

WEEK 4

HEBREWS 4-5:10

GOD'S PROMISE OF ETERNAL REST IS FOR THOSE WHO OBEY,
THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS, THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Preface

In the previous weeks...

- Week 1-2: Jesus Christ is God's ultimate revelation to the world. He is the promised Son of God who shared in our humanity and became the perfect atoning sacrifice for our sins. We were warned to pay attention to this message of salvation.
- Week 3: Through Jesus' sacrifice, we are welcomed into His family. As members of His house, we are warned to guard against hardened hearts and exhorted to firmly place our hope and confidence in Him.

This week...

- Jesus Christ, through His ultimate obedience to suffer and die for our sins while being our High Priest, has made God's promise of eternal rest available to us. We are exhorted to diligently strive to enter this rest by pursuing a relationship with God and living in obedience to His Word.

Observation

1. What are the four exhortations in this passage? (Hint: look for “let us” in verse 1, 11, 14, 16)
2. In Heb. 4:12, how were the five ways that the “Word of God” described?
3. How was Jesus’ obedience (Heb. 5:8-9) compared to the exodus generation’s obedience?

Interpretation

1. Based on Hebrews 4, what is the timing, nature, foundation, and significance of God's rest?

Leaders’ note:

[Timing] *God's rest is eternal, it has been established since the creation of the world (v.3), prophesied since the days of David (v.7), and is now available for believers.*

[Nature] *God's rest is described as a state of ceasing from one's own works (v.4, v.10).*

[Foundation] *God's rest is rooted in His completed work of creation (v.3-4) and the promise of entering into that rest through faith in Jesus Christ.*

[Significance] *God's rest symbolizes the rest, peace, and security found in a restored relationship with God through faith in Jesus; a state of spiritual rest, freed from the burden of trying to earn salvation.*

2. How do the four exhortations (v.1, 11, 14, 16) in this passage relate to entering God's rest?

*Leaders' note: We are warned to have a **reverential fear** and guard against ignorance or unbelief that may hinder us from experiencing God's rest (v.1-3), exhorted to **diligently strive** to enter God's rest by pursuing a relationship with God and living in obedience to His Word (v.11-13), reminded to **hold firmly to our faith** in Jesus Christ who is the source of our salvation (v.14), and encouraged to **approach God's throne of grace** with confidence, knowing that we have access to God's rest—grace and mercy—through Jesus Christ (v.16).*

3. Why was the “Word of God” (Heb. 4:12-13) brought up when discussing obedience and disobedience?

Leaders' note: The Word of God reveals God's will, teachings, and the consequences of rejecting God, serving as a guide for obedience. God's Word carries authority and possesses penetrating knowledge that can expose the innermost thoughts and motives, including any unbelief that may lead to disobedience.

4. What does Jesus' obedience amid suffering in His humanity, reveal about His character?

Leaders' note: Recall Heb. 4:15 and Heb. 5:2

5. Why were Jesus' prayers heard (Heb. 5:7), and how were His prayers answered?

Leaders' note: Jesus was heard because of His reverent submission. Jesus' prayers were answered NOT by escaping death but rather by conquering death after enduring suffering and facing death itself.

Application

1. What are some practical ways that we can allow the Word of God to penetrate our hearts and expose areas of unbelief that often lead us to disobedience?

2. In what areas have you been struggling to obey recently, and how have your struggles in obeying God impacted your relationship with Him?

3. What can we learn from Jesus' posture of prayer in Heb. 5:7, and how can we incorporate it when we pray for ourselves and others?

Optional Prayer Exercise: Intercessory Prayer

Intercessory prayer is a prayer to God on behalf of others. It invites us into God's care and concern for us, our families, our friends, and our world. We are commanded in the Bible to carry one another's burdens and pray for all the Lord's people. The purpose of this exercise is to **align** our hearts with God's heart and deepen our relationship with Him and His people.

1. **Practice active listening and grow our empathy.**

Ask open-ended questions to dig into the yearning behind the requests. By asking the right questions and listening closely, our prayers for others can go deeper than just repeating one's request to God.

2. **Spend some time in silence before praying out loud.**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us how we can pray for him/her, and ask God to reveal His heart for him/her.

3. **Pray out loud.**

Try to include in our prayer any Bible verses or characters of God that come to our mind during the time of silence. Try to encourage him/her with Biblical truths about our identity as God's beloved children.