Sermon Notes for November 29, 2015

The Promise of Rest

Hebrews 4:1-11

Introduction

If you have ever felt like life is too busy, you are not alone.

The percentage of Americans who say they:

- Need more fun: 68
- Need a long vacation: 67
- Often feel stressed: 66
- Feel time is crunched: 60
- Want less work, more play: 51
- Feel pressured to succeed: 49
- Feel overwhelmed: 48

But the problem runs deeper that just learning better time management skills. For many the problem is a restless heart.

“Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee.” Augustine

I. The Promise of Rest remains.

The doorway to a relationship with God is still open, but now is the time to enter it. One day that door will close and it will be too late.

He points to the Israelites as an example of those who refused to enter God’s rest in the Promised Land.

The land of Canaan was a type of the rest that is to come.

- Freedom from slavery.
- Freedom from the hardship of pilgrimage and hostility.
- Freedom from the instability of life lived in the desert, in contrast to the blessings of life lived in the presence of God.

They refused to enter God’s rest and their opportunity was lost – forever.

We are pilgrims on a journey toward a heavenly goal and there is nothing we should fear more than to fall short of it.
II. The Promise of Rest is both present and future.

“We who have believed enter that rest.”

Which rest?

- The Promised Land
- The Sabbath
- The future Sabbath-rest (Heaven).

“Anyone attending a Sabbath evening service in the synagogue would have heard the call to worship from Psalm 95:7-11 followed immediately by the celebration of God’s Sabbath rest in Genesis 2:1-3.” William Lane

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.”

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And he blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.” Genesis 1:31, 2:2-3

The Sabbath or the Lord’s Day is meant to be a picture of the rest that is to come. There is a day coming when we will cease from our toil and labor and we will worship God forever.

“Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. ‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’” Revelation 7:15-17

III. We enter God’s rest by faith.

Hearing is not the same as believing.

They heard the gospel but it was of no value to them because they did not combine it with faith.

Believing God is more than just knowing about God.

Biblical faith is trusting God with our whole life. It is acting upon the promises he has given.

To trust in Christ is to cease from trying to earn our salvation by our own works and instead we rest in the finished work of Christ who died for us.

“Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.”
Conclusion

Jesus is the door through which we enter God’s rest.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

Come to Christ today!