

**"Entering into God's Rest"**

**Hebrews 3:10**

**Introduction:** We live in a very high stress world. Last week there were many things which happened that caused the tensions to rise within our society. There was Charlottesville and then there was Barcelona Spain along with many other protests and uprisings. Then there is the situation with North Korea which seems to have cooled down for the time. Now there is talk of removing some of the memorial statues in Washington DC. There is a movement that is attempting to remove the reminders of the history of our nation. This should be of no surprise based upon 2 things.

1. Our nation has been abandon by God and the depravity of man is showing through. Evidence is found in Romans 1.
2. The world is moving toward the kingdom of the Anti-Christ.

Then besides all of this there are the trials and struggles which we face every day within our lives. All of this has many people, even believers restless and worried about what is going to happen. There are people who addicted to the news stations and so they fill their minds daily with what the news channels are pumping out.

As God's children we are not to worry. God has provided a rest for us and that rest is found in Jesus Christ. But there are many believers who never set foot in God's rest because of multiple reasons. This is what I want to speak on this morning.

Our message today is going to come from one verse in Hebrews 3 which we will get to in a moment.

**Context:**

This section is written to the Hebrew believers who were facing persecution. They needed to know about God's rest and so the writer takes them back to the days when Israel was in the wilderness.

God had brought them to Kadesh Barnia and it was there that they failed to trust Him to enter into the land of Canaan. Canaan was a picture of the rest which God has for each of us in Christ. There were giants in the land, there were battles to be fought and there were promises from God that He would protect them.

**Notice Hebrews 3:12-19**

They would not trust God and so they could not enter in.

**Application:**

There is a danger today for many believers who will not trust in God and so they have not entered into God's rest.

Now the reason Israel did not enter was due to unbelief but there was more.

**Notice Hebrews 3:10**

There is something in this verse that is very important for us to see. One of the reasons that Israel did not enter into the land of Canaan/the rest was because they did not know the "ways of God". This statement is so important for us to consider. This is also one of the reasons why many believers today are not able to enter into God's rest. They do not understand the ways of God and therefore they struggle to walk by faith. I want to take some time and consider the "ways of God" in the believer's life because I believe it will really help us to better understand the rest God offers.

I. **The Work of God in the Believer's Life**

There is something which we need to be reminded of on a regular bases or we will lose sight of this important Truth.

**Philippians 1:6**

*<sup>6</sup> Being confident of this very thing, that **he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:***

When we were saved God started a work in our lives and this work will continue until the very day that we leave this earth. Let me show you the goal.

**Romans 8:29a**

*<sup>29</sup> For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate **to be conformed to the image of his Son...***

Let me show you another verse that will brings this into focus a little better. It is seen in the words of John the Baptist.

**John 3:30**

*<sup>30</sup> **He must increase, but I must decrease.***

This is what it means to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ. There will be less of me and more of Jesus when people see me. Now that also includes something else which Jesus spoke of in the Gospel of John.

### John 15:1-2

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.*

<sup>2</sup> *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

So if we pull all of these thoughts together we can see that it is the Father's desire for us to be more like Jesus Christ and it is His mission to continually prune and shape our lives so that when others see us they will see Christ in us. This past week I was reading a book by Miles Stanford called "The Complete Green Letters" and he touched on something that made my mind go right to this text we are looking at in Hebrews.

In our Christian lives it is our desire to get under the sound teaching of God's Word and there we grow and develop. We join a church we surround ourselves with fellow believers and we find our own personal comfort zone. This is the place we have been looking for and now we are there. We attend service on a regular schedule, we hold an office in the church, and we seem to finally have arrived in the place where we desire to be.

Miles Stanford compares this place in the believer's life to a kernel on an ear of corn. We started out as a seed when we were saved. The seed produced a blade and the blade turned into a stalk. There the ears of corn began to develop and finally the process was complete. There we are on top of the stalk after many storms and days of intense heat. We are shiny and golden in color. We see ourselves as believers who have arrived. But we have forgotten one thing. **This is not God's goal for us.** Let us remember that He is still working and that is where Jesus Words come in from John 12.

### John 12:24

<sup>24</sup> *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

Here Jesus speaks of His own death on the cross but it also applies to our lives as believers. Jesus compares our lives to a "corn/grain of wheat". We start as the seed and as we grow we become the "corn of wheat". But the problem with the "grain of wheat" being on the stalk is that it will produce no fruit. The outer shell is beautiful to look at but it is hard. There is life inside but it is trapped. The only way for the life inside to get out

is for the hard exterior to be softened. That means it must be loosened from the ear and it must fall into the cold wet ground where it begins to soften and the exterior dissolves then there is the new life that comes forth.

Let me explain how that happens in our life. We find ourselves in a very comfortable surrounding just like the kernel on the ear. Then God permits something to happen in our life. It can be a loss of a job, it can be a sickness, and it can be something that has come upon us because of the actions of someone else. But the point is it is something that takes off of the ear/comfort zone. It is a situation we cannot control and if we do not understand the "ways of God" we begin to wander where God is in all of this. We can begin to question His love if we do not understand His ways. The point we need to understand is that He is removing us from the ear and He is planting us in the "soil" so that the NEW LIFE that is within us will begin to show forth.

We can see a picture of this in the parable of the wheat and the tares which Jesus explained in Matthew 13.

### **Matthew 13:36-38**

<sup>36</sup> *Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.*

<sup>37</sup> *He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;*

<sup>38</sup> *The field is the world; the **good seed are the children of the kingdom:***

Here in the words of our Lord we can see that as His children we are planted throughout the world. Let me show you what Paul said in 2 Corinthians.

### **2 Corinthians 4:7-11**

<sup>7</sup> *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

<sup>8</sup> *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;*

<sup>9</sup> *Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;*

<sup>10</sup> *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, **that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.***

<sup>11</sup> ***For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.***

The Apostle Paul made it clear that in our bodies there is a treasure. That is the life of Jesus Christ. Then he says they were troubled, persecuted, distressed, and cast down. All

of this was for the purpose of dying to self so that the life of Jesus Christ would be manifest through them.

**Application:**

This is exactly what God does in our lives. That which keeps Jesus from being seen in us is "self". Self is the hard outer coating that needs to be dissolved away. So God allows different situations to come into our lives and those situations become "graves" in which God buries us. These graves can be very painful. This is the planting of the seed. It is then that we are to die to self. That means we do not claim our rights but instead we see the situation as God's hand at work and we surrender to the grave. It is then that the life of Jesus Christ is seen in us. Let me show you the Words of Jesus again.

Let me show you something very significant.

**2 Corinthians 4:6-7**

*<sup>6</sup> For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

*<sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

Now let me take you to the Old Testament into the life of Gideon. God called Gideon to go against the Midianites with only 300 men. We need to notice how they conquered the Midianites.

**Judges 7:16-21**

*<sup>16</sup> And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.*

*<sup>17</sup> And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.*

*<sup>18</sup> When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.*

*<sup>19</sup> So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.*

*<sup>20</sup> And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.*

<sup>21</sup> *And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.*

**John 12:24**

<sup>24</sup> *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

**Conclusion:**

This is a Truth we need to keep at the front of our mind if we are going to enter God's rest. This work of God must be accepted and we must trust God as He works to manifest the life of Jesus Christ in us. We must be able to accept His work as Job did.

**Job 13:15a**

<sup>15</sup> *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:*