

## TODAY: ENTER HIS REST

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### Hebrews 3

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.' So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

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There are many things that we only have minimal control over really, if you think about it. We can do all the right things but seemingly be failing at what we are trying to do. You can try and bring about a harmonious atmosphere around the place where you dwell or work. You can be as loving and forgiving to those in your life, such as with your family, friends, acquaintances, or fellow workers. You can be a positive person in your daily travels, smiling and saying pleasant things to those you encounter throughout your day, yet still be met with opposition and even contempt. Have you ever seen someone you know and as you approach them you happily greet them but are given a less than enthusiastic response? "Oh hey Joe, glad to see you, how

you doing?" "Oh hi" they respond, making you wonder if they'd hope you'd just go away. What is going on here? Why doesn't everyone just try and get along? Why don't other people realize that this world, our country, and our community would be so much better if we all just put forth a little effort to get along? While we could justify our actions or someone else's actions based on the current state of affairs in this world, or in our country, or in our community, what really is at issue goes deeper than that. Some of the poorest people, living in the most volatile situations can be some of the happiest people, and some of the most well-off people who had been raised in a protective layer of fortune (fortune being the opposite of misfortune) and they can be some of the most miserable and unfriendly people you'll ever meet. Each person, though, regardless of how they've been raised and have lived, whether they realize it or not, has a worldview. That is, they live according to how they see the world, how they fit into that picture, and also in what they consider to be objective truths. What that basically means is, how does one think the world SHOULD operate, how individuals SHOULD behave, and then how that person responds to situations and others, with regards to their expectations. But what I found in my struggling to get along as a person in this crazy world, and then even as a Christian, trying to do the right thing, to do what I believed God wanted me to do, is that it wasn't my problem to change the world, myself, or anyone else. What I came to find out was what truly has set me free. Here it is as a teaser to what it all means. Jesus said two things that tie in perfectly with our passage of Scripture for today, to where we can enter into God's perfect rest. I'm not saying that I don't have good days and then bad days, or that you won't, or that there won't be times of confusion, discouragement, or frustration. But, in the two things that Jesus said, it has helped me and can help anyone to truly find the rest that you're looking for, and it doesn't require you to master meditation, or climb a high and great mountain, or for you to have to work on it a whole lifetime to achieve. Here it is. Jesus said, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) The second thing Jesus said was this, "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (John 8:36) Jesus IS the answer to our every need and the Way to where we are intended to be going.

How we respond or react to life, with all of its many challenges all depends on a persons foundational principles. But this foundational principle is not just a philosophy. What is our role in all of this? If one believes that everything is just a bunch of random stuff that happens and that we are all just autonomous beings with no accountability, as we all have just evolved out of a primordial batch of soup that somehow just happened to be, then we're going to see, as we do to some extent in our world today, the byproduct of that type of philosophy. Yet as we know, there are countless opinions of the

people of this world as to what this all means, what is life about, what is our responsibility in all of this. To those who ascribe themselves as accountable to no one, you can certainly recognize them in their daily actions. They just do whatever pleases themselves, without any regard to how they affect other people. There are plenty of folks who play the karma game, trying to keep a positive balance to their actions as to how it affects other people, just trying to do just enough of the good to outweigh the bad. Another type of person will work on their own inner peace, towards the zen state, the oneness of the universe but then have no inclination to being accountable to a personal God. Then there are those who believe in their heart that God will judge them one day, but they just choose to believe that God is love and mercy and that surely He won't hold them accountable for their actions. After all, one may say, I can't help it that I've been born with a sin nature. I can't help it that I am this way. I was created this way. I've tried to be all that others have expected of me and I just can't do it! I've tried to be who the Bible tells me I should be, loving my neighbor and forgiving others. I just can't do it! That's right! I can't do it, you can't do it, no one can do it. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6) It is in Christ alone to where we can find the rest and place to where God is pointing us. Jesus, in His ministry on earth, was pointing to God. Now, God, through the working of the Holy Spirit, is pointing us to Jesus! The Holy Bible from beginning to end points us in His direction.

Praise God Almighty! Most certainly you can't do it and I can't do it either. Our answer to what it all means is found in our passage of Scripture for today. And really, our answer to all of what it means in this life is found in the first verse of **Hebrews 3**. "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, **consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.**" There's Christ Jesus and then there is us with a heavenly calling. Without a proper "considering" of Jesus, we will always remain frustrated and be struggling to make it to where we are going.

There's a meme on the internet that says something like, "God commands us to worship Him or burn in hell", like God is some tyrant, narcissist that just wants to be worshipped. The Word of God shows that to be a very flawed view of God. Through the purpose of God through Christ, we WERE created to be in Christ for all of eternity. That is where God deserves the praise and the glory! Isaiah did though speak of how we were created for God's glory, "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him." (Isaiah 43:7) Ah! There you go, you may say. The ego-driven god who just created us for his glory! But wait, there's more!

The secret to our entering God's rest, as this chapter speaks of, is this: The apostle Paul explained it in **1 Corinthians 1:30-31**, "But of [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." Jesus is our Wisdom, Jesus is our Righteousness, Jesus is our Sanctification, and Jesus is our Redemption! From beginning to end Jesus is our all in all. For us, it first starts with believing in WHO Jesus is. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) Yet our faith in Jesus is not a passive faith, in that we just BELIEVE in Jesus and then it all works itself out. The Apostle John clues us in to how it all begins, "But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who **believe in His name**." (**John 1:12**) It is as simple as this: if you reject God, He will reject you. It isn't all just about you. Once again, there's Christ Jesus and then there is us with a heavenly calling.

Jesus, was, and is, and always shall be the intended sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. The sins that each man, woman, and child has committed against God and His commandments. That is how when John the Baptist first saw Jesus approaching him, he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (**John 1:29**) The Old Testament sacrifices of the people of Israel, where the priest took the animals and sacrificed them on an altar and sprinkled the blood on the altar was just an image of what was to come—that is the perfect and acceptable sacrifice by God. Notice I didn't say the perfect and acceptable sacrifice to God. There is only one way that there could be a perfect and acceptable sacrifice, and that was if it was BY God. Only the Righteousness of God could redeem us from our sins against God. "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (**Isaiah 9:6**) There we have Jesus being declared to be the "Mighty God, Everlasting Father." "For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one." (**1 John 5:7**) God the Father, God the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit."

As Isaiah prophesied that "His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father", also called Him "**Prince of Peace**". Isaiah also prophesied of the birth of Jesus saying, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Isaiah prophesied that some 700 years before the birth of Christ. But God knew of His plan for our salvation before we were even born, if you can imagine that. King David knew of God's eternal and omniscient

plan when he said in **Psalm 139:13-16**, "For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them." There are many, many more Scriptures that could be used to explain and corroborate in the fact that God is not just some ego-driven God that just wants us to worship Him. Even before God created the heavens and the earth and all that is on the earth, including Adam and Eve, that He placed in the garden of Eden, He knew that man, given a free will, would choose to sin against God. So, God already knew that He would have to provide a means of reconciling mankind back into a right relationship with Him and so He had planned for His only begotten Son, Jesus to take on the sins of the world through His death on a cross. The Israelites in the Old Testament didn't know fully how God would save them. They were told to "cling to God for He is their life, and the length of their days (**Deuteronomy 30:20**). Yet, in God's perfect time, God sent forth His Son Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice, to take away the sins of the world. "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (**Galatians 4:4-5**)

Today we don't just have a man such as Moses leading us to that promised land of eternal life, in heaven. Moses indeed was a great prophet and man of God, but even he fell short of making it to the promised land because of his sin against God in striking the rock for water, with many witnesses, and therefore had dishonored God in front of others because God had told Him to speak to the rock to bring forth water. We do not have a high priest interceding for us who is sinful as we are. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." (**Hebrews 4:15**) We have Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the Living God, as the Apostle Peter described Him (**Matthew 16:16**) as our great High Priest who takes away our sins. This is the same Jesus, the Son of God, that the Apostle John spoke of in the opening words of his gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." (**John 1:1-3**) In verse 14 he says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Jesus is our Wisdom from God and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption. Jesus is our Prince of Peace! Does that take the weight off of anybody? Jesus is bearing the load, not you or me!

Jesus confirms that by saying, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:29) When we believe on Jesus and receive Him, by receiving the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, He then begins working in us His Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, and His Peace! Really, all of the fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)

Listen to what the Apostle Paul says in **Ephesians 1:11-12**, "In Him [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory." We also, "have obtained an inheritance"! Just as the Israelites were being led to the Promised Land, we too are being led to an eternal Promised Land where we will obtain an inheritance. What might that be? "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be **glorified together.**" (Romans 8:16-17) Joint heirs with Jesus, which means inheriting the kingdom of God. There is but one catch. Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5) One must be "born again" as Jesus put it, which means when we believe that Jesus is the Christ, that is, the Savior that God sent to die on a cross for our sins, and that He rose from the grave on the third day, conquering death—after all, God can not be held down or defeated by death, and then we too will raise from the grave, overcoming death and inherit eternal life in His kingdom! We are led by the Holy Spirit to believe on Christ and then to receive the Holy Spirit in our hearts who then does the regenerative work in us, making us a new creation in Christ, and He begins making us into the image of Christ, where He works in us His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and then His Redemption.

"Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion...Therefore I was angry with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways.' So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ **if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end**, while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.""

We find belief tied to obedience or unbelief with rebellion. God's rest that the author of Hebrews is talking about is in receiving Christ, and then allowing Him to work in us. "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." (**Philippians 2:13**) To enter into God's perfect rest, the Apostle Paul gives us the key to this marvelous mystery, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (**Galatians 2:20**) Obviously Paul wasn't saying that he was literally crucified as Jesus was. Paul was saying that we should, "reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (**Romans 6:11**)

Entering God's rest, which really means that every day is the day of Sabbath for us, as we believe on Christ, we believe His promise that "He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." (**Philippians 1:6**) This IS God's eternal plan, from beginning to end, as He is the "Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (**Revelation 1:8**) By faith we are believing on Christ as our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification, and our Redemption! Let Him who glories, glory in the Lord! That is why God IS worthy of our praise, God is worthy of all glory! Because He is our God! "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (**Hebrews 12:1-2**) God has done all the work in creating the heavens and the earth, creating us and giving us the breath of life. He has given us the Way to His eternal salvation in Christ so that we can inherit His eternal kingdom! It is now up to us to give Him the praise, glory, and honor that is due Him and trust that He has gotten us this far and He alone can get us to where He has planned for us. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you [or plans that I have for you], says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." (**Jeremiah 29:11**)

We cannot control the free will of others. We can't save anyone, we can't deliver anyone from sin or their demons. We can't heal anyone, either mentally, physically, or spiritually. We can't even do that for ourselves. But Jesus can! We are not the ones in charge of all this. God is the one who has the plan from beginning to end. We just have to put our trust in Him. As the Apostle Paul said, "For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day." (**2 Timothy 1:12**) When we fully commit ourselves to Christ, that is, as you may have heard

before, surrendering ourselves to Christ, and let Him be the Lord of our lives, letting him work in us His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and then Redemption, we find as Paul did, that the suffering on this earth remains, but the peace of God that surpasses all understanding works in us to where we can, even now enter into His promised rest. It is truly, as you may have heard it explained, a relationship with God. We are God's children and He is leading us to His eternal promised land, holding our hand all the way. When we run away from Him, out of His grasp, we set ourselves up for harm and other bad things. When we keep Jesus as our goal and purpose, He will get us there as intended. Jesus is **always** to be our focus, our goal and one day His eternal kingdom will be our reward! Amen.

Heavenly Father,  
I confess that I have sinned against You.  
I ask that You forgive me of my sins.  
I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins,  
I confess with my mouth that Jesus is my Lord,  
and I believe in my heart that You raised Jesus from the dead,  
so that I can have forgiveness of sins,  
and be reconciled to You, God, My Father.  
I now commit to You, that I will repent of my sins,  
and live in the newness of life,  
being led by Your Holy Spirit,  
all this I pray, in Christ Jesus, my Savior and Lord. Thank You Lord!