

The Day of Worship, Chapter 10

"The Eternal Sabbath"

2020.11.29 Sabbath School, Josiah Rentschler
Hopewell ARP Church, Culleoka, Tennessee

The weekly Sabbath rest anticipates the eternal rest of glory, with worship as its singular great activity, shaping how we keep the day as resident aliens who are observing the culture of their homeland.

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All right, we'll get started so if you can find a seat situated we're gonna open with the word of prayer. For us Jesus, please bless to our hearts this consideration of your Sabbath day and the eternal realities of Heaven to which we're heading. Jesus' name amen.

All right, if a man is born in Scotland. And then immigrates to the United States, we can immediately know by how he talks and from what he says and from how he phrases his words and maybe even from what he wears that he is from Scotland. Okay, I would say the same thing about New Zealand.

Well, maybe you can raise your hand. You want to immediately recognize that he's not from the US. The same thing is true of our citizenship in heaven. This is what this is what the chapters about the eternal Sabbath. The same is true of our citizenship in heaven because our citizenship and help because of our citizenship in heaven we immediately become like pilgrims or strangers on the earth according to Hebrews 11:13.

In heaven consists primarily of the communion of God in the communion with God. Then to the extent that we enjoy the communion with God on earth, we have already begun to enjoy the glories of heaven. On the Sabbath day. God has commanded for us to spend the whole day in heaven.

Where kids are we supposed to spend the day? What's it supposed to be like? This is an easy one, yes. In heaven, that's right. And linking back to my opening example, this is why we should have an otherworldly appearance in our talk and our mannerisms and our behavior and so forth.

So the people know that we are from heaven. We are we have spent time as it were in heaven. John Carrick wrote that the essentially other essential otherworldly character of the Christian faith has especially from the latter part of the 19th century onwards been eroded been washed away and it has been replaced by an essentially this worldly interpretation.

This is where the focus of much modern theology falls increasingly upon man is the expense of God and upon this life and this world at the expense of the world to come so we're going to take some time to consider heaven the joys and beauty of having the church is consumed with how to get to heaven but it thinks relatively a little about being in heaven how many how many people out there are obsessed with the rapture in the end times and how it's going to end by the way, my point is not to debate the rightness or wrongness of either.

These things but how many people spend little time to no time thinking about the beauty and glory of the reality of being in heaven? Personally I when I think about the relative proportion of time that I spend or have spent thinking about the glories of heaven I calls to repent for me because I'm realized that I'm earthly minded and think too much and speak too much of the things of the earth so travel there with me today see the beauty of Jesus and heaven this chapter starts with the overall premise that our Sabbath here on earth is a reflection of the eternal Sabbath reality in heaven.

I'll repeat that because that is the overriding thing if you come away with. Nothing else you need to know this that our Sabbath here on earth is a reflection of the eternal. Sabbath reality in heaven. So there are three areas are aspects that the author Dr. McGraw likes us to consider brings out number one the connection between the Sabbath and the eternal rest of heaven so the connection number two the activities that the scripture attaches to the eternal rest of heaven and number three the manner in which we should use the Sabbath to help us anticipate the eternal rest of heaven.

All right, so the connection the activities and the manner of anticipation. Number one the Sabbath and the eternal rest of heaven point one so first what is the connection between the Sabbath and the eternal rest of Heaven well the classic passage on this is going to go to Hebrews chapter four verses one to 11 so this is really the reading for today this is what the rest of the chapter kind

of talks about you starts from so we're going to divide it up and maybe two verses each if we have the the left row here they like to read but I know there's readers all over so I am going to raise your.

Hand if you're a reader and I'll just call on a random people who I know are. In there everyone should follow along because this passage is is best read. I think and it's harder to hear it than just intermediate okay, so let's start with chapter four verse one. Peter we'll start with you.

Therefore since the promised remains of entering his rest let us fear less any of you seen who I've come short of it.

For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them but the word which they heard did not profit them not being mixed with faith and those who heard it.

Jim. Or we do have believe. As he has said. So I swore in my wrath and they shall not enter my red. Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. Oh, now are you following? You reach for us at the same time. Okay. Gabrielle.

First form.

Ally verse six.

And seven. Again.

Today if you will hear his voice not part of your heart. Pastor hiking mercy. Or if God would have given them rest then he would not afterward of spoken of another day. There remains therefore arrest for the people of God. Enoch.

There. Legit to enter that restless anyone fall according to the same sample of. You. Very good, thank you all. Thank you very much. So it's about the rest of people God, that's the theme of the these 11 verses. So Hebrews 4 begins with an extra caution to be diligent to enter the rest of God and that rest was first promised where.

Where is it someone said it? Anyone. Where was the rest first promise to next Genesis 2? Yes. In the Garden of Notre when God finished creation, all right? Did he answer you that's the first time the rest is promised. In fact, the institution of the Sabbath day served as a kind of eschatological hope.

Now, this is important with an implicit promise that mankind would enjoy an eternal rest with God. By the time King David came this Sabbath rest was still a pledge of a future promise. Okay, so we tracing we're tracing the passage. Dr. McGraw makes an interesting remark that the reference in Deuteronomy chapter 5 you remember the Deuteronomy chapter 5 we've been over it as a congregation but it's I'd say recapitulation of the Ten Commandments and it adds a little phrase in there about you know, the the fourth commandment and it says remember that you yourselves were once a slave in Egypt and the Lord God delivered you and Dr.

McGraw says that this. Promised the grace of God or reminded the grace of God in Exodus was not so much an additional reason for keeping the Sabbath as a foreshadowing of the means by which the original Sabbath purpose would be restored in heaven, so it's got an escalog eschatological bent as we trace Hebrews, we realize that the rest that's promised is an eternal rest, okay, it's an eternal rest.

That's important it is of a permit duration the author of Hebrews argues that it is not for Old Testament Christians to look back into the land that say canon for their rest that wasn't the rest that might have been a foreshadowing of the rest but that wasn't arrest instead, they must look forward to the future rest that has been secured by Christ alone.

God promised the future rest not to come through Joshua, so there's still remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. Hebrews chapter 4 verse 10, we're on verse 10 now says for he that has entered into his rest has himself cease from his own works as God did from him by implication, we are supposed we are supposed to be patterns of the Lord Jesus Christ who finished his work when he died on the cross and after he said that his remarkable thinking back to John 19 30 where Jesus says, it is finished.

Okay, so Jesus is entering that rest so this is where he sees and rested from his own worker prevention as God did from his the rest of Christ therefore his compared to the rest of God and its magnitude and secures this rest for his people with unshakable certainty, let me stop here and add some own thoughts for context if you go to the liberal wing of our church, you will find the major argument

against keeping the Sabbath is that the Sabbath has been fulfilled in Christ.

Now that sounds good and it sounds good because we do have some examples of things like the ceremonies of the temple and the sacrifices ending when Christ came and the Sabbath is in a way similar to the Old Testament sacrifices in that it occurs again and again and again and they both end when the reality to which they point comes in the case of the sacrifices of they clearly point to the once for all sacrifice of Christ, but, We should be careful not to make the same I guess distinction or mistake with the Sabbath.

It is patterned by Christ but his death is not the end of the repeating pattern for us. Instead the Bible in Hebrews in particular tells us that Christ rested from His works celebrated the internal Sabbath and that we are called to imitate that. When we die we will enter the Eternal Sabbath rest with Jesus.

The author of Hebrews concludes that since Christ has rested from His work, they're still remains a sabbatism or Sabbath rests for the people of God. That's in verse 10, I believe. So the term is unusual and it's unusual because it's not the same word that she's everywhere else for rest that translated rest in Hebrews chapter 4.

Probably why Hungary was following along in the Greek or something like that can see the sabbatism once it's a different word and it's and it is Sabbath rests. It's like in English. You have the contraction of the two words kind of created new word sabbatism. Okay. Sabbath rest for the people of God.

It's specifically Sabbath rest. And so don't miss that. The fact remains that that we have not yet entered that rest. We must wait patiently for it. We must persevere in the expectation of it through faith in Christ finish work for we walk by faith and not by sight. So to summarize the first point the Sabbath is designed to be a shadow of the heavenly realities and just as the Lord suffered for shadows a day we will sit down at the wedding feast of the lamb the Sabbath for shadows the heavenly eternal rest of heaven.

A church without a Sabbath is a church that implicitly relinquishes its hope of heaven and the Sabbath is given us as a shadow of the things come. So and that closes the the first point. The second one here is the activities in heaven. Okay, so we've talked about the connection between the Sabbath and heaven.

Now, we talked about the activities of the Eternal Rest of Heaven.

William Plummer made the observation he said no man note on earth knows much of heaven Thomas Manson and other one of the Puritans said heavenly joys cannot be told in an earthly dialect. He says the scriptures fame to list to us and speak as we can understand of things to come by things present.

Therefore, he concludes our glory is in great measure unknown and will be till we get up and see what a crown of glory is prepared for us. Your believer what a chronic glory is prepared for you and it is in large part. On unexperienced yet. I know First John 3 wanted to tell us that we do not yet know what we shall be but when he appears we will be like him.

We will see him as he is Philippians 3:21 and 1st Corinthians 15:49 tell us that our moral bodies will be transformed into the image of his incorrupt and immortal body. In heaven, we don't know a whole lot about the other activities that maybe going on but we know the primary one.

I'll just pause there and ask the kids and all of us. What is the primary activity of having? What is it? You can there's you might use three words he uses one word. What would you say it is? Thomas say it again. The worship of God, right? And he says, it's fair to summarize it in one word and that word is worship.

When we see Christ as he is which God promised to the pure and heart in Matthew 5 and stand in the presence of such infinite worth and unbounded glory what else could attract our attention? How could we be distracted or bored in the presence of God? My wife reminded me this morning and if you if you're one of those.

You wouldn't heaven. Are we gonna be bored? Well, you think about maybe a little word of encouragement to you if you're in that class or category. Whenever God appears to the Old Testament saints whenever he peers to the those in the, New Testament when the revelation got appears they're never born, they always fall down on their knees and they are in all they are afraid even and fear of the Holy God know it will not be boring.

It will be a glorious experience those who are redeemed by Christ's blood and who have nothing to fear because of that. If the angels in heaven sinless as they are worship the Lord continually how much more will we not have calls to worship because we have been redeemed to God by the blood of the Jesus and of every tongue and tribe in people of nation.

Point is we got more reason than the angels to worship God. Because we have been redeemed. Although the details of heaven made still be somewhat hazy it is beyond doubt that worship sets the tone for eternity. So we're setting the tone for eternity today. We should be Revelation for a the great throne room scene where all the redeemed creation is gathered about God tells us that they rest not night and day saying holy holy holy Lord God.

Almighty who was and is and is to come. Then they are joined by the lamb who opens the scroll and then every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and all that are in the sea. John says he hurts them blessing and glory and honor empower me to him who sits on the throne and to the land forever and ever.

Incidentally, this is one of the strongest proofs in the scripture that the Lord Jesus is really God because this thrice holy holy holy worship is ascribed to Jesus and just for concepts when the wind they don't have a word. I'm told in Greek for the holy sir, right so we have holy holy or holiness to English they don't have that the way they get there is through emphasis holy holy.

So they're saying there's nothing the implication of by the fact that the repetition means there's no other worship that's holier than this there's no one holier than this and so it's ascribing to Jesus. Godhood minor point. Okay, so where there's no distinction made in heaven there's also no distinction made on the earth so worship or worship is the primary activity in heaven and should be ascribed to God as well as to the Lord Jesus.

The extent to which we failed to understand why we would desire nothing other than worship in heaven reflects the poor proportion to which we have failed to understand the glory and wonder and grace of the trinity in the gospel that's important if you are in Christ then you will be made like Christ if you are made like Christ, then you will see him as he is first John three two, and it will not and will not Dr.

McGraw argues will not take eternity to express your gratitude to the trying on. Life. May God help us when we doubt and increase our faith. So in summary the most primary most important activity of heaven is worth. Now some have speculated about what other activities may be going on in heaven.

And there are some that think that we will go to maybe an Eden like state before the fall. But that's kind of an assumption in my opinion, we don't know we do know that since the fall things have changed radically and there's more reason to praise and worship our God for the redemption that he has worked and there was before the fall.

We know that the things will be very different from the Garden of Eden for instance the institution of marriage as we know it will no longer exist this mean that we won't spend time with our wife or family or relatives or anyone we know no no I don't think it does but the preeminent activity that we will be involved in is the activity of worship our union with Christ will replace I think to a large extent our union with our spouses which was ever only a model and a shadow.

Marriage is the other creation ordinance that and it is fitting that marriage work and the Sabbath will be fully and finally fulfilled with the recreation. So you see there's a connection there creation ordinances, they're fulfilled in the recreation. They don't not before them. The summary of our second point about the activities of heaven is that worship is the pre-minute activity The argument the doctor from McGraw makes is that the ceaseless nature of this worship should make it our exclusive activity and that's where I have to stick close to Scripture and say in my opinion scripture doesn't exactly say that public worshipping the exclusive activity has happened.

It's certainly possible to get there by your friends. But I think that inference and inference and direct command is to recommend. So all I seek to do is present the Bible and let the Spirit apply the the implications but it certainly, You could reach that conclusion by inference. One last point is that whatever other pleasures or treasures there are in heaven.

They only serve to accentuate and to improve the glory and beauty of God in heaven imagine with me a great room at the center of the room is the greatest treasure of all the pearl of great price and it diverts the attention of the viewer of everyone who enters the room to the neglect of all else.

Yet the wonder and the beauty of all the other treasures in the room. Provide the only appropriate backdrop for this drainage of all treasures and center degrees. God himself is the great consuming treasure of heaven and it is his design that all other wealth and enjoyments serve as the fitting backdrop getting back to him.

So, that's where we're willing to point to. Last of all using the Sabbath to anticipate the Eternal Rest of Heaven. We need every help we can get to set our minds on things above. The Sabbath is a blessed gift of God that He's given us for just such a purpose so that we can long for having more.

Now our third point we come to consider how the Sabbath in particular helps us to anticipate heaven. Dr. McGraw gives us three points or three ways, it does this. Number one, the Sabbath keeping should mimic or imitate the activities of heaven. By worshipping God in public and private on the Sabbath day throughout the entire day, we mortify the desires of the flesh, right?

There's more vacation there's diversion. Mortifying you when you worship God throughout the day you're mortifying to desires the flesh. You're saying no to things that are not wrong in and of themselves, but that don't serve that greater purpose of worship. Number two, the Lord's day keeping should encourage us on our way to have it.

So how many times have you walked in or have I walked out from experience, you know, kind of downcasts and discouraged and and walked out thinking wow what a God we have and how encouraging it is to be in union with Christ with him. And number three, the Sabbath should increase our faith in God through Jesus Christ.

You know, we have weak faith. That's why we have a weekly savor to renew our faith our enjoyment of Christ. The church's primary hope is to see Christ face to face in heaven and worship Him in His unveiled glory and this hope has to be the dominant features of our lives and of the church.

John Piper rewords the first question of the catechism. Are you going to bring this in? What's the first question to category the who knows it? Oh Mary in the back, what's the first question? Oh, yes, that is the first question. Now, what is the first answer kids? Who knows it?

Because okay, not yes yours your hand. That's right man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. So he rewords it. And he says what is the chief of demand and he says the chief end and demand is to glorify God by enjoying him forever. Now that's kind of John Piper's theological contribution and and I don't agree that enjoying God is the only way that we glorify God.

There's certainly other ways, okay. But suffice it to say and and I think John Piper would tell you that but in terms of practically how we glorify God by finding our enjoyment in him in his worship. It's hard to underestimate how important the part of enjoying him. Is if men do not relish the type is a Sabbath in this case it's proof positive that they're not prepared for the anti-type which is the eternal Sabbath rest.

If you're not finding joy and enjoyment God in the Sabbath and calling into the light in honorable how you how will you ever delight in heaven? John Owen makes this point and he says what would such persons do if they should ever come to heaven to be taken aside for all eternity to be with God alone who think it a great bondage here to be diverted unto him for dead.

If we're doing if all we're doing is desiring heaven as a refuge from health then we are missing the main blessedness of heaven, which is Jesus himself. So the conclusion of this chapter is that the Sabbath is inextricably inextricably connected to the hope of heaven and the biblical conception of the activities that heaven and should shape our Sabbath keeping.

In conclusion we've talked about the eternal rest of the Sabbath and its connection to heaven we've discussed the activities going on in heaven and the manner in which the Sabbath helps us anticipate them. Or heaven Thomas Boston who incidentally was connected to the marrow controversy, which was the start of the ARP says this The Sabbath in the esteem of the saint is the Queen of Days and there shall and they shall have an endless sabatism in the kingdom of heaven.

So shall their garments always be white they will have an eternal rest with uninterrupted joy for heaven is not an arresting place where men may sleep out eternity there they rest not day and night but their work is their rest and continual recreation and toil and weariness have no place there they rest there in God who is the center of their souls here, they find the completion or satisfaction of all their desires having the full enjoyment of God and uninterrupted communion.

With him. Thomas Watson, another puritan in the book heaven called heaven taken by storm the holy

violence a Christian is to put forth in the pursuit of glory. I love that title heaven taken by a storm the holy violence a Christian is to put forth in the pursuit of glory and that he wrote when this blessed day approaches we must lift our hearts and thankfulness to God that he put another means into our hands for gaining heavenly wisdom.

These are our spirituals talking about the Sabbath these are our spiritual harvest days the wind of God's Spirit blows upon the sales for gaining heavenly wisdom.

The wind of God's spirit blows upon the sales of our affections and we may be carried further into our heavenly voyage Christ nor Christian lift up your heart to God and thankfulness that he has given you another golden season be sure you improve it in swift it may be your last.

So we in this talk in a serious note Christian beware keep the Sabbath holy don't let another wasted one go by use and improve it and let the Word of God call us to repentance may we all say with the demon possessed voice father with tears the Lord I believe help my unbelief.

May God help us to rightly apply his truth and rejoice of the glory in the glory of God in heaven.

All right, listen right heavenly father we thank you for. Promising us arrests and. Our souls on this earth are you know prone to wander from? We are prone to leave the God that we say that we love but you have given us an eschatological hope that is heaven to look forward to so that all the cares of this world and the allurements of of our own pleasures growth in the light of your glory and grace and we pray.

Father that that would happen today. Lord bless the preaching of your word. May your spirit apply that to our hearts and do the work that you sent him for and it is in Jesus name that we pray this amen.