

“Boy! Am I Tired!”—Hebrews 4:9-11

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “Boy! Am I Tired!”, is Hebrews 4:9-11 → *There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

“Boy! Am I Tired!” How many times have you said that to yourself or someone else at the end of the day? If one were to take inventory of the amount of physical activity, the dynamics involved with relationships and the mental stimulation through conversations, reading, entertainment and emotional turmoil in a given day, it’s no wonder a person feels tired and emotionally drained. Hopefully, at the end of the day a person can lay down and get the needed rest to start all over again the next day.

Yet, just laying down in bed at the end of the day does not guarantee that you get rest. Why? We all know that it is impossible to shut off the mind! How does one stop worrying when trying to get to sleep? How do you quit working even while you’re sleeping? How does a person let go of emotional turmoil,

much of which keeps haunting him from years ago? How can you find rest for your soul which feels the guilt of your sins, even if you live like they don't exist? Besides, even if you fall asleep easily you don't have control over your dreams! Boy! I'm tired just thinking about the struggle with getting some rest!

God understands this need for rest. In fact, Genesis 2:2 says that *on the seventh day God finished His work of creating everything, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done. God rested . . . from all His work that He had done?* Why would God need to rest? After all, He is Almighty! His rest was not for Himself. Rather, His *Sabbath rest* was put into place for you as a way to find rest for your soul which is under attack daily.

Verse 9 of our text says there still *remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.* What *Sabbath rest*? I thought Jesus came as *lord of the Sabbath* (cf. Matthew 12:8), fulfilling those ceremonial laws (cf. Colossians 2:16-17) so that we are freed to worship the LORD on any day, as well as freed up from following all those work restrictions of the Old Testament ceremonial law. How can there still remain *a Sabbath rest* for Christians? Besides, haven't we determined that we don't even know what day is the Sabbath Day since we don't know what day it was upon which Yahweh started creation?

The *Sabbath rest* goes much deeper than working so hard to keep some Sabbath law. Verse 10 goes on to say: *Whoever has entered God's rest has*

also rested from his works. It's about entering **God's** rest.

Entering **God's** rest is important because there is another perspective from which you may say: "Boy! Am I tired!" It happens when you find yourself struggling with spiritual battles as satan attacks and tempts you. It happens when you have to deal with the guilt of your sin, never being able to perfectly meet up to God's laws. It happens as you strive to resist the devil's temptations to discredit God's love and forgiveness for you. You find yourself spiritually tired, drained and worn out. Even fighting God in rebellion, refusing to obey His Word and Will for your life with wear on you. It is no life of peace.

This is why the warning is given in verse 11 of our text: *Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.* What is the *disobedience* to which the writer of Hebrews is referring? Around 1446 BC Yahweh delivered His people out of slavery to Egypt for the purpose of giving them the land He had promised their forefathers, in which they would live as His special people. When they came to borders of the Promised Land they disobeyed Yahweh when He told them to enter it as He would give it to them. In other words, they refused to enter into that "rest" He had in store for them in the Promised Land. This disobedience cause much death amongst the people during a forty year wilderness journey. Thus, the warning in our text: *Let us therefore strive to*

enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Because the presence of sin, the devil and the world can make you spiritually “restless,” you can easily fall into the same disobedience of failing to follow God’s Word and Will for your life. Then “restlessness” sets in when you experience a guilty conscience because of such disobedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit through God’s Word as Hebrews 4:12 says: *The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit . . . and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* The Word of God reveals your sinful heart. This conviction comes to lead you to enter *God’s rest* by confessing your sins and trusting in His forgiveness for you in the Person & Work of Jesus, His Son!

Spiritual “restlessness” will also accompany a works-righteous life. This is the idea that you can be a good enough person so that God will like you, forgive you and let you into heaven. Many people view their work of belonging to a church, being a “nice” person, following some spiritual rituals, paying their church “dues” while refusing to enter *God’s rest* by partaking of the Word and Sacrament in worship with others regularly, and so forth, as that which makes them “worthy” of heaven. This will lead to spiritual “restlessness”—if not now then on Judgment Day—because you will never know if you’ve done enough to make your salvation happen.

God's rest has to do with trust in the One Who has obtained His rest for you. It's about Jesus. He has kept God's Law for you perfectly as your great *high priest!* He is able to *sympathize with your weaknesses* because *in every respect He was tempted as you are, yet without sin.* (cf. Hebrews 4:15) Entering *God's rest* is simply coming to Him and thanking Him for doing it all for you!

Jesus gives the invite in Matthew 11:28-30 → *Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.* Why is His yoke . . . easy, and His burden . . . light? Because He took all the burden and guilt of your sin upon Himself so that you can rest assured that you are forgiven and saved eternally! Such forgiveness brings rest to the spiritually tired and weary soul!! *Sabbath rest for the people of God is Jesus!!*

Thus, our worship today is not simply following a mandate of "going to church" in obedience to the 3rd Commandment: *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.* (cf. Exodus 20:8) Rather, it is about resting in the forgiveness of sins as you hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ read and applied in the worship service. It is about resting in the forgiven of sins as your sins are forgiven through Confession & Absolution and the Lord's Supper in the worship service. It is about resting from your works as the Holy Spirit works God's work

in and through You! The need for this forgiveness brings you to worship where, as Philippians 2:12-13 says, *you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, **for it is God Who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*** God does His work in you as He brings you to His rest in **Christ Jesus!**

After resting in God's grace and forgiveness in this place we may go home saying, "Boy! Am I Tired!" But it won't be because of the struggles with the power of sin and guilt. It won't be because of the struggles of feeling weary and burdened trying to keep God's laws perfectly. Rather, it should be because the rest you've received here has brought such relief from the burdens of sin lifted and the empowering of the Holy Spirit that you are relaxed and at peace. You have entered *God's rest!* Amen.

As we enter *God's rest* now while looking forward to entering His eternal rest on the Last Day, Hebrews 4:14 & 16 tells us:

Since then we have a great high priest

Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God,

let us hold fast our confession . . .

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace,

that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Amen