

True Rest for God's People

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Hebrews 3:7-4:13
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Key Theme: Those who enter God's rest pay careful attention to His Word and respond with faith and obedience.

I. Listen to His voice with obedient, soft hearts

II. We enter God's rest by faith

III. Respond with belief to the living Word

Questions for Discussion/Application:

- Consider taking time to read Hebrews 3:7-4:13 out loud. What initial insights or observations of the text do you have?
- This passage warns us to not harden our hearts to the Lord. It warns us to not follow the bad example of the Israelites, wandering in the desert who "failed to enter God's promised rest due to their disobedience and unbelief (ESV Study Bible)." From your Old Testament Bible reading, what are some of the ways you recall that the wilderness wanderers hardened their hearts of the Lord?
- In what ways can we at times harden our hearts to the Lord?
- The author calls us to be on guard against "the deceitfulness of sin (verse 13)." How was the deceitfulness of sin at play in the sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in the Garden? What other examples can you think of where a biblical character was hardened by sin's deceitfulness? In what ways can we as believers be vulnerable, even in subtle ways, to the deception of sin?
- What does it mean practically for us to "exhort one another every day" that we might not be "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin"? In other words, how can we be a means of God's grace in one another's lives to not follow the path of unbelief and hardening our hearts to the Lord?
- A major theme in the passage, and the sermon on Sunday, was rest. What is "the rest" the wilderness wanderers who hardened their hearts to the Lord were unable to receive (see Numbers 14:30, Deut. 2:14)?

- How would you describe the rest that that God calls us to pursue and strive after (See Heb. 4:11)?
- Re-read the three points Jeremy shared (see Sermon Recap above). What can we do practically to grow in these ways? In other words, what kinds of steps might we take to grow in responding to God's Word with believing, obedient, soft hearts?
- We have all sinned, at times, by yielding to unbelief. Sin at times, has deceived us all. We all, in various ways, have at times hardened our hearts to the Lord and the Spirit's conviction. How does remembering the gospel encourage us and strengthen us, even as we consider our own failures in these ways?
- Consider taking time to pray, that God would help us to be faithful to "exhort one another every day" to trust in the Lord and to obey Him. Pray also that God would help us to foster in our own lives believing, obedient, soft hearts.

Wisdom and insight from the ESV Study Bible:

Heb. 3:14 For we have come to share in Christ. The evidence of the Christian truly partaking of Christ's salvation involves endurance to the end. The condition (if indeed) has been understood in various ways. Some have argued that the condition ("if") indicates that true Christians can lose their salvation. Scripture is clear, however, that true believers cannot lose their salvation, as evidenced, e.g., by John 10:27–29 ("no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand"), Eph. 1:4 ("he chose us in him before the foundation of the world"), and many other Scripture passages (e.g., John 6:39–40; Rom. 8:35, 38–39; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:3–5). Hebrews 3:14 should be understood in connection with v. 13, as is indicated by the linking word "for" (Gk. *gar*). That is, v. 14 is linked to the exhortation not to become hardened (in unbelief and sin). Thus the logic of the argument is that those who are hardened or who become hardened (v. 13) give outward evidence that they are not (and never have been) genuine believers who "share in Christ," because genuine believers do not become hardened; instead they persevere—that is, they hold on to their original confidence firm to the end. Of course, Scripture also encourages believers to pray for and seek to bring back any who have fallen away (James 5:20; 1 John 5:16), in the hope that they will turn back. Still, this passage should be viewed as a sober warning—intended as a means that God uses to keep Christians resolved in faith and obedient until the end. The ongoing experience of perseverance results in "confidence" and assurance that one does in fact "share in Christ." This verse then provides a grave warning to everyone who claims to be saved—that is, to examine oneself carefully to be sure that one is in fact a genuine believer, because if there is no evidence of perseverance in faith and obedience, then there is real reason to doubt that such a person has ever been saved.