

Building on the Foundation

Chapter 7

Hebrews 4, and in particular I want to look at the 9th verse through the end of the chapter. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The main objective that I have for doing this particular series of teachings is to underscore and highlight the responsibility that we have to take advantage of the provision of God. Let me give you an example from one of the parables that Jesus taught. He taught the parable of talents in which a rich man gave talents to three of his servants. There is a whole story about what happened and who did what and who didn't do what. There are many lessons and many principles that we can learn from studying that parable, but I think that one of most obvious lessons from that parable is that the servant that only gave back to his master what he had been given was the one servant that the lord and master was not pleased with. The obvious takeaway is that the master was looking for an increase. We can say the word increase as being growth, so the one that was given five talents grew the talents to 10 talents.

We spent some time in Romans 4, talking about what we have been given by God because of what Jesus did for us and that we have been blessed by the offering that Jesus made of himself on our behalf. So, we have received not only the forgiveness of sins, but we have had righteousness accounted to us without works. We have received a benefit of those things because we trusted the provision, but the faithful servants profited by the way their master behaved. Even though the unprofitable servant knew how his master performed – he said, I knew you had high expectations but I was afraid to lose what you gave me – when all he had to offer the master upon his return was what the master had given him, the master was not happy. If we look at the 16th verse of the 4th chapter of Hebrews, the point of

what God has done for us is so that, based on the confidence of what we have been blessed with, we can come to the throne of grace for mercy and grace when we are in need and we can expect to receive a positive result. I'm not talking about an earthy need; I'm not talking about better money or better car or better food. I'm talking about when we have sinned, I'm talking about when we have been angry with our brother, and therefore we are guilty of murder. I'm talking about when we have unforgiveness in our hearts. I am saying that the need here in the 16th verse is spiritual need.

My experience with most Christians when they look at themselves and their needs spiritually is that they have an expectation of punishment and God's anger. I was counseling with somebody about two years ago, and they started weeping so profusely that they couldn't even talk. I said please don't confess your sin to me but when you get a hold of yourself, I would like you to explain why you're in tears. They said, because I've disappointed my savior. He died and he bled for me and I let him down and started crying again. I waited for the tears to dry up and I said, I have a question for you. Would you please explain to me how you can disappoint someone who has foreknowledge? We know that Jesus ascended and is sitting with his father in his father's throne. When he was here on earth, he said no man knows, only the father knows. But, now that he ascended far above all heavens and is seated in his father's throne, he now knows all things, and he is what we would call technically "omniscient". It would be impossible to know all things if you didn't know the future, so I asked this person, Please, explain to me how you can disappoint somebody who is omniscient. They asked, What do you mean? I said, whatever your sin is, he knew before you did it, and the provision of God in Christ covers that problem. You can approach the throne of grace with an expectation of mercy and grace when you have a need. You can be bold in your approach because you're expecting a benefit. You're not approaching an angry God; you're approaching the God of all mercies. This is part of entering into a rest.

I want to mention the last verse of Hebrews the 3rd chapter; it's the 19th verse. It says concerning Israel that they did not enter into the rest because of unbelief. The evidence of the spirit working in our life is that we trust the provision of God, that it is always the answer. Let's take the case of somebody that has sinned since they were born again and baptized in the spirit. The Apostle John addresses this in his epistle to the church. In the first chapter of the first epistle, he says twice in the first chapter that if any man sin and confesses his sin, God is faithful. It doesn't mean God became faithful because he confessed; God changes not. He was never angry with man. If he portrayed himself as being angry, it was so man would heed the law and not destroy himself. Before God made the world, before he put man on the planet, there was a lamb that was slain. When it says in Revelation the lamb

slain from the foundation of the world, a spiritual understanding of that phrase is that the shed blood of the lamb is the foundation on which the world rests. The word “from” brings to light that the world was set in the blood as a foundation that brings purpose to the earth and therefore stability.

The provision of Christ for Adam is Adam’s hope; it gives substance to an existence that would otherwise be vain and empty. Solomon – accounted by Jesus as being the wisest man that was on the planet before Jesus showed up – realized in thinking about this world and the condition of man in this world, it is all vanity; it is empty. You are born naked and horizontal, and you go out horizontal; there is no greater hope than to live with the wife of your youth, enjoy the fruit of your labors and die. Solomon not only says that life as Adam is vain, but he also says life as Adam is a vexation of spirit. It’s like sandpaper; it will wear you down; it will scrub you. It’s like a grindstone that takes grain and makes powder out of it. So, this is the best that you can expect in this world, and if it didn’t have a foundation of redemption, if it wasn’t the blood of the provision of God to uphold the earth and give it purpose, it would be completely empty and worthless.

What I want to highlight is that as wonderful as it is to partake of the provision of God because of what the sacrifice is that Jesus made for us, there is much more to God’s purpose than just being born again. When Jesus said to Nicodemus except you be born again you cannot see the kingdom of God and except you be born of water and of the spirit you cannot enter into the kingdom of God, he said in both cases that the result of being born again is to see, and the purpose to be cleansed by the washing of the water of the word and the Holy Spirit regeneration is to enter. If we enter in, it has to be according to the 3rd and 4th chapter of Hebrews, by trust. They could not enter in because of unbelief. In another place it says that they did not mix the word that they heard with faith in them. They heard the words but they didn’t trust the God who spoke. God, from his point of view, said, they drew nigh with their lips but they kept their heart from me. When they heard my words, they said we will do but they never gave me their heart. So, they entered not in because of unbelief. What God is saying is that we have an opportunity, being born again, to enter into the kingdom of God, but the way we must do so is by faith and that is faith in the God who spoke.

The 10th verse of the 4th chapter of Hebrews tells us how we are to enter into the rest, and it says we have to match how God entered into the seventh day. We talked about how God entered into the seventh day – that he ceased from creating and making. When he stopped creating and making, the sixth day came to an end and the seventh day began. It says that on the seventh day he rested from all that he had done, so that means that what made the sixth day end and the seventh day start, is that God blessed and sanctified what he had finished creating. This 10th

verse is a huge key for us as children of God. What it says here is that if we're going to enter into the blessing and sanctification of God, we have to enter in the same way God did: we have to cease from our work.

I want us to consider a very famous verse; it's in John 1:12. It says that as many as received Christ received the power to become the sons of God. It doesn't say they received the power to do anything; it says they have the power to become, so this is no longer about doing. It's about ceasing and promoting the work of God in our lives by trust.