

March 1, 2020

—The Gospel Changes Everything—

The Sabbath in Glory

Hebrews 4:9

Our final sermon on Sabbath

If you are new to us this morning, we have been going through the Scriptures looking at the idea of the Sabbath. This is our final sermon in this series. The basic outline that we have been following is the overarching storyline of the Bible, namely: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Glory.

The Sabbath in Creation

First, we looked at the Sabbath in creation. On the 6th day God created man in His image—male and female He created them. God then gave man what's called the creation mandate—to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion” (**Genesis 1:28**). That is glorious! When we create and produce and think and speak in the world, we make God’s image to shine forth. But this is not the pinnacle of the creation account. If the 6th day is the pinnacle of creation, then we are slaves—because our great purpose on earth would be uninterrupted work. No, God’s goal for humanity is that we would rest and rejoice in Him—that’s Sabbath. We *cannot* have a fulfilled life apart from this end. As Augustine said “Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.”¹

The Sabbath in Fall

Secondly, we looked at the Sabbath in the fall. We asked why is the Sabbath so *hard*? Why can it be so *frustrating*? Because of sin. John Knox the Scottish Reformer said that “...Satan first drew mankind [away] from the obedience of God...by pouring into their hearts that poison, that God did not

¹ Source: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/42572-thou-hast-made-us-for-thyself-o-lord-and-our> Accessed February 29, 2020

love them.”² They drank that poison, they ate the forbidden fruit, and sin entered the world. And now like Adam, we naturally hide from God. We no longer want to walk with Him in the garden in the cool of the day. So we respond with the error of legalism or antinomianism.³ We become legalistic when we treat Sabbath keeping as a way to earn God’s love and favor. We become antinomian when we cast off the Sabbath altogether thinking the gospel has made void the law. In either case, Satan wins, because he has succeeded in making us believe that the Sabbath is not expression of the Father’s gracious love, but rather reflects His cold, restrictive heart.⁴

The Sabbath in Redemption

Thirdly, we looked at the Sabbath in Redemption. We asked the question: how is the Sabbath redeemed in the gospel? We saw that all the ceremonial parts of the Sabbath law in the OT were telling a story about a Savior. When He came into the world, those ceremonial parts were fulfilled and put away *by Him*, because the shadow gave way to the substance (**Col. 2:16-17**). We discovered that the Sabbath wasn’t mainly about a day, it was about a Person—our True Sabbath Jesus Christ. He said in **Matthew 11:28-29** “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you *rest*. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find *rest* for your souls.”

² Iain Murray, *The Old Evangelicalism*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), pg. 157

³ Every week, the question lies before you: what is the most vital thing I will do in this week? And Satan is always trying to answer that question for you. He’s still whispering: “...eat this other fruit—God knows that if you spend time doing other things, you will be more fulfilled. He’s holding out on you. Don’t waste your time Sabbathing—think of the money you’ll lose, or the family time you’ll lose, or the rest you will lose, or the career opportunities you will lose.” That’s the antinomian temptation. The legalistic temptation goes like this: “...you better obey and Sabbath, because God doesn’t love you unless you earn it. So be a good little minion, take the bitter medicine and then you will be free to do what you really want to do.”

⁴ Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*, (New York, NY.: Viking, 2015), pg. 54. “For both the legalist and the antinomian, obedience to the law is simply the way to get things from God, not a way to get God, not a way to resemble, know, delight, and love him for his sake.” *ibid*, pg. 55

The Sabbath in Glory

This morning we are looking at the Sabbath in glory. What will the Sabbath look like in Heaven? What is God calling us to for all eternity? **Hebrews 4:9** holds out this infinitely precious promise: “So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.” This is not a command. It’s a promise. But it’s more than a promise, it’s a prophecy—telling us what is to come. “There *remains* a Sabbath rest for the people of God.” A Sabbath *remains* for us—meaning a rest is *reserved* for us, a rest is *kept* for us in the future. Think about the wise virgins in Matthew 25, besides having the oil in their lamp, they kept a *reserve* for future use. Loved ones, we still have a Sabbath reserved for us.⁵ God has never changed his mind. He still desires to walk with us in the garden of the cool of the day. He still desires for us to dwell with Him and to feast off the abundance of His house and drink from the rivers of His delight. **Matthew 25:34** says that God has been preparing this future Sabbath—this kingdom for us to inherit from before the foundation of the world.

The Big Idea...

A Sabbath rest remains for the people of God—that no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor heart imagined—in which we will forever be with the LORD

- ★ The Nature of That Rest
- ★ The Activity of That Rest
- ★ The Person of That Rest

⁵ The worldly man hopes for *mere* retirement. Like the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12, the worldly man at best hopes to be able to relax, eat, drink and be merry with the bigger barns that he has built for all his stuff. But when he dies, his soul will be required of him.

I. The Nature of That Rest

The problem of Hebrews

The book of Hebrews was written in order to help 1st century Jewish Christians. They had come to know and believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, that all the OT prophets pointed to Him, yet "...they lacked a full confidence in the gospel."⁶ They experienced "...tremendous hostility from their own people—ostracism from their families, persecution, and suffering..."⁷ Therefore they who were tempted to go back to the rituals and ceremonies of Judaism.

Jesus is *better than*

So what Hebrews does is it shows how Jesus is *better than* everything in Judaism.⁸

Ch.1 Jesus is *better than* the OT prophets because *though* they spoke God's Word, He being God's Son upholds the universe *by His own Word*.

Ch.2 Jesus is *better than* the angels because *though* they were sent to serve us, He was sent to share in our flesh and blood and to make propitiation for our sins.⁹

Ch.5-7 Jesus is the *true and better* High Priest for He has done away with the daily sacrifice for sins when He offered up His own body once for all.

⁶ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Hebrews*, (Chicago, IL.,: Moody Publishers, 1983), pg. xi

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ The following contrasts are found in: Hebrews 1:2-3; 1:14; 2:14,17; 3:3; 4:8-9; 7:27; 8:6,10; 9:11, 24; 10:1; 11:16; 12:28; 13:5 (respectively)

⁹ Ch.3 Jesus has been counted worthy of *more glory* than Moses just as the builder of the house has a more glory than the house itself.

Ch.8 Jesus is the mediator of the *better* covenant built on *better* promises for He has not written God's law on tablets of stone but on our hearts.¹⁰

Ch.12 Jesus is the *true and better* King for in Him we have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

Ch.13 Jesus a *better* hope than anything found this world for He has promised 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'

Jesus is the *true and better* Joshua

Now the argument of chapter 4 is essentially no different. Jesus Christ is the *true and better* Joshua because Jesus doesn't lead us to a *mere* earthly rest (the promised land) but to Heaven where we have an eternal rest.

You see after Moses died, Joshua led the children of Israel into the promised land. When this happened, **Joshua 21:44** says that "...the LORD gave them *rest* on every side..." Entering the promised land meant entering into *rest*. But the argument here in Hebrews 4 is that Joshua didn't give them rest. Please look with me at v.8 "For if Joshua had given them *rest*, God would not have spoken of another day later on." What's going on here? Well the Greek word that is used here for *rest* has two applications. It can refer to an *earthly* rest or an *eternal* rest.¹¹ Clearly Joshua led Israel to an *earthly* rest (**Joshua 21:44**) but not to an *eternal* rest. That's why the end of v.8 tells us that God has spoken of another type of rest, a rest that Israel didn't enter, a rest that is something infinitely better than the promised land.

¹⁰ Ch.9 Jesus is the *true and better* tabernacle for He entered into Heaven itself to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

Ch. 10 Jesus is *better* than the OT ceremonial laws since they but a shadow of the good things to come, but He is the substance *the true form of these realities*.

Ch.11 Jesus is the *true and better* object of our faith because He is the *better* country—the Heavenly one—that all the saints of old greeted from afar.

¹¹ Specifically the noun form of this *rest* G2663 (the verb form is G2664)

A Sabbatismos that is coming

Please look at v.9 “So then, there remains a *Sabbath rest* for the people of God.” The Greek word for *Sabbath rest* here is σαββατισμός sabbatismos. This is the only place in the NT where this word is used. It means our eternal resting place. That realm that we will enter into when this life ends, where we will be free from all trouble, all sin, all evil. **Revelation 14:13** “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may *rest* from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”

Now we know that v.9 is speaking about the next age, because v.3 tells us that as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have already possess a certain type of *rest*. v.3 says “For we who have believed enter that *rest*...” Believers possess a true *rest* already, because they have peace with God (**Romans 5:1**); there is now no condemnation for them (**Romans 8:1**); nothing can separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (**Romans 8:39**). Every believer possesses this rest objectively.

But v.9 is pointing to something more. Consider these six truths that show the best rest is still reserved for believers in Heaven.¹²

1. This is a unearthly rest

No one has *ever* experienced this kind of rest on earth. It is an other-worldly rest. v.9 stresses this point: it is a Sabbath rest that *remains*—it is reserved, it is kept. Kept for when? For the end of this age. Listen to how NLT puts it: “So there is a special rest still waiting for the people of God.”¹³ Dear congregation, there is a true and better rest coming, a special rest. It is like when Jesus changed the water into wine at Cana, the master of feast said “Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the

¹² Much help here from Thomas Brooks, *The Works of Thomas Brooks*, Vol. 1, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint, 2001), pg. 414-418

¹³ Or the Amplified Bible “So then, there is still awaiting a full and complete Sabbath-rest reserved for the [true] people of God.”

guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best [until last].”¹⁴ Beloved, the best rest is still coming. This is something you’ve never experienced. Your eye has not seen it, your ear has never heard of it, and your heart has never imagined it. It is not of this world.

2. This is a comprehensive rest

Meaning, every part of your being will experience rest. As the Puritan Thomas Brooks says, it will be “...a rest from all sin, and a rest from all sorrow; a rest from all afflictions and a rest from all temptations; a rest from all oppression and a rest from all vexations; a rest from all labor and pains, from all trouble and travail, from all aches, weaknesses and diseases.”¹⁵ **Philippians 3:21** says that “the LORD Jesus Christ...will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.” Beloved do you know what it means to have a body like the glorified body of Christ? It means that on that day “every part of [your body] will be as full of pleasure as [it] can hold.”¹⁶

3. This is an uninterrupted rest

Even the most godly saint has his rest interrupted here. Jesus said “In this world *you will have tribulation...*” (**John 16:33**) Here our rest is interrupted by sin and temptation; by the devil molesting us and God withdrawing from us; here our rest is be interrupted by persecution and suffering and by the death of friends and family. But when we reach our final rest in Heaven, our rest will never be interrupted again. All sin will be swallowed up. We will never be tempted again. The devil will be thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur and He will be tormented day and night forever. Death will be no more neither shall there be mourning. And we shall never feel distant from God again. “For the

¹⁴ NIV

¹⁵ Brooks, pg. 416

¹⁶ Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2009), pg. 619

Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water..." (**Rev. 7:17**).

4. This is a universal rest

Meaning, that this rest is for every single true child of God. Our verse tells us "So then, there remains a Sabbath rest *for the people of God*," meaning—every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will enter into this rest together. Isn't this one of the things that we grieve over here? Since we are all members of the same body "if one member suffers, all suffer together" (**1 Cor. 12:26**). How can we possibly have true rest here when our brothers and sisters are being persecuted for their faith? Or when we see them suffering from abuse or sickness or abandonment? But there remains a Sabbath rest for *all the people of God!* On that day, all will enter into the joy of their master, all will possess the peace that passes understanding, all will have every tear wiped from their eyes.

5. This is a peculiar rest

Meaning this rest is *only* for the people of God—"...there remains a Sabbath rest *for the people of God*" not for those who do not belong to God. **Revelation 14:11** says "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, *and they have no rest*, day or night..."

6. This is an eternal rest

Whenever we rest here, it always comes to an end. We lay down to rest at night but the morning always comes. We begin our weekend of rest from work, but Monday always comes. But this future rest that is reserved for us, is endless, everlasting rest. **1 John 2:25** "And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life." What does eternal rest mean? Well consider that our eternal rest does not consist in *ages*. Humanity progresses in *ages* from infancy to adulthood. We begin young and then turn old. The older we get the less time we have for rest in this life. Our lives are like those hour glasses with the sand—each day that passes is one less grain of sand. But not so with eternity. After we

have been there 63 million years, there is not any less sand in the glass than when we were there only 63 seconds. If a great mathematician were to start subtracting years from eternity at an exponential rate with the latest and most powerful computer so that the numbers he subtracted soon exceeded the machine's capacity *and* then made even more progress with ever-increasing velocity and precision, and then spent the duration of his life simply subtracting by tens of billions always ever increasing in his skill he would still not lessen eternity by a blink of an eye. To enter into our eternal Sabbath means that we rest and rejoice in God's presence as long as He Himself shall exist.

That's our **first point**. The Sabbath rest that is reserved in Heaven for us is 1) an unearthly rest, 2) a comprehensive rest; 3) an uninterrupted rest; 4) a universal rest for all the people of God; 5) a peculiar rest for only the people of God and 6) an eternal rest.

II. The Activity of That Rest

Heaven is not static inactivity

We should never think that Heaven will be a place where we do nothing. That is not the type of *rest* that the **Hebrews 4:9** is pointing to. When God finished creation on day 6 and entered into His rest on day 7 He didn't stop working *properly* speaking. He merely stopped "...producing [new] things out of nothing..."¹⁷ That's why Jesus said in **John 5:17** "My Father is working until now, and I am working." Likewise when we get to heaven we will not enter into a state of static inactivity. I would suggest to you that is a lie of the devil.¹⁸ What

¹⁷ Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: God and Creation Vol. 2*, (Grand Rapids, MI.,: Baker Academic, 2004), pg. 592

¹⁸ Ephesians 6:16

better way to slander our Lord than for Satan to insinuate that we will have nothing to do in Heaven?¹⁹

The problem of inexpressibility

It's true that the Scripture doesn't have speak with great detail about what we will be doing. But that is for one simple reason: heavenly things are inexpressible. After Paul was translated to Heaven, he said that "...he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter" (**2 Corinthians 12:4**).²⁰

1. We will work in Heaven

However, Scripture does provide some revelation regarding our activity. **First**, we know that will continue to work.²¹ But the difference between our work now and our work *then* is the curse will be no more. All of our creating and producing and learning and laboring will be pure joy as we reflect God's working. Herman Bavinck says "[All] Tribes, peoples, and nations will make their own particular contribution to the enrichment of life in the new Jerusalem."²² **Revelation 21:26** says that all "...will bring into it their *glory* and the *honor* of the nations."

¹⁹ What an insult to God to think that we are more happy here on this sinful earth, than He could make us in Heaven. Likewise it is an insult to Christ (Rom. 8:32). "If nothing be too much to be given to man, and to be done for man in the means of procuring his happiness, nothing will be too much to be given to him as the end, no degree of happiness is too great for him to enjoy." Edwards, pg. 624

²⁰ The Dutch theologian Brakel said that "Anyone who receives but a glimpse and tastes but a little of [Heaven] will be dumbfounded and his pen will stop, for he will not be able to find words to express it. He will be ashamed about the expressions he makes concerning it, as they do not correspond to the matter itself." Wilhelmus A. Brakel, *The Christian's Reasonable Service, Vol. 4: Ethics and Eschatology*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Reformation Heritage Books, 1995), pg. 361-362

²¹ In **Ephesians 2:10** "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." Did God only prepare good works for us here? Surely not. Certainly the greater part of our works are still ahead of us in our eternal state. Furthermore Revelation 14:13 says Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, *for their deeds follow them!*" Meaning, each of us will be followed by our works.

²² Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church and New Creation*, Vol. 4, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2008), pg. 727

2. We will reign in Heaven

Secondly, we will rule and reign in the Sabbath rest to come. There will be kings and priests who will reign on earth forever. **Revelation 5:10** "...you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign forever" (cf. 1:6; 22:5). There will those who are put in charge of many cities. In **Luke 19:17**, Jesus tells those who were faithful over little that they will be put in charge of many things: "Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over *ten cities*"

3. We will judge the universe

Thirdly, we will God judge the universe. In **1 Corinthians 6:2-3** Paul says "...do you not know that the saints will judge the world?...Do you not know that we are to judge angels?"²³ So clearly the Sabbath rest to come is not a state of inactivity.

4. We will enjoy our rewards

Fourthly, we will be busy *enjoying* our rewards. We should never be ashamed or think it is inappropriate to speak of gaining and enjoying rewards in Heaven. **Hebrews 11:6** demands that we think of God as One who rewards those who seek Him: "...for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists *and that he rewards those who seek him.*"

Likewise Jesus promised us rewards, and held them out as a motive. Furthermore He taught that rewards are giving in proportion to the works performed. **Matthew 16:27** says "For the Son of Man is going to come with his

²³ Jesus told the disciples in **Luke 22:29-30** "I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, [30] that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.”²⁴

Q. What will be rewarded?²⁵

Faithful service will be rewarded. **1 Corinthians 3:14** “If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, *he will receive a reward.*”

Loving your enemies will be rewarded. **Luke 6:35** “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, *and your reward will be great...*”

Showing mercy will be rewarded. **Matthew 6:3-4** “...when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. *And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*”

Praying will be rewarded. **Matthew 6:6** “...when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

²⁴ Also cf. Matthew 19:29; Romans 2:6; 1 Cor. 3:8; Gal. 6:9; Rev. 2:23. Regarding the objection that there is no difference in rewards: In Matthew 20:1-16 we are taught that every believer will *equally* receive the same eternal life, that we will *equally* live in the same Jerusalem that is from above, and that we will *equally* share in the same fellowship with God and in the same blessedness. But this passage does not say that there will be not any differences. It is in other passages that we say there will be a great diversity of rewards given.

²⁵ Two seed thoughts: 1) A disparity of rewards will not cause saints to envy each other in Heaven. See 1 Cor. 12:26 and Edwards pg. 621. Also see Edwards in *Heaven is a World of Love*. 2) No one can boast because God crowns His own work. See 1 Cor. 4:7; Eph. 2:10; 15:10. “For Christ has fulfilled all the requirements; he not only suffered the penalty but also, by fulfilling the law, won eternal life. The eternal blessedness and glory he received was, for him, the reward for his perfect obedience. But when he confers this righteousness of his on his own people through faith and unites eternal life with it, then the two, both the righteousness conferred and future blessedness, are the gifts of his grace, a reality that utterly excludes all merit on the part of believers.” Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 4: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic 2008), pg. 729

Ministering to the saints will be rewarded. **Matthew 10:42** “And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

Simply talking about the Lord with others will be rewarded.²⁶ **Malachi 3:16** “Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name.”

Suffering will be rewarded.²⁷ **2 Corinthians 4:17** “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.”

Summary

So we will be engaged in those things during our future Sabbath rest: 1) We will be producing and creating; 2) We will be ruling and reigning; 3) We will be helping God judge the universe and 4) We will be enjoying our rewards.

The catechism of Heaven

At the very end of John Bunyan’s Pilgrim Progress, Christian and Hopeful are about to enter into the Celestial City. And they had experienced so many tribulations to get there. Faithful was martyred at Vanity Fair. They were almost driven to suicide at Doubting Castle. Finally they passed through the deep river of death. So before they entered the Celestial City, they stopped and asked the angels who were with them:

“What *must* we do in the holy place?”

The angels answered them: “You *must* there receive the comforts of all your toil, and have joy for all your sorrow; you *must* reap what you have sown, even the

²⁶ Evangelizing will be rewarded. Daniel 12:3; John 4:36

²⁷ Acts 5:41; Philippians 1:29; 1 Peter 4:13

fruit of all your prayers, and tears, and sufferings for the King on the way. In that place you *must* wear crowns of gold, and enjoy the perpetual sight and vision of the Holy One, for ‘there you shall see him as he is.’ There you shall serve him continually with praise, with shouting, and thanksgiving...There your eyes shall be delighted with seeing, and your ears with hearing the pleasant voice of the Mighty One. There you shall enjoy your friends again, that are gone... before you; and there you shall with joy receive, even every one that follows into the holy place after you. There you also shall be clothed with glory and majesty, and put into [armor] fit to ride out with the King of glory. When he shall come with sound of trumpet in the clouds, as upon the wings of the wind, you shall come with him; and when he shall sit upon the throne of judgment, you shall sit by him; yea, and when he shall pass sentence upon all the workers of iniquity, let them be angels or men, you also shall have a voice in that judgment, because they were his and your enemies. Also when he shall again return to the city, you shall go too, with the sound of trumpet, and be ever with him.”²⁸

That brings us to our final point...

III. The Person of That Rest

We will be in the presence of God

The reason that our future Sabbath rest is so inexpressible great is not *mainly* because it is everlasting; it’s not *mainly* great because death will be no more or because we will be rewarded for our works. It is great because we will be in the very presence of God *Himself*. This is what we have been stressing about the Sabbath from the beginning of this series. The Sabbath is man’s chief end. God’s ultimate goal in creating the universe is that we would dwell with

²⁸ John Bunyan, *The Works of John Bunyan Vol. 3*, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2009), pg. 163-165

Him.²⁹ This is what Jesus prayed for us in **John 17:24** “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”

We will see God *Himself*

What does it mean to dwell in the presence of God? It means that we will see God *Himself*. I don’t mean the essence of God, for His essence is invisible. **1 Timothy 6:16** says that God “...dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.” But we will see the God-man,³⁰ the LORD Jesus Christ. In him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.³¹ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature.³² Every perfection of God will be tasted and seen in Him. Every believer “...will see Jesus in His glory, and [we] will speak with Him, and He will speak with [us] face to face” as a man speaks to his son.

We shall enjoy Him fully and without measure

On that eternal Sabbath we shall enjoy the Son of God fully and without measure. For three reasons.

1. Our knowledge of Him will be perfect

1 Corinthians 13:12 says “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.” This doesn’t mean that we will know all there is to know about God. That’s impossible. Only an infinite mind can know the infinite. We will always

²⁹ “The ultimate goal of creation [is] for humanity to dwell with God.” L. Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?: A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*, (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 2015), pg. 40

³⁰ cf. SCQ.21; Hebrew 7:24; <https://sydneyanglicans.net/blogs/theology/why-jesus-is-still-human-and-why-it-matters>; <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/jesus-is-still-human>

³¹ Colossians 2:9

³² Hebrews 1:3

be learning more about who God is. What Paul means by saying “I shall know fully” is that we shall “be able to know God according to our capacity not obscurely, but perfectly, as it were, face to face...all veils shall be taken off...all masks, clouds, and curtains, shall be drawn for ever...”³³ On that day God will give us the strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, and we will be filled with all the fullness of God.³⁴ That’s the **first reason** we shall be able to enjoy Jesus fully and without measure, because we will know Him as He knows us.

2. He will remove every obstacle that would prevent us from enjoying Him

Our sin will never stop us from enjoying Him, because Christ already removed it with His precious blood. **1 John 1:7** says that “...the blood of Jesus...cleanses us from all sin.” None of our sins, even our most egregious sins will ever prevent us from enjoying Him.³⁵ Jonathan Edwards says here: “Though the saints in heaven will see their exceeding folly and vileness in much of their behavior here in this world, [and] will see a thousand times as much of the evil and folly of sin as they do now; yet they will not experience any proper sorrow or grief for it, for this reason, because they will perfectly see at the same time how that it is turned out the best to the glory of God...and particularly they will have so much the more admiring and joyful sense of God’s grace in pardoning them, that the remembrance of their sins will rather be an indirect occasion of joy.”³⁶ Oh the depths of riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! That He can even make our sin as an occasion of worship.

³³ Brooks, pg. 419

³⁴ Ephesians 3:18-19

³⁵ I reject the idea that God makes us forget our sins *as if* that is the only way that we could enjoy Him without regret. How is Romans 8:28 true if God has to make us forget the things that work out for our good?

³⁶ Edwards, pg. 621

Nor will our creatureliness prevent us from enjoying Him. For Christ took on flesh, God became man, the Creator took on the nature of a creature *in order* to be with us. The Son of God became incarnate and took on the nature of a servant, not for His sake, but for ours, that we might have full possession and enjoyment of Him.³⁷

Nor will Christ's exaltation prevent us from enjoying Him. Kings and presidents are not enjoyed personally and intimately by their people because their rank puts them out of reach of the common man. And you would think that Christ being the King of the universe would be so exalted as to be out of our reach. But the opposite is true. **Ephesians 2:6** says that God has "...raised us up *with him* and seated us *with him* in the heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*." In other words, the exaltation Jesus will not result in Him being at a greater distance from us *because* He is going to exalt us along with Himself.

3. We shall enjoy the Son of God fully and without measure because we shall finally comprehend our union with Him!³⁸ (Edwards 629)

Our union with Christ³⁹ means that we have been placed *in Him*, and have been *bound to Him* such that everything that we possess is His and everything He possesses is ours. It's the same way that Paul speaks about the union between a husband and a wife. **1 Corinthians 7:4** says "A wife belongs to her husband instead of to herself, and a husband belongs to his wife instead of to himself."⁴⁰ Such it is with us and Christ. The Apostle John understood this, which is why He was so free in the presence of Jesus—we read of him as leaning on Christ's bosom (**John 13:23**). Why? Because John looked upon Jesus *as his own*.

³⁷ "Christ was made flesh and dwelt among us in a nature infinitely below his original nature, for this end, that we might have, as it were, the full possession and enjoyment of Him." *ibid*

³⁸ Much help here from Edwards, pg. 629; also see pg. 638 §1072

³⁹ **1 Corinthians 6:17** "...he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him." Source: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/union-with-christ/> Accessed March 1, 2020

⁴⁰ CEV

Beloved, don't you see that in everything Christ did, He did it because He considered Himself to be ours.

When He was on earth, He considered His blood to be our blood, and spilled it for us when it was needed for our pardon

He considered His own flesh to be our flesh, and willingly laid it down for our life. **1 Corinthians 11:24** “when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you.”

He considered His heart to be our heart, and He gave to us in the covenant of grace, therefore He willingly gave it up to be broken for us.

He considered His soul to be our soul, and therefore “...he hath poured out his soul unto death” (**Isaiah 53:12**) to make perfect satisfaction for our sins.

The moment of eternal clarity⁴¹

From the agelessness of eternity past, Christ considered Himself to *belong* to His elect people. And throughout ageless eternity future nothing has changed. Christ is ours. Beloved, **when we enter into our Sabbath rest**, our union with Him will suddenly become so clear to us. We've always belonged to Him. He is our portion, our inheritance, our wealth, our treasure, our food our dwelling place our very life. We possess Him by right of the eternal covenant, and this is an everlasting right. He is ours, and we are His, and we will be with Him to all eternity.⁴²

⁴¹ Some seed thoughts: 1) The Christ we are united to has infinite joy (Matthew 25:21); 2) This Christ takes delight in our delight ad delights to make us happy (John 17:13; Edwards pg. 626; Psalm 16:11); 3) This Christ finds His rest in us God finds His rest in us! (Psalm 132:13-14)

⁴² We've always been seated in the Heavenly places, because Christ has always been seated there. The Father has loved us with an everlasting love, because He has loved Christ with an everlasting love. The Father has always delighted in us, because He has always delighted in Christ.

To those not united to Christ

Perhaps you are here this morning, and you know this union with Christ is not true about you. There is nothing worse that could be said about you than that. Hell will be horrible. Endless conscious punishment makes the heart sink beyond cure. But nothing is worse than to be separated from Jesus Christ. To be separated from the friend of sinners, from the Great Physician, from the Bread of Life, from the Light of the World is the most tragic thing that could ever happen to you. To be separated from Him is to be forever alone, cut off from all happiness and joy and peace and rest and hope. Non-existence is better than to die without Christ. Who will plea your case before the Holy Judge on the last day? Who will cover you under the shelter of His wings? Who will make satisfaction for your sins? Who will remove your guilt? Dear friend, don't spend another minute separated from Jesus Christ. He offers you true rest this morning: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (**Matthew 11:28-29**)

Application: Awaiting That Rest

"If It's Sunday, It Must Be Heaven"⁴³

I've said from the beginning of this series that if you were to take these messages with all earnestness and carefully weigh them against Scripture, they could possibly ignite personal revival in your life and a new reformation in this church.⁴⁴

This one verse that we have looked at today should change the way you think about our weekly gathering. Isn't it interesting that the author of Hebrews

⁴³ much help on this section from Paul D. Wolfe, *Setting Our Sights on Heaven: Why It's Hard and Why It's Worth It*, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2011), pg. 151ff

⁴⁴ That is not hyperbole. The Word of God is what shapes nations; it is what crumbles tyranny; it is what restores the years the locusts have eaten, and it is what raises the dead.

calls Heaven our *Sabbath rest*? What does that mean for us when we gather weekly on the Sabbath? One author made the connection by saying: “If It’s Sunday, It Must be Heaven.” What he meant is that when we gather we are partaking of heavenly realities. We are getting a foretaste of Heaven. That’s exactly what the author of Hebrews tells us in **Hebrews 12:22-24**

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant...”

Is that what you believe about our weekly gatherings—that we are getting a foretaste of Heaven? Let’s test ourselves: When you wake up on Sunday morning and you remember what day it is “Oh, that’s right, it’s worship day—be honest: does your heart rise or sink?”⁴⁵ Does your heart remember that you are peering into another realm on this day? Or have you lost sight of the heavenliness of corporate worship—that we are gathering, and singing, and preaching, and eating and giving, and mediating on things that are not of this world? If *all you see* are the faults of the preacher, or the faults in our music, or the faults in our fellowship, you are not a mature Christian. Anyone can see those things. Unbelievers can see those things. Can you see more? Why do you come here? Is it out of habit? Is it to appease your conscience? Is it because you would be ashamed if your friends didn’t see you here? Or is it because you long for your true home? Is it because you need to hear *again* about how the blood of Christ cleanses you from all sin? How Christ will never leave you nor forsake you? How Christ has been preparing a place for you so that when He comes again He will take you to Himself? Is Sunday a taste of Heaven for you?

⁴⁵ *ibid*, pg. 157