

Rest Hebrews 4 22nd Sunday after Pentecost, Oct. 21, 2018

So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did Hebrews 4:9-10

Dear friends in Christ, how did you sleep last night? Well or not well? Are you sleepy now? Well I'll tell you now, if it wasn't well, don't try to make it up during the sermon.

I will say this though, if it wasn't well, you are not alone. In fact up to 70 million Americans routinely have trouble sleeping, trouble getting enough rest. From abien to CPAP machines, there are lots of ways to try to get more rest. The Mayo clinic has 6 tips:

1 Stick to a schedule - plan for 8 hours of sleep, go to bed at the same time

2 Food and drink - Don't go to bed stuffed or hungry, the discomfort will make it harder to sleep -and watch nicotine, caffeine and even alcohol to get a full deep sleep

3 Create a cool, dark environment - avoid the screens

4 Limit naps - hard to do if you couldn't sleep the night before, but it will help.

5 Get some exercise, especially out in the light. But not too close to bedtime.

6 Limit worries - easier said than done. The thing I do is set an alarm so I don't worry about getting up in time to do what needs to be done. But worries about safety, about money, about jobs, about health can keep us up - even when there isn't much to do about them.

WE are concerned about rest, and so was the writer of Hebrews. But He speaks not of sleep, but of the rest God gives. The rest given on the 7th day, where God rested from his labor and bids his people rest. The rest given from the hard toil in Egypt, where the people could rest in God's bounty in the promised land. These rests were offered to the Children of Israel.

But they had a problem. They had worries - about enemies, that the people of the land were stronger than them, They had worries - about food, that the food was better in Egypt. They had worries, about water - that God would not provide. And they turned back from the land God offered, turned from his food, grumbled about the water. And God let them wander from their rest. They wandered 40 years, till that generation died, for God said, they will never enter my rest.

And we might be a little worried here too. Because one reason we can't sleep is due to worries. Because we do worry - about health- and what that memory lapse, what that pain means. About Jobs, whether we can do them, if they will still be there, about money, where it will come from and if it will run out. About food and drink, and acceptance, and security, and the world and nation. And we wonder is there rest for us.

Now we are told there remains a rest for the people of God, that Jesus said come to me you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. WE are told to make every effort to enter that rest, we are told to seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you.

Christ completed his work on Good Friday and rested in the tomb on the Sabbath. He accomplished your salvation and mine, and invites us to rest in Him. So make every effort to enter his rest.

Don't look for other rests. Not the food of Egypt, not the accommodation with the enemies of God, not slavery to the world or to sin. Make no allowance for them, and don't compromise and say they are enough. That is what the addict says about the next hit or drink or the next project at work, but the rest they offer is death. The rest God offers is life. Do not work for the rest this world offers. The atheist offer the temporary solution - the eat and drink and be merry. We have better, rest with God.

And don't neglect how God gives rest. He gives his word, living and active, that we to may live. He gives that word today. He offers his rest in the body and blood of his son, the great high priest who defeated temptation and sin for us. The third commandment, Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, tells us of the rest. And Martin Luther showed that rest is in God alone when he said this means that we should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and his word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. We can rest in God alone, and we stay in his word to rest in him

Rest isn't about not doing anything.. Its trusting God with the results. Running is restful when I don't need to worry about the result. Work is restful when the result is assured. Running and living in this life is not a worry when we know God has defeated all our foes and offers rest. Don't save your strength for the next problem - God has handled them all. Rest in him.

So today, make every effort to enter his rest, for God has opened it to you.