

“God Gives Rest”

The Sermon God Wrote #11

Hebrews 4:1-11

November 22, 2015

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 4:1-11

Introduction

1. Mankind has a dysfunctional relationship with work: workaholism or laziness
2. Workaholic Stats
 - a. In 2011, Reuters ranked the U.S. as the 5th most workaholic country in the world: 1) Japan, 2) Australia, 3) South Africa, 4) South Korea
 - b. 2014 Harris poll:
 - i. 75% of Americans don't use all their vacation days
 - ii. 15% percent took no vacation days at all
 - iii. 50% of people who did take vacation worked on their vacation
 - iv. 1970-2006 avg. hours per year +200
 - c. For those who are severe workaholics
 - i. Divorce rate is over almost 4x higher
 - ii. Perceive time differently than others do
 - iii. When they do take vacation, far more likely to get sick
3. Laziness Stats
 - a. In 2010, the Daily Beast ran a survey and found that the U.S. was the 1st place winner in the laziest country award
 - i. TV watching per day, Calories consumed per day, Internet usage per day, and likeliness to play sports with free time
 - b. In 2011, the Center for Disease Control said that 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese. Multiple factors, but exercise is one of them
4. War between two camps.
 - a. Linton Weeks, *Lazy in America* (2011, NPR): The battle over how we spend our leisure time [has] turned into an all-out war between two extreme camps — those who use it and those who snooze through it. The divisiveness continues today. Some Americans exercise religiously; others grow more obese. Some go to night schools; others are diverted by video games. Some believe that computers and the Internet have made us lazier; others aver that technology has increased our productivity.
5. Our relationship with work has been messed up since the beginning
 - a. Genesis 1:28 — “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”
 - b. Genesis 3:17-19 — ¹⁷And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of

it all the days of your life; ¹⁸thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

6. Both workaholism & laziness are our man-made attempts to deal with the curse

Big Idea: One of the great benefits, outworkings of the gospel is the promise of rest. God is a God of rest, and he shares his rest with those who are united to Him by faith.

I. CREATION REST | vs. 3-4

1. Hebrews 4:3-4 — ³For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, “As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest,’ ” although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.”
2. Genesis 2:1-3 — ¹Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

II. SABBATH REST | vs. 9-10

1. New Testament letters are strangely silent on the Sabbath
 - a. 59/61 references in the Gospels & Acts, because they are stories
 - b. 2 verses in the rest of the NT
2. Hebrews 4:9-10 — Hebrews 4:9-10 — ⁹So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.
3. What is the Sabbath?
 - a. Gift | Exodus 20:8-11
 - b. Sign | Exodus 31:12-13
 - c. Rest + Worship

III. PROMISED LAND REST | vs. 5-8

1. Hebrews 4:5-8 — ⁵And again in this passage he said, “They shall not enter my rest.” ⁶Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, ⁷again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” ⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on.

2. Peter O'Brien — Our author thus acknowledges that the Old Testament, rightly understood, announces the temporary character of the rest in Canaan, and looks forward to a future, final rest of God.

IV. GOSPEL REST | vs. 1-2

1. Hebrews 4:1-2 — ¹Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. ²For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.

Jesus & the Sabbath

Mark 2:23-28 — ²³One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴And the Pharisees were saying to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ²⁵And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: ²⁶how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?” ²⁷And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.

1. Sabbath is a gift *for* man
2. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath
 - a. Matthew 11:28-30 — ²⁸Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
 - b. Colossians 2:16-17 — ¹⁶Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.
3. This rest comes through faith, not through works
 - a. Hebrews 4:2 — For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.
 - b. Hebrews 4:9-10 — ⁹So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

V. ETERNAL REST | vs. 11

Hebrews 4:11 — ¹¹Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

- Revelation 14:13 — ¹³And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”
- Randy Alcorn — Regular rest will be part of the life to come in the new universe...Part of our inability to appreciate Heaven as a place of rest relates to our failure to enter into a weekly day of rest now. By rarely turning attention from our responsibilities, we fail to anticipate our coming deliverance from the Curse to a full rest.

Conclusion

How is God inviting you to rest today?

- Charles Spurgeon — Do not tell me that there is no rest for us till we get to heaven. We who have believed in Jesus enter into rest even now. Why should we not do so? Our salvation is complete. The robe of righteousness in which we are clad is finished. The atonement for our sins is fully made. We are reconciled to God, beloved of the Father, preserved by his grace, and supplied by his providence with all that we need. We carry all our burdens to him and leave them at his feet. We spend our lives in his service, and we find his ways to be ways of pleasantness, and his paths to be paths of peace. Oh, yes, we have found rest unto our souls!

