
Ignite

"Dear Jesus, today we choose to enter into rest. We choose to trust You. We choose to put our faith and hope in You knowing that You are good, and You have good things in store for our future in Jesus' name! AMEN."



SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

Jesus: A Better Rest

Pastor Chris Kam

Hebrews 4:1-4

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. For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed. Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said,

“So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

And yet his works have been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “On the seventh day God rested from all his works.

Hebrews 4:9-11

There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

Introduction

This chapter follows the early Hebrew Christians that are under pressure to return to their old ways. They experience physical rest but struggle with finding spiritual rest (true rest). What kept them away from finding true rest is the lack of faith, unbelief and disobedience. The message then is to focus on Jesus and to be encouraged to find rest in Jesus. The idea of rest is not the mere cessation of work, where the physical body is rested, but also the rest from worries and anxieties. There are two aspects of rest; the rest from outward activity which is a rest in the physical body; and the rest from inward anxieties or worries which is the rest in the soul. While the rest from outward activity and physical body is easily achieved through the things we do,

the rest from inward worries of the soul is more intriguing. This is because such complete and absolute rest of the soul (spiritual condition) can only be found in Jesus.

BIG IDEA: Rest is found only in the Person of Jesus.

1. Creation Rest - Rest that is promised

The Creation Rest is a rest that is promised by God. It is a rest that God enjoyed when He had finished His creation. He rested from all His works on the Sabbath day. **God's Sabbath-rest was spoken of in [Genesis 2:2](#) and [Hebrews 4:4](#) (Creation Rest).**

F.B. Meyer stated, "What is meant by God resting? Surely not the rest of weariness! He fainted not, neither is weary. It was the rest of a finished work....of divine complacency, of infinite satisfaction, or perfect content....a rest of satisfaction not after exhaustion! This is a delightful rest." Clearly, God did not rest because He was weary, rather He rested in delight and satisfaction at the completed works.

Therefore, Creation Rest is when we delight in God and all that He has done. This rest is good for our soul as it reminds us to depend on Him, and to trust in Him. We lost this perfect rest when sin came into the world through Adam and Eve. But God restored it for us by commanding that we observe the Sabbath-rest ([Deuteronomy 5:12](#)). Keeping the Sabbath-rest is important for us so that we are mindful of our spiritual state lest we disobey and go astray. Disobedience and unbelief incur God's wrath, and consequently, hinders us from ever entering His rest. We see this with the early generations of Jews who did not get to enter the promised land (Canaan). They never made it to **Canaan, the rest for Israel after 40 years of wandering**, for God in His anger declared that "they shall never enter my rest" ([Hebrews 3:11](#)). Even with Joshua and Caleb's generation who entered the promised land, God continuously searched for their spiritual condition ([Hebrews 4:1](#)). In short, we should always be mindful to never take God lightly lest we lose eternal rest. As followers of Christ, we can only find spiritual rest when we obey and trust in Him.

2. Calvary Rest - Rest that is for Today

In the present day, we can enter and claim this spiritual rest as followers of Christ. This Calvary Rest allows us to find complete rest in Christ, as we rest not just our body but also our soul. We can achieve this by obeying and honoring the Sabbath-rest. But Sabbath-rest is not just a day, but a person. It is about Christ, and how looking to Jesus and entering the presence of Jesus, deepens our faith in him and builds that greater and deeper rest that we so longed for. **The believer's present rest in Christ**

([Hebrews 4:3,10](#)) can only occur if we give ourselves fully to Him, surrendering all our doubts, worries and anxieties. By surrendering our all to Him, He will give us rest ([Matthew 11:28](#)). And this deep peaceful rest reflects our delight in how God has taken control of our lives and in all that He has done through us and for us. Truly, Sabbath-rest was made for man ([Mark 2:27](#)), for we are well-rested when we are anchored fully in God's promise.

Therefore, we should make every effort to enter that rest. Keep our eyes on Jesus amidst all the unrest in the world. Do not take our salvation for granted. Seek the perfect rest and do not be distracted by the worries and anxieties that keep us away. God wants us to enjoy life on earth in restedness, which can only be achieved through Jesus. And Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit so that we can be an overcomer. Be diligent in God's word so that the Holy Spirit can manifest and help us to have **the overcomer's present rest in victory** ([Hebrews 4:11](#)). With the help of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, a deeper relationship with God can be fostered, and this will help guard our hearts against disobedience, unbelief and faithlessness ([Hebrews 4:12](#)). Therefore, trust in Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to manifest so that we may have a restful relationship in Christ.

3. Consummating Rest – Rest that is for Tomorrow

There remains a Sabbath-rest for the people of God ([Hebrews 4:9](#)). Canaan and Sabbath-rest are but foreshadows of things unseen and yet to come; of a final, eternal rest in Heaven. The final rest is in the New Creation, a Heaven and Earth together that God will create as a dwelling place among His people ([Revelation 21:1; Revelation 21:3,4](#)). And we get to be part of this eternal rest because of Jesus!

It is our mission as followers of Christ, to let others know (through evangelism) of this eternal rest and not to miss this eternal hope and life. The challenge for us today is to not harden our hearts ([Hebrews 4:7b](#)) when we hear God, but to respond to Him. Learn to trust in God today, for tomorrow may never come. Trust in Him for eternity to have restedness of your soul. What is unseen is eternal, so find rest in the Lord amidst the unrest. Amid unrest in the world, we must not lose heart for we are being renewed day by day, for our eternal glory far outweighs the momentary troubles we see today ([2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#)).

Conclusion

The absolute, true rest that we seek for our soul can only be found in Jesus. Our soul can truly rest from burden and anxieties when we turn to God and depend on Him for this eternal rest. Our relationship with Jesus is restful, and can be fostered through surrendering our burdens, anxieties, and our ways to Him, so that we can experience a deeper rest. Our eyes should be fixed on the eternal rest that God has promised, for He will give rest to all who are weary.



SERMON REFLECTION



Photo from Aaron Burden at Unsplash

Penning the Ignite document this week on this aptly themed “Jesus-A Better Rest”, I

truly felt that God was speaking to me. This is because I have not *truly rested* in the last few weeks. Not in mind, body or soul.

The last few weeks have been unusually distracting for me. These distractions bred feelings of despair, anxiety, resentment, and even of hopelessness. The country is going through a political turmoil, there is also the increasing Covid cases and risks towards the impending reopening of schools, as well as increasing workload to manage remotely, piles of paperwork with tight deadlines, family and household obligations, and close friends who lost loved ones. I unknowingly (or perhaps, knowingly) got myself further involved with more worldly chaos by spending more time than necessary, following news feeds and social media on current events. I knew I was tired at the end of the stressful day and compensated with a 7-h sleep routine. But this did little as I felt I needed rest all the time. With each passing day, I felt restless, not rested. When my soul is not rested, my mind and body does not feel rested at all.

As I am penning this down, I am reminded of what I needed the most now - a good rest for my soul. I have decided to take proactive steps to claim this rest that is found in Jesus. My first step in choosing to experience the deep rest from Jesus, is to rekindle the trust in Him so that I can release all my burdens and anxieties to Him. I will reflect on the times He has been faithful and good to me, giving thanks for all that He has provided. The certainty of His love and steadfast promise will carry me through the anxieties that I have. I will learn to view the worldly problems as momentary and small, within the scale of eternity that He has for me. I will not be overwhelmed or easily anxious, but to remain anchored in His promise. I will also learn to surrender and repent for having idols (i.e. work, achievements) in my life, which has taken precedence over Christ. I will be more diligent and disciplined to honor the time set apart for Him (daily, weekly, seasonally), so that I can consistently have fellowship with Him, to deepen our relationship. A deep relationship of trust leads to a good rest for the soul.

I encourage you, my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, to walk this journey with me. Let us remember and reconnect with the Rest that is only found in the Person of Jesus. The rest that is from Christ is a good rest, one that allows us to remain steadfast and at peace, knowing exactly what to do and never in a hurry, amidst all the unrest and chaos around us. Have faith in Christ, for faith leads to trust and trust leads to rest. May we all find rest in the Lord.

"Father Lord, forgive us that amid the unrest in the world, we have often not turned to You for a complete rest. We have been ignorant and disobedient, thinking we could always do things by our own strength. Remind us Father, that the promise of eternal rest is only through Jesus. Teach us to surrender our all to You, and to give ourselves fully to You. Teach us to renew our faith and trust in You, so that we can experience a deeper rest in You. Amen."



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Activity/Questions

- How rested are you today? (Scale 1-very stressed, Scale 10-very well rested). Share why you gave those ratings. [NOTE: This sharing gives an idea on the distractions in life that prevents us from having a good rest]



Photo from Emma Frances Logan at Unsplash

- What do you do to feel rested? Do you sleep, eat, read, write, draw, paint, knit, or meditate? Do you feel “well-rested” after these activities? Was it a rest to your body or soul? *[NOTE: This activity encourages us to think about the things that we do to feel rested, and highlights whether are we taking care of our body or soul]*

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- What does “rest” mean to you? Which type of rest is important to you - the physical rest or the spiritual rest, or both?
- Have you ever felt **truly rested**? What prevents you from experiencing a “good, deep rest”? Is it fear, anxiety, insecurities, anger? What did you do or could do to overcome them?
- Rest is important to our body and soul. What do you understand from these two aspects of rest? Why is it important that while we may cease from work, our soul must also be rested? What does “having rest in the soul” mean to you?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- God's rest is not like the physical rest that we know. It cannot be achieved by doing things according to our own strength. How then, can we experience such perfect and deep rest? What practical steps can we take to experience deep rest for our soul? How can we help each other on a personal level, and as a CG to encourage one another to experience deep rest?
- Do you seek "rest" and "to rest", amidst the unrest in the world? Would an external or an internal rest be more fulfilling? Share your thoughts.
- Are you a well-rested person, working from a place of rest? Or are you always in need of rest? What would rest in an area of your life look like? What new habits can we create to nurture a good rest for the soul?
- What is the difference between a rest that everyone desires (e.g. holidays), and a rest that followers of Christ seek?
- In the light of those who have gone home to be with the Lord, in what ways does the eternal rest in God (Consummating Rest of Rev 21 and 22) comfort us? How does this truth help us live life better on earth?

Question Bank *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

- Share what you did to find rest in Jesus when you or someone you know was faced with a very stressful/ helpless situation.
- Sabbath rest is not about a day, but a person. What do you understand from this? How can we appreciate this and honor a Sabbath-rest?
- Rest that is promised is a rest that is perfect in content. Have you experienced such rest? Share your experience. What can we do to rekindle the need for such rest?
- Do we function better coming from a place of restedness?
- Sometimes we ask for more peace from Jesus in difficult circumstances but often it is a question of us not surrendering our lives to Him. Do you agree and why? Share examples. Discuss this in the light of ([Matthew 11:28-30](#)). In what ways can you trust in Jesus with what you may be going through today?
- Why is evangelism so important? Are there people in your life that need to hear the Gospel? Start by praying for them and for God to make divine appointments for you to share with them.



PRAYER



Photo by Jeremy Yap on Unsplash

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

Cambodia

8 provinces in Cambodia are undergoing a 14-day lockdown (29 Jul-12 Aug) to prevent community spread of the Covid-19 Delta variant, and some churches cannot meet virtually due to lack of technology and internet.

Pray for the Church in Cambodia:

- Unity among the churches and protection from cults. Wisdom for church leaders to lead, nurture, encourage, and equip their members.
- Believers to continue to walk daily with Jesus in reading the Word and in prayer.
- God's provision and protection for healthcare workers and those who were impacted by the pandemic and lockdown."Increase Association connects & strengthens TEE (Theological Education) & other church-based training movements across Asia & beyond.

Yew On & Chern Chern - Missionaries in Cambodia

Pray for:

- Wisdom for Chern Chern and her team as they facilitate the OMF Pre-Home Assignment Workshop on 16-20 Aug via Zoom. Pray that participants will learn effective communication and partnership-building in missions with supporters/churches.
- Wisdom for Yew On and Chern Chern to support the Student Ministry and Graduate Fellowship in Siem Reap.
- God's guidance and confirmation as they explore another location for future ministry.



OTHER RESOURCES

*Below are some links to resources for you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!*

FEATURED

In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!



Helping without Hurting in Short-Term Missi...

8 sessions (20-30 minutes average)

rightnowmedia.org

This stand-alone resource applies the principles of "helpin...

Brian Fikkert

Mission Social Concerns

Video Series



Discipleship Bands

1 hour a week for the duration of the discipleship group

discipleshipbands.com

A framework for discipleship groups for 3-5 people based...

J.D. Walt

Fellowship Prayer & Spirituality

Tool App



Gospel Comes with a House Key, The

13 videos (3 minute clips on average)

rightnowmedia.org

Rosaria Butterfield invites us into her home to show us ho...

Rosaria Butterfield

Fellowship Friendship Hospitality

Video Series Book Study



Knowing God (Video Series)

3 videos (8 minutes average)

youtube.com

The leader must know God and walk with God in a daily, ...

Malcolm Webber

Leadership Prayer & Spirituality

Video Series



DUMC STORIES

Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!

