

A Rest That Can't Be Found — Delivery Transcript

Hebrews 4:1–13 (CSB) • Wes Terry • Sunday, March 16, 2025 • *Neglecting Salvation*

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All right. Thanks to the team for leading us in worship this morning. If you have your Bibles, you can open them to Hebrews chapter 4. We're going to be in chapter 4, and if you want on the way there, you can put a thumb in Psalm chapter 95, Psalm 95, because our text today is going to use Psalm 95. And we've been going through a series on the warning passages in Hebrews, very challenging passages, but very appropriate for this time of year. And I'm hopeful the Lord will continue to use these warnings in the life of our church and as he has in my life individually.

This morning the warning is just as severe as all the others. But the invitation I think might be a little bit more attractive in that the invitation is to experience God's rest. And I don't know about you, but I would not deny God's rest were it to be freely offered. Rest is a good thing. It's one of the reasons I love the months of October, November, and December. One is the weather changes. October not so much, but November, December for sure but also deer season begins and October archery season begins and rifle season, the usually the opening weekend of November.

And I like that because I like to hunt and but that's not the real reason. I love that time of year it's because I usually spend way more time in Fisher County in the months of October, November, and December. And it seems like life just goes at a different speed when I'm in Fisher County. And I don't know why that is. Something about just being out there on the property. The phone cell service is shot, so I can't get any phone calls and the very hurried, chaotic schedule that I typically keep is exchanged for something much slower, easier, relaxing, and just rejuvenating and restorative.

And that's not just when I'm out on the field, it's some just hanging out with my family and Roby. And it's a good thing, and I love it, and that's I if you don't have something like that, I would commend it to you because the truth is we were simply not made to live under the pressure of constant stress. And y'all know that, right? If you've ever lived under stress for an

extent of extended period of time you know it begins to do damage to your soul, it does damage to your body, physical health consequences.

There's all kinds of consequences that are very negative. And so we were made to live that way. We were designed by God. Our bodies were designed by God. We were created of all the creatures in all the world. To reflect God. We were created in what's called the *imago Dei*. Use the Latin word. It means that we were uniquely created Gifted with the capabilities to reflect God in our reasoning capacity, our relational abilities, and the responsibility that we have over the created world. And God is a worker, so working is good, right?

God is productive, so pre- being productive is good, but God is also a God of rest. On the seventh day, God rested from all of his activities and his creation. He ceased. And he said, it's good. And so if we're to be like God in productivity and hard work, then we should always also be like God in finding a way to rest. And that's what this morning's passage is all about. Now, you could say rest is good because the Bible says it's good and God rests and we're in his image.

You can also say resting is good because when you don't rest, you see what happens. I don't know about you, but after a good night's sleep, I'm much more productive the following day. A good seven, eight hours. I'm all in. If I don't get a good night's sleep because of whatever reason, then the next day I'm pretty well spent and I'm worthless. Does anybody else resonate with that? A couple of you do. You know that when you're constantly overworked, just look at it culturally, our culture is in the West chronically overworked.

We are you know home of the 60 hour work week. We are home of capitalism on steroids. It's go go go make make make wealthy influence, prosperity, bigger houses, bigger cars, bigger everything, especially in the West Texas. Texas is bigger and everything. And with the consequences of that are pretty easy to see. You can look at the health consequences of heart disease and diabetes and cirrhosis of the liver and a lot of these things. They come from a lot of what things, but a lot of it is from overwork. The relationship consequences of absentee fathers or disengaged mothers.

It's usually not because those men and women don't care. Sometimes it's because they care too much and because they want to give their children the life that they didn't have. They grind themselves to the bone, working extended hours and keeping from their families the thing they actually desire so that they can provide a level of material prosperity that they think. That they need and it's damaging. It produces a life of chaos and brokenness. And is not what your heavenly father who made your bodies and put you in those relationships would have for you.

If you're taking notes, the abundant life in Jesus is a life that learns to rest. And Jesus talked about this. The Lord modeled this in creation. He gave to Israel a command, one of the big

ten, to honor the Sabbath. That's in Jesus. So if you're new to the book of Hebrews, no fear. It's a really wonderful New Testament sermon. You might think of it as a sermon, not so much a letter. I think it's a sermon on Psalm 95, which we're going to see this morning. But like all good sermons, it's got teaching and exhortation, and the exhortation this morning is the extension of something we started last week in which he compared the New Testament Christians like you and me to the old covenant community, Israel, during the Exodus.

If you're not familiar with the Exodus, God liberated Israel from slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt. He took them through the wilderness. He gave them the ten Commandments. They God on the cusp of the promised land, he said, go in, I'm going to give you the land. And ten of the twelve spies says, we can't. There's giants. We'll die. Let's go to Egypt. And God said You fools, you're not trusting me. I've had enough. You've tested me these ten times now. And so everyone twenty years old and older will die in the wilderness over the next forty years, and those twenty years or younger will enter in so the author is essentially saying in chapter 3, you are similarly inclined to disbelieve the Lord.

And so since that's true. Don't harden your hearts. Don't let happen to you what happened to them. We're going to pick it up at chapter 3, verse 18, to start our text in chapter 4. He asked the question, and to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest if not those who disobeyed? So we see that they were unable to enter because of, what's this word here? Unbelief. That's really important to understand Hebrews chapter 4 because you could read the word. Disobedience and import into that word your disobedience against the Lord.

You know they were had a potty mouth or they loved to gossip or they you know, spent their money in bad ways. That's not why they didn't enter the rest. They didn't enter the rest because they didn't have faith. And the lack of faith is what disqualified them from entering the abundant life that God desired for them to experience. And that's why chapter four uses the word therefore, since all of that's true of them. And since the promise to enter his rest remains, let us beware, CSB says. NIV says, let us be careful.

ESV, NASB, KJV, all the other Word to word, say, let us fear that none of you be found to have fallen short. Now I love the CSB for a lot of reasons, but they get it wrong here. I don't know why they don't use the word fear. It's a perfectly good word, and it's shocking. And it's a good shock because usually when the Bible talks about fear, what does it say? Don't fear. Don't fear. Don't be afraid. Fear not. I am with you. But this one says, no, you need to fear.

You need to fear. In fact, the NLT says you need to tremble with fear. That's I like that one. Well, what are you supposed to do? You're supposed to fear or not fear? The Bible says fear but don't fear. Don't fear but fear. The Bible says don't fear anything in the world ever except one thing. Fear the Lord and fear lack of faith in the Lord. Fear no faith. That's the warning. Fear not having faith. And if you don't have faith, you won't enter the promise. Now if you doubt that that's what he's talking about, I don't know how you could.

You got verses eighteen and seventeen and eighteen of chapter three, but look at what he says in chapter two and three, or verses two and three. He says, we've also received the gospel, the Evangelion, we've got the good news, just like they did. But the message they heard, or the gospel they heard, didn't benefit them. Why? Because they were not united with those who heard it in faith. Some transcripts, manuscripts will say it was not united in faith. As those who heard it. And so the idea is that they didn't have faith.

And then he says, but we who did have faith, we who believed, we did enter the rest. So the warning is no faith. If you have no faith, you do not have God's rest. God's rest is entered through faith alone which means if we're going to understand this passage, we've got to understand what the author means by the word faith, because the way the Bible uses the word faith and the way we think about faith is really not the same. Because in our culture, faith has come to mean something along the lines of personal religious preference, you might say.

You hear politicians all the time talk about well I have my faith and it's like I have my what I think is true and you have what you think is true and so long as we all sincerely believe. And passionately believe what we believe, then that's faith. So faith is kind of determined by what's going on in here. It's determined by the intensity or the sincerity with which you believe, and that is not how the Bible describes faith. In the Bible, faith is not subjective, it's not determined by how strongly you feel it.

Faith is always objectively defined. It's defined by what the faith is in. The object of your faith is what defines whether the faith is or is not, or what the faith is what the substance of the faith is actually of. And the reason that's important is because if you're going to miss out on God's rest, there could be a temptation to read it as if I don't like get super excited and passionate about Jesus, and if I don't say stay super excited and passionate about Jesus, then I'm not going to enter in to heaven when I die.

And that is not what he's saying. Because the definition of faith is not what's up in here, it's what the faith is in. The best illustration of this I've ever heard is the airplane illustration. If you were going to get from Abilene to Fort Worth and you were going to fly. You got American Airlines, right? The only game in town. I love American Airlines because I have no other choice, right? So you get into the you get into the airplane and some people get into that airplane, they'll have faith, cross the line, get in the what is that called?

The threshold? Whatever that is. You sit down in the seat. Some people are going to be stressed out. They're going to be grabbing the thigh of the stranger next to them, they're going to be sweating bullets, they're going to be crying, they're going to be calling their husband, they're going to be all these different things. And then someone else is going to be sitting there Looking out the window, excited. I hope we get some turbulence this time

around. You know, just a glutton for punishment. And you'd say, well, that one person had a lot of faith and that other person had a little faith, I guess, but the that's not relevant, right?

The only thing that's relevant is the plane in working order? Does it have a good pilot? Is it going to get you from point A to point B? In other words, if you ask the question, was your faith well founded? Whether you were stressed out or excited is irrelevant. What's relevant is the object of your faith. It's the plane, and did it get you from where you needed to where you were to where you needed to be. And the same is true in the Bible when it talks about faith. The faith is the quality of the faith, the amount of the faith, the emotional response to the faith is irrelevant to the object of the faith.

And the problem with the f the problem with Israel was that their faith was in the wrong source. They either had faith in themselves, or you might say a lack of faith in themselves, they were trusting in their own strengths. And they were too weak, and so they said, we can't go into the promised land because there's giants in Nephilim. Or their faith was in Pharaoh in Egypt, and they were like, well, we should just go back there. It was better there. It was terrible, but at least we weren't going to die.

And because they had shifted their object of faith to the wrong place, that's why they weren't able to enter. So New Testament faith, sufficient faith, faith that does not fall short, to use the word of the author in Hebrews is faith that is properly placed. Hebrews chapter eleven, Hall of Fame chapter about faith I've sometimes told you that when you're trying to understand the Bible, that the meaning of a word is not determined by the dictionary, but the meaning of a word is determined by the context and specifically the context of that author in that book.

If you want to know what faith means in chapter 3, ask the question, what does he mean by faith in other parts of Hebrews? And in this book, of all books, he gives you a working definition of faith. Which defines it just like we described it. Faith is the substance. It's the reality of what is hoped for. It's the proof of what is not seen. That in no way sounds like faith as we define it culturally. It is not blind wishful thinking. It is not, you know, get yourself psyched up.

It's not good vibes. I think that's what we think about faith. Faith is good vibes I saw a Facebook post the other day. If you're a person of faith and send good vibes my way, and I thought, oh my goodness, it's so foreign to what the Bible means by faith. Faith is substance, faith is proof, faith is conviction, faith is evidence. These are all the words the Bible uses to talk about faith. And it's and it's enacted, not in the lack of evidence, it's unseen, but it's in light of the evidence that what is unseen is assured.

It's it I'm confident of what I can't see because of what I do see. Because of the object my faith is in, I can have confidence of what is yet to come. And so faith is properly placed, and

then the other thing about faith is it endures. If you keep reading in Hebrews 11 and verse 13, it talks about well it talks about all these people about faith. Abraham was a man of faith. Sarah was a woman of faith. All these people are about faith. But then it shifts and begins to talk about how people were sawed in two, they were caught on fire, they were eaten by animals, really pretty gross stuff.

And they also were commended by faith. They died in faith. Look at this Although they hadn't received the things that were promised. Now there's a version of faith today that says, if you have the faith, then God will give it to you. Believe it. In the name of Jesus, and God, it's like you're twisting God's arm. He has to give you the house. He has to give you the healing. He has to, you know, whatever. That's not what Hebrew says it's not if you have faith, it's here and now. It's sometimes if you have faith, it's even when I don't get in the here and now, I still believe because what I'm about is not the here and now.

What I'm about is the sweet by-and-by. What I'm about is the kingdom yet to come, because my faith isn't in what is seen, but in what is unseen. My faith is in the Lord, the creator, not the creation, it's the city that's yet to come, the city whose architect and builder is God. And therefore I will persevere in faith even when I don't see, and even when the pressure mounts, and even when I'm sawed into or in the hospital, or the faith healing didn't work, even then I will persevere because my faith isn't about the here and now, it's about what's yet to come.

That's true faith. That's Sabbath rest faith. That's biblical Christian faith. It's in the right place and it's marked by perseverance. That's why the author of Hebrews says in chapter 12, verse 1, since that's true of them. Let that be true of us. Fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and the perfecter of our faith. Lay aside the hindrances. Lay aside the sin. Looks this phrase. Run with Endurance, the race that is set before us, keeping your eyes again on the object. What's the object of our faith? Jesus. He's the pioneer.

He's the perfecter. In other words, he's the source. And he is the one that as you abide and persevere. He is strengthening and completing and polishing that faith so that you finally enter God's rest. And so sufficient faith perseveres under pressure. And sufficient faith. Is placed in the right object. Now after he talks about what faith is, he talks about what rest is. And this is where the text gets really really confusing. And I don't want you to be confused, so I'm going to try to simplify what he is comp complicating.

But the reason he's complicating it is because he is in the first century. He does not have a Bible. Everything he knows about the Bible is probably from memory, because their Bibles were called scrolls. They had no chapters, they have no verses, they have no vowels. It's just a bunch of Hebrew words. And he's trying to piece together. What God said about his rest that makes it available for us today in Christ. And so he quotes Psalm 95. In fact, if you want to turn there. Well, not yet. We're going to read this and then you can turn there.

He says in verse 3, we who have believed enter the rest in keeping with what he, that that's God, keeping what God has said. Here's what God said in Psalm 95. So I swore in my anger, they will not enter my rest. How do I know that Psalm 95? Well, if you look in your Bible, there's a little footnote after the word rest. My Bible says G. If you go down to the bottom of the page, what does your Bible say? Next to the letter G? Anyone? Anyone? Psalm 95. 11.

Very good. Look at you, Bible nerds. Look at you go. So he's quoting Psalm 95. God's saying to the Israelites, they're not going to enter my rest. And Psalm 95. 11 is about Numbers 14. But then he switches in his brain. He's like, but even though God's works have been finished since the foundation of the world. In other words, there's this other rest that God did in Genesis 2. 2. Because somewhere, verse 4, somewhere, he, God, has spoken about the seventh day in this way. And on the seventh day, God rested from all his works.

Look at there, another footnote. What does your footnote say? Did you say Genesis 2, too? Very good. Here we got a Werther's. Just joking, I don't have it. But I love some Werther's. That's my candy of choice here lately. So he's quoted Psalm 95. Eleven he's quoted Genesis two two and he's saying there's actually two kinds of rest. There was the rest in Genesis, but then there's this rest in Psalm ninety five which is talking about the rest that's in the land, but that's the rest that they didn't enter because of their unbelief.

And then he continues. And then again in this passage he says, they will never enter my rest. So since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news did not enter because of disobedience, aka unbelief. He again specifies a certain day. Today. Mine's bold faced talking about Psalm ninety five eleven today. Psalm ninety five eleven isn't about the rest of Numbers fourteen. It isn't about the rest of the land. It's about the rest that is in Jesus and it's available today and it's similar to the Sabbath rest that God had in Genesis two.

He specifies this by speaking through David, who wrote Psalm 95, after such a long time. He wrote Psalm 95 way after Kadesh Barnea. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts. For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. Therefore a Sabbath rest remains for God's people for the person who has entered his rest has rested from his own works, just as God did from his. So let us then, finally here's the challenge. Let us then make every effort to enter that rest.

So that no one will fall into the same pattern of disobedience. So I don't know if you were counting, but if you were to take the word rest, which shows up over and over again, and you were to ask the question, what does he mean by rest? As far as I can tell, he means four different things. There is the rest that he's talking about in Jesus. There is the rest that God experienced in Genesis 2. 2. There is the rest that God promised Israel, if you'll come into the land of Canaan, I will give you rest.

And then there is the rest that Psalm 95 is talking about that the author of Hebrews says isn't describing the land of Canaan. But is probably describing something similar to Genesis, but even better and fuller that's available in Jesus. Are you tracking with me? I know it's confusing. And it's the reason it's confusing is because he doesn't have a Bible with a chapter and verse, but this guy is a preacher. The book of Hebrews is a sermon. This guy is a preacher, and he is using scripture in the Old Testament, namely Psalm 95, 7 to 11, and he's saying, this is what God wants us to hear.

And this rest that God has explained is now available to you and me in Jesus Christ if you won't believe if you will just believe. If you won't harden your heart. So let's read Psalm 95. 11. If you got it there, Psalm 95. 11. The challenge, find a life of rest, Psalm 95, 7 to 11. You can't understand Hebrews 4 if you don't understand his understanding of Psalm 95. So let's just read it. He, I'm talking about the Lord, is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the sheep under his care, today.

That's his key word here. Today. If you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts. He uses Meribah, which means grumbling and complaining. And masa, which means testing. Don't be like them in the wilderness where your ancestors tested me. They tried me, though they had seen what I did. He's saying, don't do what they did. In Numbers 14. Don't do what they did in Kadesh Barnea. Don't listen to the 10 spies who were all negative Nancy and said we can't do it. We're not strong enough. God isn't good enough. Don't be like them because they didn't get the rest because of their unbelief.

He says in the next verse, if you go to verse 10, for forty years I was disgusted with that generation. I said they are a people whose hearts go astray. They do not know my way, so I swore in my anger they will not enter my rest. So here's the author of Hebrews. He's saying, they didn't get the gift of God because of their unbelief. But the gift that God wanted to give them wasn't even about the land. And you know it's not about the land because some of them did get the land.

Like Joshua led some of them into the promised land. And then David later after that says there's still rest. That wasn't it. The rest is not geography, it's not real estate, it's not Palestine, it's something so much better, it's so infinitely better. And it's available today to you and to me. And the author of Hebrews is saying, you don't even have to be Jewish or from Abraham to receive it because true children of Abraham are children of faith, like Abraham was a child of faith. And so God's rest is available for you.

And in that way, you can cease from your labors. Just like God ceased from his labors. Now here's what he's doing. He's developing what's called a biblical theology of rest. Biblical theology is just a term that's different from what's called systematic theology. In systematic theology, you take a topic, sometimes it's a word that's not even in the Bible, like Trinity. Trinity is not in the Bible, but the concept of Trinity is in the Bible. And so people will type

all the verses that talk about the Trinity and they'll put them together in a list and they'll read all the verses and they'll say given all these verses here's what the Trinity is.

That's called systematic theology. There's another form of theology that's called biblical theology, where you do take a biblical word like kingdom or grace or rest, and you trace the development of that word through the old testament into the new testament watching how it matures and builds and finds its completion and resolution in the new covenant under the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel. It's called biblical theology. And that's what he's doing with the word rest. If you go to the first page of the scripture, Genesis chapter 2, Genesis chapter 1.

Okay, second page of the scripture, Genesis chapter 2. Rest shows up, right? What does God do? He rests on the seventh day. Of course not, right? He is God. He doesn't get tired. That's why he's God. And yet he says, I'm going to take it easy today. Because my work is done. So if he's not resting because he's tired, why is he resting? He's resting because he's done. And he's done because what he created is good. He didn't need to add to it. He doesn't need to tweak it. It's sufficient.

I think this is God's way of saying, I'm satisfied. I've done what needed to be done, and it's good. In fact, it's very good. And I can rest. That this is what God wants Israel to take away is pretty clear to me because when God gives the ten Commandments, He tells them, I want you to do what I did. I want you to honor the Sabbath. This is Exodus 31, verses 12 to 13. The Lord said to Moses, Observe my Sabbaths. Why? Because it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, so that you'll know that I am the Lord God who consecrates you.

In other words, the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant in which God is teaching Israel, I'm the point. Now Israel like us would have said yeah but if I don't work on Sundays they're going to get a competitive edge. That's 24 hours more work, which means more money, which means more productivity and more influence and more wealth. And the Lord is saying to Israel, that's not why I made you. I didn't make you to make a bunch of money and be driven by wealth and all the things that you can sometimes mistakenly place your identity within.

I made you for me. I'm the point and I'm sufficient. And if you'll do it my way, you'll be satisfied. More satisfied than if you would have done it any other way. So it was to teach Israel that in Jesus, which Jesus is the point of the Sabbath, he's the Lord of the Sabbath, in Jesus you and I can say, it's enough. I'm satisfied. When we don't do that, when we don't rest, we are driven by our work. And that's why so many of us work. Crazy hours, neglecting our family, cheating, compromising morally, ethically.

So that we can make enough money to have the right kind of lifestyle so that we can say to ourselves and anybody else, I'm satisfied. And you're slave you are slave to that work. For some of us it's not that. For some of us, it's we don't have that life, so we're not satisfied. And so we can't ever make the money, but we live under the burden of feeling inferior and insufficient because I can't work. But in either way, your identity is in your work. This is why a lot of stay-at-home moms.

When people ask, well, what do you do? It just cripples them. Well, I'm a stay-at-home mom. AKA I don't find I'm not like other people who make money in the workplace, therefore I'm inferior, is what a lot of them will struggle with. And that's because you're finding your identity in what you do, not how you rest. For some of us it's not work, for some of us it's relationships. I'm only okay if my kids are doing well. I'm only satisfied if my spouse is treating me a certain way. I'm only satisfied if I'm no longer single but I'm married.

We could go on and on and on. For some of us, it's your moral performance. So long as I'm like feeling okay with God or so long as you know we could go on and on. I'm not going to go on and on because we don't have time to go on and on. But the point is God gave you the Sabbath so you would stop. And you just rest and realize in Jesus it's satisfied. I'm suff it's sufficient. I can be okay. The second reason he gave the Sabbath If you trace it theologically, is in Deuteronomy.

The Deuteronomy means second law. Deutero means two. Nomos means law. And the second giving of the ten Commandments, not because he gave it twice, but because they talked about it twice. He says that when you honor the Sabbath, I want you to remember something, namely that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out of there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and that's why I've commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. In other words, don't just keep the Sabbath to remember you can be satisfied in me.

I also want you to practice the Sabbath to remember I saved you. I delivered you from slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt. I took your fear of death because of the death angel and how that death angel passed over you because of the blood of the Lamb. I want you to remember that every time you and for us like every time we come to church on Sunday, we need to be reminded God is sufficient. He is my source. I don't need to work on seven days a week, I can rest in Jesus because he's sufficient.

And as I rest in Jesus, I remember that I am safe and secure in his arms because of what Jesus Christ has done. And liberating me from slavery to the fear of death and liberating me from the slavery to the power of sin, I am free in Jesus Christ because He is my rest. He is my Sabbath. And that's what the author of Hebrews is saying. He's saying that's why you got to do everything you can do to enter the rest. That's why you don't harden your heart. That's why you fear no faith.

Fear not having faith, because if you don't have faith in that Jesus and in that Sabbath, you're never going to find his rest. And so the challenge is find a life of rest because in Jesus' Sabbath rest we are satisfied, safe, and secure. I saw something this week that says the greatest, deepest psychological needs in a human person is the need to feel clean, morally clean, safe, and significant. And that's not surprising to me when the Bible talks about the human flesh. It talks about the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, I'm sorry, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

Which really boils down to the need to feel morally clean, morally safe, and morally significant. We want to know that we're okay. And so we'll pursue things that make us feel okay. I'm clean. We want to know that we're safe. So we pursue things that make us feel safe, whether it's money or relationships or whatever it may be, and we want to feel significant. We want to feel like we matter. And what the author of Hebrews is saying is all those are found in Jesus. He is our rest. He is the one in whom we can find our identity, in whom we can be justified and forgiven of sin, the one in whom we can find safety and security and significance because he has called us to live a kingdom life.

And so make every effort to enter his rest. The last question, quickly, is how do we how do we get there? And that is in verses 12 to 13. Notice the word for. This is a word that talks about causality or the logical implications of so the warning is fear no faith. The command is find God's rest. And the method or the motivation is because the word of God is living and effective. It's sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow.

And it is able. Notice the word it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from him. See how I switched it? But all things are naked, Pastor David would say, naked. All things are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account. Now if you're an English teacher, you get your red pen out, right? You're switching your pronouns, brother. Nah nah nah nah nah. And the author of Hebrews will say, on purpose. No, no, no, no, no.

He's doing it on purpose. He's saying there is a written word. Like Psalm 95. God inspired the scripture in Psalm 95 to point us to Jesus. But that written word is pointing us to the living word. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word took on flesh, and he tabernacled among us. Jesus is the word living and written. And if you want to enter into God's rest, the author of Hebrews is saying it happens as you face the Word.

Because when you face the Word. The word is a living word, and the word is able to do what no one else can do. I can do a lot of things as a preacher. One thing I can't do is judge the thoughts and intentions of your heart. I have no idea what motivates you. I don't know if you're faking your salvation or if it's for real. I don't know if this is all a front or if it's coming

from a place of genuine love for Jesus. I'll never know. So I don't try to know, and you shouldn't try to know.

But one person knows and it's the living word of God. And when you face the word of God, I don't know if you've ever done this. Sometimes when I read the scripture, he just eats my lunch, right? The Lord exposes things in my heart I didn't even know were there. This happened this weekend when our staff went on a prayer retreat and we did a personal consecration exercise. We read Colossians 3, verses 1 to 17. I've preached that mess I've preached that text. I've read that text hundreds of times. But Friday morning when we got away and I spent an hour with Colossians 3, verses 1 to 17, the Lord spoke to me in a way I had never heard before.

He confronted me on sins I had not ever explored. He challenged me up here and in here with it wasn't bad sins. It wasn't like s visible sins, I was doing this or that. There is a vice list and usually that's where I feel a lot of conviction. But that day it wasn't on the vice list, it was on something else. Because that's how the Word of God works. It's like a scalpel. It's so sharp and so precise and does work in ways that no other tool can. And that's why we love the Bible in our church.

That's why we teach biblical truth. That's why we do expository preaching. That's why we say let the word do the work because it's not about me or some Bible teacher or Sunday school teacher. It's about the Bible because Jesus is in the Bible. When the Bible speaks, God speaks because God has inspired the Bible to not just be an it but an he does this make sense? And when you put yourself underneath the he of the word, the living word, he will judge the so the secret intentions of your heart.

You say why do I need to do that? Because if you don't do that, you might miss the rest. Because the rest is entered into by faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word. You've got to be in front of the word. You've got to face the word. And what is our tendency, I'm afraid, is to do anything and everything but. I'll go to church once a week, but I'm not going to open my Bible. On Monday through Friday. I'll listen to the sermon, but I'm not going to spend daily time with the Lord in prayer.

And a lot of the reasons we run from that is because we're hurried and hassled and busy. But we're hurried and hassled and busy because we're not resting in Jesus. And sometimes the reason we neglect the word is because we know what the word is going to say and we don't want to deal with it. But you will never find God's rest without faith, and you'll never find faith without the word. And so face the word, stop hiding from the word. The other reason we need the word is because you see that phrase everything will be naked and exposed before him.

That word is what's called a hex F A hepex logomenon, there it is. A hefax logomonon. That's just fun to say. All that means is it's a Greek word that's used only one time in the Old or New Testament. Those are important. When those things show up, you listen. And I did a little word study on this word, and it means bare neck. And the usage of the term outside the Bible was in like Greek competitions think gladiator. Remember the gladiators? We salute you. When a gladiator was in battle in the arena and he had finally conquered his foe, he would stand over him and like absolute like shame of just destroyed you and he would pull out his sword and he would bare the neck of the person he was about to just end.

That is this word. This is this is God's way of saying stop hiding from the word and submit to it. Let the word Defeat you. Let the word put you in a place of submission. Let the word be, let yourself be at the mercy of the word. Let the word expose what you're trying to hide from everyone else. Let him get through the armor that you're using to pretend and fake and lie to yourself and others and ex let him expose that neck, let him get you in a place of vulnerability and transparency and intimacy.

And when you'll do that He will judge you. It will be painful. It will be difficult because he will expose the things that you're clinging to find rest that are not sufficient. He will expose our tendency to trust the creator, trust the creation instead of the creator. But if you'll let the word judge you in the here and the now, then you can enter into this rest. And escape his judgment at the end of time where it will be too late. Because it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.

Because he's not an idea. He's not a concept. Christianity is not a philosophy. Jesus is a living person. He's the judge of the universe. He will come again in glory, and you will give an account. And so you can either give an account of striving and earning and working hard and failing and not being enough and receive the consequences. Or you can enter into a rest that is available to you today if you will only believe. Those are the options. And you can enter that rest today because Jesus has He's done the work.

He's already completed on the cross everything you need to be reconciled to God and to experience the abundant life. Jesus on the cross cried out, Tetelestai means it is finished. He absorbed into his body the punishment that you and I deserve for sin. That's what we celebrate in the Lord's Supper. His body was broken for us, his blood was shed for us, so that he could live a sinless life of love and obedience that we couldn't live and give it to us as a gift. And he could take our sinful life of hate and rebellion and hardness of heart and all of those things, and he could suffer the penalty that we deserved.

And so if you are not in a place where you are experiencing God's rest, it's maybe because you have forgotten the work is finished. Maybe you've found your identity in achievements or relationships or money or moral performance, and this morning your Heavenly Father is saying don't stop believing. My rest is a gift that is open to you if you'll just repent and trust

me. Stop trusting in yourself. Stop trusting in these other competitors. And trust me once more. And if you've never entered into that kind of relationship with Jesus as Lord, this morning there's an invitation for you to find that rest in Him.

I'm going to ask our ushers to come forward as we distribute the Lord's Supper. And if there's a sense in which God is moving in your heart to respond to Him, the altar is open, I'd be happy to receive you and to pray with you. You can also, you might be more comfortable is filling out the connect card on the chair in the seat in front of you and putting that in the box on your way out. Filling it out online and taking those next steps as the Lord leads. But don't leave this place without responding to the Lord's invitation.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity we have this morning to be reminded that there is a rest that is infinitely greater than any other any other rest of that we may know. As Augustine said, our hearts were made for you, and so we are restless until we rest in you. And so help us to be men and women characterized by faith and not unbelief. So easy it is to harden our hearts. To say, no, God, not today. I'm having too much fun with this or that no, not today.

I'm not worthy. I'm not there yet. I still got to do more. I got to try harder. God forgive us for that way of thinking, that is what you died to save us from. We'll never be strong enough. We'll never be good enough. We'll never work hard enough. That's why you've invited us to rest in you and in you alone. And so where unbelief has raised its head, would you confront it with the truth of the gospel? Help us not to harden our hearts, but to believe, to join our intellectual understanding of Jesus with a heart that fully surrenders and trusts him for salvation.

Not just eternally in heaven, but right here, right now. Save us from our works. Save us from our moral performance. Save us from these counterfeit saviors that we sometimes cling to and that destroy our lives. Save us from these things so that we can rest in you. And help us to have wisdom to know what it looks like to do everything possible on our end so that we can strive to enter that rest. Resisting the enemy who wants to do everything to disrupt that process. And we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.