

Rest of the Righteous

Week 1 - Jesus is our Rest and We Live by God's Provision

Hebrews 4:14-16 and Matthew 4:1-4

Purpose: God's People will Find Rest in Living Obediently – True Rest is in Jesus

Series Graphic (SLIDE 1)

Opening Idea

Depleting Exhaustion

Have you ever worked so hard, for a prolonged period, and with a burden and worry that it seems impossible to really rest during the work and recover when the work is over? Do you feel that kind of exhaustion now? You really haven't exerted yourself physically, yet you can't seem to find rest. You've gone to the special places – mountains, beaches, woods, rivers, impressive spectacles, quiet places, and beyond. Yet, you didn't find rest there. Your mind won't quiet down. Your thoughts won't stop. Your burden is heavy. Maybe you are struggling with something spiritually and it is impacting your whole life? Maybe there is an aspect of your life that you have tried to maintain, but it is something that God doesn't approve of and has commanded you to stop. Yet, you keep doing it. Maybe you have tried laying it down and stopping, but you return to it and the grief and shame are heavy. What can you do?

Let's look for the next few weeks at God's word to find relief and rest. We will look at two passages to guide us through this. Hebrews 4 and Matthew 4 will share God's direction to find rest.

Read

Hebrews 4:14-16 ESV (SLIDE 2)

14 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. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 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.

Notes on Hebrews 4:14-16

An Eternal High Priest (Hebrews 4:14)

The author of Hebrews is writing about Jesus being better. This is a general statement that he will prove throughout the book of Hebrews. The author makes several statements here that are important to understand. First, the context of this passage is that God's people are to rest. The first three chapters of Hebrews establish Jesus's greatness. In Chapter three, the author declares

that Moses was great, but Jesus is greater! The Israelites were brought out of captivity (Egypt) to take possession of the land promised to them through Abraham. Many of the Israelites disobeyed and did not take possession of the land God was giving them. God caused them to wander the desert for 40 years so that none of the disobedient people would take possession and live in the Promised Land. The author writes that they would not find rest because they were disobedient. The desert isn't unrest, and the Promised Land isn't rest. Abiding with God through obedience is the place of rest for God's people. Joshua and Caleb, and their families, wandered the desert. The offspring of the disobedient people were also wandering the desert. Joshua, Caleb, their families, and the offspring will take possession of the Promised Land. The people who settled and lived in the land promised to the Israelites will not experience peace or rest in that land. Rest is living in abiding obedience with God! When God's people do not obey and experience unrest, then God's people have hope. They can turn to the "Great High Priest" and confess. They will receive forgiveness and find rest. There are descriptors concerning Jesus in this verse that are important. One, Jesus is The High Priest. He is the only one capable of entering into God's presence and Jesus intercedes for His people. Two, Jesus is the Great High Priest. There have been many priests who have served God and served God's people. There have been fewer High Priests. Some of the High Priests served well. Some did not serve well and left people at risk of God's wrath. Of all the High Priests, only one is perfect and serves perfectly. This one High Priest is Jesus and He is the Great High Priest who never fails and provides God's people rest. Three, Jesus is the High Priest who passed through the heavens. This descriptor reveals that Jesus is not a High Priest whose service to God and His people will end upon His death. He is also not a high priest who is contained to a geographical location. Jesus is a High Priest who dwells with God in Heaven (He is God), He is continuously mindful of all His people need, and He will serve perfectly with Honor. Finally, The Great High Priest is God, the Son. Jesus Christ brings His people into God's presence, intercedes for them, and as God is the only one truly qualified to serve as High Priest. The Son of God created a new covenant with His people through His blood. The Son of God defeated death and gave His people life.

A Compassionate Advocate (Hebrews 4:15)

The Hebrew author continues describing the Great Heavenly High Priest in ways that are complex. Jesus, being in Heaven, isn't distant and removed with little to no care for His people. Jesus is described in verse fifteen as a High Priest who is sympathetic and cares for His people. His people see something hopeful in Jesus because He was tempted, like we are. He suffered in this temptation. Yet, God's people see a High Priest who endured what we suffer but did not fail. God's people have a compassionate advocate who hears their confession and forgives.

Draw Near and Find Help (Hebrews 4:16)

The Hebrew author tells the reader to turn to Jesus for help. Since Jesus is the Great High Priest who has been tempted like they have been tempted and who is perfect and compassionate, they can turn to Him when they have disobeyed and found themselves in chaos and unrest. This is an

aspect of God's Grace. Turning to Jesus and confessing to Him will put them in a place to receive forgiveness and help in a moment when they need it. Jesus' perfection doesn't mean that He will reject His people who turn to Him. It means that they will experience God's Grace in a way to help them recover, grow in gratitude, and find rest. Help isn't to come to terms with unrest and be ok. Being ok with our disobedience will not bring rest. Just as Jesus was obedient, God's people are to also be obedient. Obedience keeps us close to God and aware of His presence and work. That is the place of rest.

Let's now look at the Temptation of Christ to see what Godly Obedience and Rest look like and how Jesus was shown to be the atoning sacrifice and the Great Heavenly High Priest.

Matthew 4:1-14 ESV (SLIDE 3)

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written,

“Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

Notes on Matthew 4:1-4

Jesus has been baptized and now the Holy Spirit leads Him from the baptism into the desert to be tempted by Satan. There are three temptations with three responses and three actions in the Matthew 4 and Luke 4 temptation account. For today's study, we will look at the first temptation: Turning stones into bread.

Turn these stones into bread (v. 3)

Jesus is fasting and experiences physical hunger. Satan addresses Jesus in an accusatory manner. This isn't necessarily questioning Jesus' deity but questioning His personhood. Craig Bloomberg, author and theologian, writes, "The first-class conditional clause, 'If you are the Son of God,' does not imply any doubt on the devil's part (cf. Jas 2:19). Rather, what is in doubt is what type of Son Jesus will be." 1 The context of fasting and being in the desert/wilderness reveals the reason for the temptation for food. Satan tempts Jesus to satisfy Jesus' hunger and provide Himself with bread. Jesus does not fail and provide Himself with bread. Making bread appear

¹ Craig Blomberg, [Matthew](#), vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 84.

from rocks would have been a demonstration of supernatural power, but Jesus would be disobedient and have sinned.

Jesus rejects the temptation in obedience and then gives scriptural citation to show His obedience. Jesus replies to Satan's question and temptation citing Deuteronomy 8:3. This is the account where God reminds the Israelites that God was active and purposeful during their desert wondering. God caused them to hunger and not be able to satisfy their hunger. Then, God provides. God gave them bread. They were to depend daily upon God to provide bread. It wasn't the bread that satisfied their hunger, but it was God. He spoke the bread into existence, and it is His word that God's people should rely upon. God told the Israelites in Deuteronomy 8:3 that man does not live only on bread, but people live on what God speaks. Jesus doesn't make bread appear; He trusts God to provide for Him. Jesus shows that it is not good for man to worship his stomach. Don't trust the bread, you should rely upon God.

God's People Find Rest in Living by God's Provision (SLIDE 4)

Our Hunger Causes Us to Worship God (SLIDE 5)

We Hunger and trust God to meet our needs

We purposefully worship God

Our hunger for food reminds us that we are to hunger for God

We Live Obediently Worshiping Him Alone (SLIDE 6)

We reject worshipping our stomachs

We receive God's provisions with Gratitude

God is our one focus of Worship

We Praise God as He Satisfies Our Needs (SLIDE 7)

Sing His Praises

Tell of His providing work

Give thanks and receive His gifts with thanksgiving

We Will Rest in God's Word and Provision – Jesus is Our Rest (SLIDE 8)

We Find Rest in Obedience in Trusting God for Provision

We Find Rest in Confessing our Sin of Trusting Ourselves and Receiving Forgiveness

Read

John 6:47-51 ESV (SLIDE 9)

47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Series Graphic (SLIDE 10)

Daily Readings

Rest of the Righteous – God Provides and Jesus is Our Rest

Day 1

John 6:47-51 ESV

47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Jesus uses the account of God providing bread (manna) for the Israelites in the wilderness to reveal to you that Jesus is God providing life for you. He is the bread of life. If you feast upon Jesus, you will find abundant eternal life. God did not withhold what you needed for life. He gave it and invites you to be satisfied. In Jesus is where you will find rest. Respond to Jesus’ words to feast and rest. Hearing and doing what Jesus says is how you feast. So, be obedient today and rest in Jesus!

Day 2

Exodus 16:21-30 ESV

21 Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted. 22 On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23 he said to them, “This is what the Lord has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.’” 24 So they laid it aside till the morning, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. 25 Moses said, “Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord; today you will not find it in the field. 26 Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none.”

27 On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. 28 And the Lord said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? 29 See! The Lord has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day.” 30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

This account of God providing manna and quail for the Israelites in the wilderness is a reminder and a revelation. The reminder is that God provides. God has provided in such a way that God’s people grow in their trust and reliance upon God. God commanded them to rest and provided bread so that they could rest. They just needed to trust Him. You see what God did in the wilderness to trust that He will provide for you today. He commands you to rest. Rest isn’t just doing nothing, but rest is peaceful abiding with God. The revelation is that when you obey you find rest and enjoy it. What do you need to obey in today? What has God called you to do that in not doing it is causing you unrest? Confess your sin to Jesus and receive forgiveness. Now, do what God is telling you. Jesus is your rest!

Day 3

Deuteronomy 8:1-3 (quoted by Jesus in Matthew 4:4) ESV

8 “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. 2 And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. 3 And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word[a] that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

God causes you to hunger! Be spiritually mindful to not satisfy your hunger by any means other than trusting God. God knows that you need food and other resources. He will not leave you starving. As His child, God gives and gives you good things. God has told you in His word that He provides for you. Let your physical hunger remind you to be spiritually hungry. Regularly ask God to provide for your hunger (spiritual and physical). Give thanks as God provides! There is rest for you as you obey and as your feast upon God’s words and God’s gifts. Jesus is the bread of life and your rest!

Day 4

Matthew 6:25-34 ESV

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?^[a] 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount that God provides. Anxiety in response to lacking resources can cause you to focus on the resource in need or to try to provide what you need by your own strength. Both of those are actions of worship. Jesus reminds you that you are more valuable and God will provide for you. Today, seek God and His kingdom first and the promise is that God will provide for you. Jesus is that provision and He is your rest. Rest in Jesus!

Day 5

1 Timothy 4:1-5 ESV

4 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, 2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, 3 who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

It is not food, drinks, or rituals that will bring you life and rest. Rest and life come from God. God has given things for your life and enjoyment. There are deceitful teachings that say to reject the things that God gives to be more spiritual, find deeper rest, and be morally superior. God tells you in this passage to receive it with thanksgiving and use spiritual wisdom gained from His word to discern how to receive it. You will experience spiritual exhaustion in disobedience, but there is rest in receiving what God gives with gratitude and a thankful heart. These are core aspects of the Christian. Thanksgiving is an aspect of rest. Rest in Jesus!