

## ***“Tools to Help us Rest in God”*** ***Hebrews 4:12-16***

INTRO:

We learned last time in **Hebrews 4:10-11** there is an ultimate rest with God for all eternity and a present rest that we must diligently attempt to attain avoiding disobedience. How do we do this? The writer anticipated this question and continued on to tell us the tools for our entering rest. We have two great assets.

We can enter God’s rest because He has given us the Word of God and because we have the Lord Jesus Christ’s great high priestly ministry

***I. The Word of God (v.12-13)***

***II. Our Great High Priest (14-16)***

***I. The Word of God (v.12-13)***

A. ***“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*** (Hebrews 4:12).

He began **verse 12** with the word **“for.”** This is the connection to **verse 11**. Here is the first major tool to keep us from falling into the same example of disobedience and unbelief. This tool helps us in several ways

1. First, the Word of God is ***“living and powerful.”*** (v.12) The words of the Bible are not an incantation or a spell. Instead, they are used by the Holy Spirit of God to penetrate our hearts and lives and show us who we are and how we must change.

2. To illustrate its life and piercing power, the writer describes a penetrating that can’t possibly be physical. The word of God pierces between ***“soul and spirit.”*** (v.12) No human being can see the soul and spirit. How then could we divide them? It also divided ***“joints and marrow.”*** (v.12) Joints are between bones. Marrow is the substance within bones. What is the writer telling us? The Bible can cut right through us and show us what is wrong with us.

3. The key statement is that the Word of God is the judge, ***“the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*** (v.12) God sees much more about us than we can ever see. As we read the Word of God it shows us the evil still in our hearts and is the judge of the motives and actions we take. It goes where no one has ever gone before. Jeremiah reminded us

***“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”*** (Jeremiah 17:9).

The Word of God shows us that we are guilty of all manner of sin against our Lord.

B. **Verse 13** tells the result of our spiritual cat scan by the Word of God.

***“And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”***

We are laid bare and helpless.

1. The writer wants us to understand we cannot enter into the ultimate rest with God alone, nor can we live in the present rest without God helping us.

2. Perhaps, the most difficult for us to grasp is how helpless we are without Christ. Paul worked hard to teach this to us in **Romans 3:10-12**.

***“As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”***

C. What do we do? We are helpless.

## ***II. Our Great High Priest (14-16)***

A. ***“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” (Hebrews 4:14–15).***

When the Word of God shows us we are sinners, that is when we must remember who our high priest is. High priestly language can be strange to our thinking, but it was not strange to the Jewish converts who made up the writer’s first readers.

1. These readers had been taught of the Day of Atonement when the High Priest entered the holy of holies to make atonement for their sin.

2. They had learned that in the Law they could only be right if there was an innocent sacrifice for their sin. These are all images that the writer to the Hebrews will explore in the pages ahead in this book. Right now they had to understand that God had given them a high priest who would take care of their sin problem.

3. First, the Lord Jesus is ***“a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens.” (v.14)*** Our High Priest is greater than any other high priest these Jewish readers had ever heard about. He also had gone to the highest place in heaven, the very presence of God Himself. We have already read that He is seated on God the Father’s right hand.

Second, He told us that this high priest is none other than Jesus Christ the Son of God. Unlike all the other high priests, this is God Himself in human flesh.

Third, we need to hold fast to our confession because the Lord Jesus our high priest who knows what we are going through. The writer states this with a double negative, perhaps to make it an emphatic positive. We have a high priest who can be our go between because He can put his hand on us and on God at the same time because He is the God/man.

B. ***“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16).***

This verse does two things for the writer. First, it alerts his readers to their greatest tool for living in rest and that is drawing near to God and finding grace and mercy (nothing that they deserve, but what they do not deserve) to help in time of need. Second, it provides a great launching pad for his discussion of our Lord’s superior high priesthood.

How do we apply all of this?

First, we must recognize the Word of God, the Bible, is our first tool when it comes to **“rest.”** We cannot rely upon the promises of God if we do not know that they exist. Do we memorize the promises? Do we pray the promises? Do we turn them over in our minds? Do we believe them? Do we trust our lives to them?

Second, we must recognize that no one ever hides from God. He sees all of us and our sin. Nothing is hid from Him and everyone is helpless before Him. We begin in our walk with God by throwing ourselves upon His promise to save us by faith. We then can live our lives by grace through faith in His promises.

Third, we must learn how to draw near and seek God at the throne of grace, to find grace and mercy in our time of need.