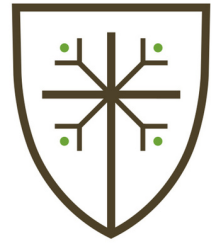


CLOSER ATTENTION

The Journey Home Through Hebrews



SERMON NOTES



September 6, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Finding Rest"

PREACHER

Rev. Brent Baker

TEXTS

Jeremiah 6:16-17

Hebrews 4:1-13

Matthew 11:28-30

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe that true rest is available to you? How do you rest currently?
2. Do you practice Sabbath? What are some habits you can establish to slow down and to make room for God's word?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

Our passages this morning highlight that true rest is available for the people of God, from the very foundation of the world. This is the type of rest that can carry the full weight of human striving, anxiety, and worry, compared to the temporary outlets outside of faith that can bear these weights only for a time.

The Pathology of Restlessness

There is a sleep deprivation epidemic in our world, and especially our culture, so much so that even children and youth are experiencing it. Screens, caffeine and alcohol, technology allowing work to be always "on," and stress are some of the causes, in addition to a culture that glorifies hyperactivity while viewing rest as weakness. We experience this restlessness physically in our bodies and psychologically in our minds, but we know that the consequences of a restless life are more than mere physical ailments. All things held constant, we will still feel restless if we cut our caffeine, practice meditation, breathe deeply, or take vacations. In fact, these healthy habits will never yield rest, and can instead frustrate and reveal deeper impacts of restlessness: hopelessness, joylessness, lack of confidence, and a lack of peace, perhaps even a critical inner voice you turn on others, and also a low-level sense of guilt, shame, or an unending sense of grief.

Despite this noise of restlessness, the writer of Hebrews insists that a cure is available. The author draws on Old Testament Israel, who knew the cure—God, who led them out of Egypt toward the promised land of rest—yet still grumbled, complained, and ignored the hope of rest. The author identifies that Israel succumbed to this restless pathology because they did not have faith that true rest existed. The prophets, including Jeremiah in our reading today, testify to this pattern. Faith in God and that he will fulfill his promises is the antidote to the restless epidemic.

The Pattern of Rest

Our New Testament reading insists that those who believe enter into the true rest from God. But what is faith? It is more than hearing the good news, and it's more than mental assent; it's a commitment, it's a person—Jesus. We cannot merely understand the facts of faith or agree that it is true; there must be a personal reliance that is countercultural to our culture of hyperactivity. Without such a commitment, you can get stuck in the cycle of being surrounded by the good gifts of God but never entering the rest; in other words, you may experience, or may currently be experiencing, circumstantial rest rather than true rest.

God established the pattern of true rest when he created the world and rested on the seventh day. Since rest is fundamental to God's work, we know it must be fundamental to us. To apply this, we must first acknowledge that the work we rest from is God's own work. In him we live and move and have our being, so the work is his. This work is Christ's finished work—his death, resurrection, and exaltation—that reordered the fractured decay and unrest caused by sin. Because of Jesus, we will have ultimate rest with God, so our present worries and cyclical frustration with restlessness will afflict us only for a time. We can have a taste of the eternal in our life rhythms by adopting a habit of Sabbath, just as many of our predecessors in faith have done for centuries. On the Sabbath day, make room to hear God's word and let it penetrate deep. God is the only one who can carry the weight of our mortality, and even if faith won't cure every wound or solve every problem, we can reorient our perspective and fix our eyes on Jesus and the hope of ultimate and eternal rest in him.