
Words of Truth

Hebrews 4:10-11

By: Brian A. Yeager

The writer of this epistle had just made the point that there was still a rest for the people of God to look forward to (Hebrews 4:6-9). Then he wrote this: *“For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief”* (Hebrews 4:10-11). In this context the rest God took on the seventh day of creation was already mentioned (Hebrews 4:4). Now the reference is made again.

If you take the day God took for a rest as an example to learn from, there are some relevant points to consider that fit the contextual lessons. On the sixth day of creation God saw every thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good (Genesis 1:31). Before we think about our rest, we need to be able to look at the things we have done in our life and see that things we have done are very good. Think about the Judgment Day. Jesus said this: *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”* (John 5:28-29). Later in this epistle we read this: *“For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased”* (Hebrews 13:14-16). Those of us in Christ were delivered from our sins and created in Christ unto good works (Ephesians 2:1-10). The Scriptures furnish us unto all good works (II Timothy 3:14-17). So, before we think about a rest, let’s be sure we are able to look at our lives and see good works.

In continuing to look back at the time God created the heaven and the earth, we are going to consider another point. Before God rested on the seventh day (Genesis 2:2-3), we read this: *“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them”* (Genesis 2:1). God didn’t rest until He was finished. Notice what Jesus said while living on this earth: *“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work”* (John 4:34). Jesus did not consider His work for the Father finished until it was (John 17:4 and John 19:30). Jesus was a finisher. We should realize that rest comes after the work is done. Even regarding physical labor, the sleep of a laboring man is sweet (Ecclesiastes 5:12). The reward for our faithful, good works does not come until the end (Romans 6:22, Philippians 3:3-21, Hebrews 9:27-28, and I Peter 1:3-9).

The point thereafter is clear. Since it's not time for the rest, that means it is still time to work. We know this is the truth. Here in El Paso we sing songs that say: "I want to be a worker for the Lord..." (page 13), "We'll work till Jesus comes..." (page 34), and "Work, for the night is coming..." (page 40). At the conclusion of teaching about the resurrection to come at the end (I Corinthians 15:1-54), Paul penned these words: *"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord"* (I Corinthians 15:55-58).

If you want the reward, you have to work to get it. The laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7 and I Timothy 5:18). If you want the reward, finish the work (Matthew 20:1-16 and Mark 13:34-37). That's simple enough. However, some people struggle with that. Many of us have seen people get to a point in life wherein they think they've done enough. We can never do enough. Even when we have done all the Lord requires of us we are still unprofitable servants (Luke 17:7-10). That being said, how can a person think that way? Well, sometimes, laziness comes into play. We should all know that regardless of how difficult things get in this world, God expects faithfulness until the day of one's death (Revelation 2:10). Who is considered faithful? In part, as it applies in this study, here is the answer: *"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing"* (Matthew 24:44-46).

So, the point of laboring so that one can enter into the rest promised by God should not be lost on a faithful Christian. Yet, it was taught in this context for a reason. Some first century saints just weren't focused on being finishers. Later in this Hebrew letter we read this: *"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises"* (Hebrews 6:9-12).

For us, we should learn from those things written here to these Jewish saints. Think about this: *"And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, **Strive** to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"* (Luke 13:22-24). What fight do you have in yourself (I Corinthians 9:24-27 and I Timothy 6:12)? Will you enter the end of your physical life with the confidence Paul had (II Timothy 4:6-8)? Brethren, keep working (Titus 2:7-14)!