the eyes—lust of the eyes
 - iii) A tree to be desired to make one wise—pride of life
 - c) The temptation of Christ (Hebrews 4:15)
 - i) The lust of the flesh (Matthew 4:3-4; Luke 4:3-4)
 - (a) Satan commanded Christ to turn stones into bread (Matthew 4:3).
 - (b) Christ’s response (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3).
 - ii) The lust of the eyes (Matthew 4:8-10; Luke 4:5-8)
 - (a) The temptation of Satan
 - (i) The Devil took the Lord to a high mountain (Matthew 4:8; Luke 4:5).
 - (ii) The Devil showed Him the world’s kingdoms (Matthew 4:8; Luke 4:5).
 - (iii) The Devil offered them to Christ (Matthew 4:9; Luke 4:6-7)
 - (b) Christ’s response (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8)
 - iii) The pride of life (Matthew 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12)
 - (a) The temptation of Satan
 - (i) The Devil took the Lord to Jerusalem (Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9).
 - (ii) The Devil set Him on a pinnacle of the temple (Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9).
 - (iii) The Devil told the Lord to cast Himself down and quoted scripture (Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:10-11; Psalm 91:11-12)
 - (b) Christ’s response (Matthew 4:7; Luke 4:12; Deuteronomy 6:16)
 - d) The temptation of every man (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:11)
 - (2) A greater understanding of this temptation
 - a) Jesus truly experienced temptation (see Hebrews 2:18).
 - b) Yet, He possessed no inward lusts that would draw Him away and cause Him to be enticed (see James 1:13-15).
 - (3) The likeness of His temptation—“like as we are”
 - c. The victory of the priest—“yet without sin”
4. The access to the priest (Hebrews 4:16)
 - a. The cause of our approach—“Let us therefore”
 - b. The nature of our approach—“boldly”
 - c. The object of our approach—“unto the throne of grace”
 - d. The hope of our approach
 - (1) Mercy
 - (2) Grace to help in time of need