

# ENTERING GOD'S REST

*“Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it.”  
—HEBREWS 4:1*

It is possible to be reconciled to God, but left with a Christian life that doesn't work. The resources we have appear no different than our unbelieving neighbors, and the promises of God just don't seem to come to fruition. This is the way it was with the Hebrew people.

After 400 years of captivity in Egypt, the Israelites had witnessed the many miracles of God, which secured their release from Pharaoh, in order that God would bring them back to Canaan where He intended they should prosper. But safely on the other side of the Red Sea, they are now a free people, and instead of looking to God being equally capable of bringing them into Canaan, they look to themselves.

They sent out twelve spies, one from each tribe, to survey the land of Canaan. Ten of the twelve reported back that though the land was rich and fertile, there were powerful, fortified cities which would be impossible to overtake. It was only Joshua and Caleb who thought none of that mattered, because they believed God's promise of giving them the land. They took a vote, 10 to 2 in favour of turning back, and for 38 more years the Israelites wandered the desert. Every one of their fighting men over the age of 20 had died except for Joshua and Caleb, the only two to eventually enter Canaan.

During those 40 years of circling the desert, the Israelites were bogged down with a Gospel that didn't work. Why? Hebrews 4:2 tells us, “For

we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them because those who heard did not combine it with faith.” Hearing the word of God isn’t enough. Truth, in itself, won’t do very much for us. It may provide us with information, but does not provide us with transformation. What turns information into transformation and truth into life is combining the truths we know of God with faith in God.

More than two thousand years later, the writer of Hebrews looks back upon the Israelites, and warns us to be very careful we don’t have a Gospel that merely reconciles us to God, but that we live with faith in God’s involvement in our everyday lives. This is entering the “rest of God”, whereby we rest in His sufficiency, His strength and His presence. But entering God’s rest isn’t lying on a deck chair somewhere. It’s being like Joshua and Caleb, who in obedience to God, stepped out in faith, and entered the Promised Land.

***PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that I always combine my faith in You with my everyday responsibilities, and thereby enter into your rest. Thank You, Lord.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: Am I experiencing God’s rest through my faith in Him?***