

Unbelief is Never Undetected

Hebrews 4:12-13 *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

The letter to the Hebrews was originally intended for Christians, but as we read the letter, we notice warnings directed at individuals within the church who seem to not have been deeply committed to their faith. Let's consider the types of people they could have been.

Revelation 3:1-3 *And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: "The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. 'I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.'"*

The author of this text reminds the church of how the Israelites struggled with unbelief when God promised them rest. Instead of trusting in God's ability and faithfulness to provide them with rest from slavery, a good land to call their own with lasting peace, and the necessities of life like food, water, shelter, and protection, they chose not to believe in God for these blessings. They sought these securities elsewhere.

We, too, have been presented with the opportunity for divine rest through the work of Christ. The rest offered to the Israelites was a foreshadowing of the eternal rest that would eventually be available to many through Christ. The author of Hebrews cautions both his original audience and us today not to follow in the footsteps of the Israelites. We should not be a people marked by unbelief, seeking rest through means other than the work of Christ. His rest is superior, genuine, and everlasting. Along with this encouragement to believe God, we can know that our unbelief will not go undetected.

With this perspective in mind, let us take to heart the author's warnings, so that we do not end up like the Israelites—disbelieving God and missing out on the opportunity for eternal rest with Him.

Let's quickly scan a few verses leading up to our texts today.

- **Hebrews 3:12-14** *Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.*

- **Hebrews 4:1-2** *Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. 2 For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.*
- **Hebrews 4:11** *Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.*

Verse 12 helps us unearth several questions about the belief and unbelief we find in ourselves.

- How can my unbelief be exposed?
- Can I even explore the deepest places of my heart, including the hidden darkness I might not even be conscious of or the suppressed corners within me?
- Am I relying on alternative sources aside from Christ for my needs, such as food, drink, shelter, love, acceptance, protection, provision, and fulfillment?
- Do I, like the Israelites, long to return to my past life of sin? Is my loyalty and allegiance to God or temporal idols and passing forms of pleasure?
- Am I the Revelation 3:1-3 church attender?

A few practical applications for today, tomorrow and the coming days.

- Pray and ask God to have his word search you to find if any unbelief is in you. (**Jeremiah 17:10, Psalm 139:1-4**)
- Repent of your unbelief and sin. (**Ezekiel 18:30-32, Revelation 2:5**)
- Remind yourself that there will come a day when we'll stand before God's judgment seat. (**2 Corinthians 5:10, Acts 17:31**)
- Make it a daily practice to read his Word and pray for him to instill within you a deep love for his Scriptures. (**Psalm 19:7-8, Psalm 119:47-48, 97**)