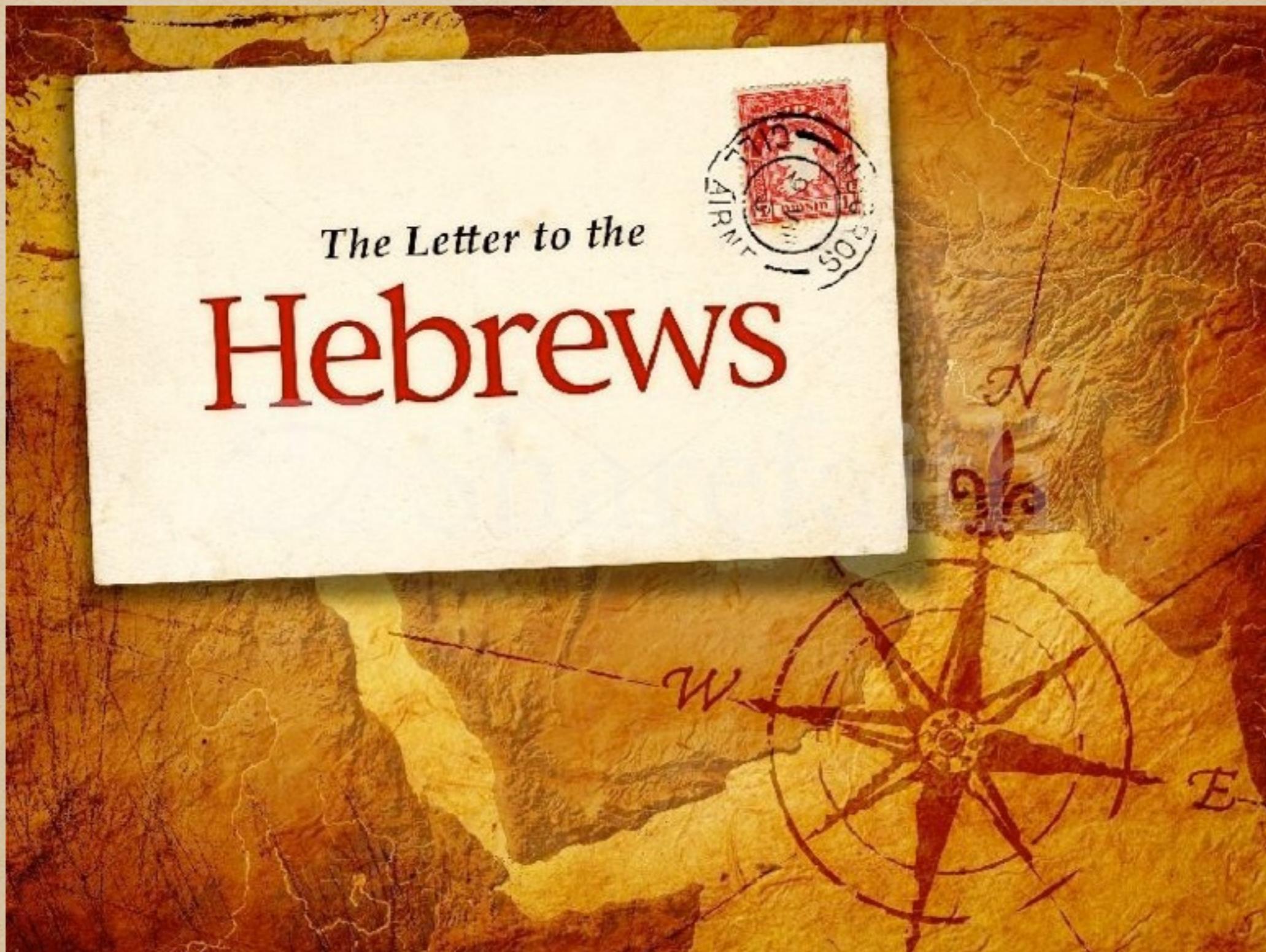


The Letter to the
Hebrews



Introduction

- The author remind his readers that God's rest is available today.
- It is analogous to the land promised to the Israelites many generations prior.
- He concludes by reminding them of the power of God's Word.

Believers Must Rest From Their Work

Hebrews 4:1-10

Believers Must Rest

- The author reminds them that the Israelites heard God's invitation to escape slavery and enter into the Promised Land.
- They failed to believe the Good News. They heard it but did not believe it.
- Their minds received what their hearts did not receive.

Believers Must Rest

- God declared them a hard-hearted people.
- They failed to enter the Promised Land.
- We are warned that we, too, can hear God's invitation (escape slavery of sin) and yet fail to fully believe the Gospel.
- Make sure you don't miss God's rest.

Believers Must Rest

- There is a future heavenly rest awaiting each of us (Hebrews 1:5; 3:7; 3:13; 4:7).
- Rest is related to the redemptive work of Christ - when we cease from our works, we enter into rest (Hebrews 4:10).
- Spiritual rest comes from maturity and perseverance (faith and obedience).

Believers Must Rest

- Unbelief breeds unrest and anxiety:
- “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6).
- Our salvation is complete. It is finished in Christ. We do not need to be anxious.

Rest Is
Available Today

Hebrews 4:11-13

God's Rest

- The author urges readers to enter into God's rest today.
- Strive to enter that rest - what are we striving to do? Striving to relax!
- Jesus is in charge. He is the author and finisher of our faith.

God's Rest

- We are to follow Jesus into the Promised Land of God's rest.
- Hebrews 4:11 says we are to “strive to enter that rest” but Psalm 46:10 says that we are to “cease striving.”
- We are also reminded of the power of God’s Word in our lives.

God's Word

- The Word is active - we can rest because the Word of God works in our lives.
- The Word is piercing - we can rest under the Word of God like a patient under the scalpel of a skilled surgeon.
- The Word is discerning - we can stop trying to justify our thoughts and actions.

The Power of God's Word

God's Word is Living

- God is a living God (3:12), therefore His Word cannot be separated from Him.
- The Word is a Living Word. It can never be exterminated.
- Isaiah 40:8 - “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”

God's Word is Living

- God's Word also imparts new life to dead sinners (Ephesians 2:12).
- A dead sinner cannot will himself into spiritual life any more than a dead corpse can will itself to life.
- James 1:18 - “In the exercise of His will, He brought us forth by the word of truth.”

God's Word is Living

- 1 Peter 1:23 - “for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.”
- God’s Word was written to bring about salvation through faith - John says this in his gospel (John 20:31).

God's Word is Living

- God's Word also imparts renewed life to believers.
- When we need spiritual encouragement, we can find it in God's Word.
- Psalm 19:7 - “The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul.”

God's Word is Living

- Psalm 119 has 176 verses that extol the benefits of God's Word.
- When we go through spiritual dry times in our lives, we need to turn to His Word.
- Because it is a Living Word, it also speaks to our current needs and situation.

God's Word is Active

- We get our English word “energy” from the Greek word translated “active.”
- The word could also be translated “effectual” or “impactful.”
- Isaiah 55:10-11 is a promise from God that His word will go forth and it will not return empty.

God's Word is Active

- The Old Testament teaches that God's Word accomplishes the purpose for which it is sent (Isaiah 55:10–11).
- The New Testament (4:12-13) teaches that the purpose is to create faith in some and evoke resistance in others.
- The Bible and the Holy Spirit do this.

God's Word is Sharp

- God's Word is sharp and piercing.
- Your joints are the thick, hard, outer part of the bones in your body.
- The marrow is the soft, tender, living, inner part of the bone.
- That is an analogy of “soul and spirit.”

God's Word is Sharp

- Swords that aren't too sharp may strike a bone and glance off and not penetrate.
- Others swords may penetrate part way through the tough, thick joint of a bone.
- But a very sharp, powerful double-edged sword will penetrate the joint all the way to the marrow.

God's Word is Sharp

- The Word of God reveals our true selves.
- Are we spiritual or are we natural? Are we spiritually alive or are we deceiving ourselves and spiritually dead?
- Are the “thoughts and intentions of our heart” spiritual thoughts and intentions or only natural thoughts and intentions?

God's Word is Judge

- Word of God is an authoritative judge.
- The word “thoughts” refer to what you think about, you would not want exposed.
- The word “intentions” are the actions you might take because of those thoughts.
- God’s Word exposes who we are!

God's Word is Judge

- God sees everything, including our deepest thoughts and motives.
- It is impossible to hide from God (Adam).
- We are naked and exposed to God. There is no escape from His omniscient gaze.
- We can't fool God!

God's Word is Judge

- The author also reminds us that we must give an account.
- That means we should be living a life that pleases Him (2 Corinthians 5:9-10).
- The following verses remind us Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest who invites us to draw near to the throne of grace.

Practical Action Steps

Treasure God's Word

- Treasure God's Word above worldly advice and counsel.
- Counsel from God's Word or from a godly Christian counselor is worth so much more than advice from a secular source.
- Psalm 37:30 (NLT) - “The godly offer good counsel; they teach right from wrong.”

Meditate on God's Word

- Psalm 1:1-2 - “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.”
- We should read God's Word and meditate on God's Word.

Obey God's Word

- We should also obey God's Word and apply it to every area of our lives.
- In a church with such good teaching, it is easy to fill your head with lots of Scriptural truth but never take the time to apply it to your daily life.
- Study God's Word so you can obey it!

Open to God's Word

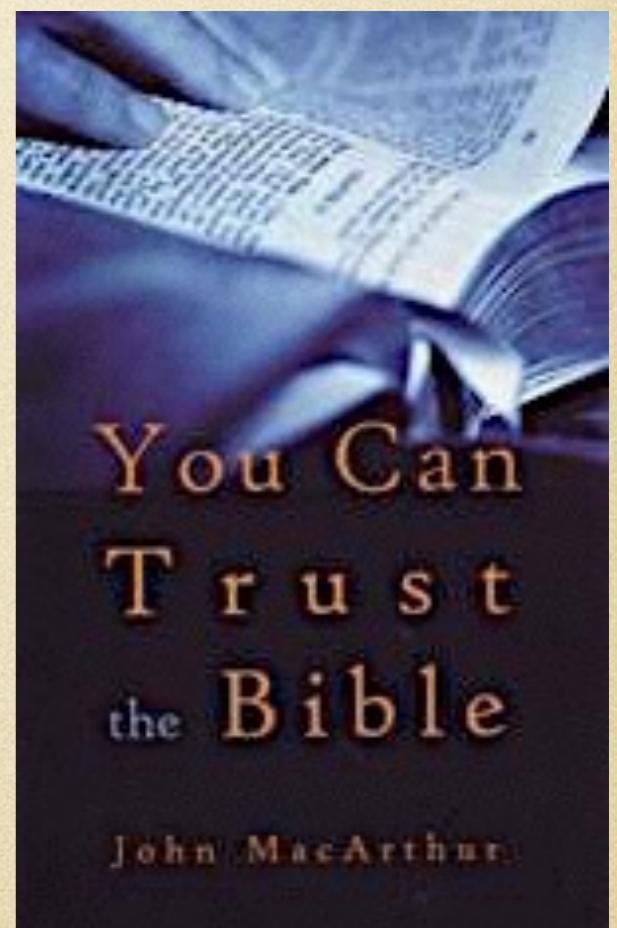
- We should always be open our hearts to God's Word.
- When the Word convicts you, confess it to God (1 John 1:9) and be cleansed.
- Don't postpone getting right with God but deal with sin immediately.

Seek Out God's Word

- Don't just assume that God's Word is only for Sunday.
- Seek out opportunities to hear God's Word throughout the week (sermons on radio, download messages).
- Schedule a dedicated time for your own in-depth study of God's Word.

Trust God's Word

- The Bible claims to be revelation from God to us.
- We should trust in God's Word, but what evidence do we have to justify our trust?
- Here are a few examples.



Trust God's Word

- Experience - the Bible gives us the experience it claims it will.
- The Bible says God will forgive our sin (1 John 1:19), and we can feel freedom from guilt.
- We become new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17) and we can see transformed lives.

Trust God's Word

- Science - the Bible provides an accurate picture of the universe and life on earth.
- Each Wednesday we are learning about the evidence for creation and the flood.
- Isaiah 40:26 - reminds us that God created the universe. He holds the stars together.

Trust God's Word

- The Bible gives an accurate description of the hydrological cycle (Isaiah 55:10).
- The Bible gives an accurate description of earth in orbit (Job 26:7).
- The Bible accurately describes the shape of the earth (Job 38:14).

Trust God's Word

- Miracles - the Bible describes various miracles that occurred in the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- More than 500 people saw Jesus alive after His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:6).

Trust God's Word

- Prophecy - the Bible is the only book with specific prophecies that were written down hundreds of years in advance of their fulfillment.
- Peter Stoner - *Science Speaks* - the probability of just eight messianic prophecies being fulfilled by chance is 1 in 100,000,000,000,000.

Trust God's Word

- Jesus - we know the Bible is reliable because Jesus Christ places His seal of approval upon the Bible.
- Matthew 5:18 - “Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.”

Trust God's Word

- The Bible is perfect - Psalm 19 explains that “the law of the Lord” is perfect.
- The message of the Bible is able to transform human beings.
- The death of Jesus on the cross for our sins makes us perfect in God’s eyes.

Trust God's Word

- The Bible is sure - Psalm 19 also explains that the Bible is sure, trustworthy, reliable.
- The Bible touches every area of life, including relationships, marriage, work.
- It provides guidance in every area of life and aids us in cultivating virtue in our daily lives.

Trust God's Word

- The Bible is clean - Psalm 19 says the Word of God is “clean, enduring forever.”
- The only things that will last forever are those things that are untouched by the devastation sin and evil.
- Most subjects we study in school are obsolete or will become obsolete.

Trust God's Word

- The Bible is true - Psalm 19 says the Word of God is true.
- In the Bible, we see that Pilate asked Jesus, “What is truth?” (John 18:38).
- Some people are “always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 3:7).

You Can Trust the Bible

