

Abiding In God's Rest Hebrews 3 and 4

There is only one hindrance to experiencing God's rest - UNBELIEF! (Heb 3:11,12; 4:2,6,11). The rest of God is His witness upon the life willing to live in a receptive and responsive union with Christ - our full and perfect Savior. Our obedience of faith in His complete sufficiency is the "yoke" that is easy, the "burden" that is light (Matt 11:28-30). This is how He rests us! Hebrews 4:11-16 gives us some clear direction upon entering and remaining in His rest.

We must first learn to rely upon our great High Priest, Jesus Christ the Son of God (Heb 4:14). As both the Lord of the Sabbath and the Promised One in Whom we dwell, His finished work as Justifier, Sanctifier, and Glorifier is what fully completes us and provides us with everything pertaining to life and godliness (Col 2:9,10; II Pet 1:3,4). (There is no rest for those who are working on themselves - those trying to justify, sanctify themselves or to glorify God in their own strength.)

Secondly, we must be ever ready to embrace the living Word of God for the moment we are in (Heb 4:12). His always active Truth, His ever fresh "say so", His present tense revelation must be heeded in order to remain free from the burdensome and ill-fitting, fallen voices of the world. Only when we put the government of our lives upon His shoulders do we discover our options for discerningly walking at rest in a chaotic and turbulent realm. (The self-defining and self-determining are never at rest.)

It is critical that we come to settle down and find our home in the perfect love of God (Heb 4:13). Behind the "eyes" of the all-knowing God beats the heart of a loving and gracious Priest. He sees all, misses nothing... yet perfectly and relentlessly loves us. An immersive rest in such deathless love casts out of us the fear that keeps us so self-absorbed (I Jo 4:18). There is no rest in our excuses, our rationalizations, our blame. (The fearful one is never at rest.)

Finally, we must never forget to treasure Christ's awareness of our humanity (Heb 4:15,16). Behind those eyes, within that heart we find a sympathetic and compassionate friend (Heb 2:17-18). One Who is not ashamed to call us "brother" (Heb 2:11). Because He functioned on earth as a fully human person, He is not unaware of the physiological, psychological, and spiritual realities of depending upon God in a fallen world. Each and every one of His spirit, soul, and body needs below were calls to derive what He needed from His Father above. (The self-sufficient are never at rest.)

Is God's rest a far-off promise to you, or, a present tense part of your experience? As we learn to operate from His full and perfect salvation, His liberating Truth, His perfecting love, His compassionate acceptance, "today" becomes the day of our rest (Heb 4:7). "Today"... the day you and I are in!

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Greetings

It is early January as I write this newsletter. That means a couple of things: 1) Christmas and New Year holidays are gone; 2) it's probably quite a bit warmer where I am writing this than you are reading it, and 3) we've recently compiled year end financial reports.

I am very delighted for number one, grateful (but not gloating) for number two, and humbly amazed at number three. This is nothing new - I like my quiet space, love the warm weather, and am perennially astounded when I sit down and realize again the goodness of God to supply our every need.

We are into our fourth decade of this ministry, simply trusting His directive to us from day one - "Do not do your own 'PR' (public relations) and do not ask for funding (no fees or costs for anything - I will supply all your needs according to My riches.)" (Phil 4:19) And once again, a calendar year full of ministry opportunities and all our fixed costs covered.

Why tell you this? First and foremost, to give God the glory - He is trustworthy and sufficient for His every directive. His Word is never without His miraculous power. Then, to thank you. OIC is no isolated, solo mission or ministry. Thank you.... for being "His riches" to us!

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

1-2 1st Baptist Sebring, FL (Deacons & Staff)
6,13,20,27 1st Baptist Alachua, FL (386-462-1337)
8 Alachua Study
22 Ocala Study

25-27

* * **2022 Florida Retreat** * *

MARCH 10-13

Grace Life, Baton Rouge, LA
(225-769-8844)

APRIL 22-24

Binghamton, NY (607-239-5006)

MAY 15-18

Pope Dr. Baptist, Anderson, SC
(864-226-1789)

↓ 2022 Florida Retreat ↓

February 25-27 Alachua, Florida

\$50 deposit (per person) due by

January 25, 2022

\$320 - couple

\$270 - single (1 per room)

\$165 - single (2 per room)

\$50 - conference fee and Saturday dinner

\$30 - conference fee only

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