

## 20:20 Vision Ministries -- Devotions by Roger Browning Week 9 (February 24-March 2, 2013)

We will spend one more week studying the marvelous letter to the Hebrews. Some portions of these teachings are gleaned from Warren Wiersbe's commentary on Hebrews, Be Confident. I pray that you will enter into His **rest** as you grow in faith.

### Sunday -- February 24 (Hebrews 4:1-5)

The material in today's study is in the middle of the writer's second warning to the Hebrews and to us. He warns against **drifting** away from God's Word in Hebrews 2:1-4. Now he is cautioning about **doubting** His truth (3:7-4:13). The Israelites experienced many miracles in Egypt and on the road to Canaan, yet they did not learn to trust God fully (v. 2) and, therefore, were not able to enter where they could rest. Since **we** are living in the Day of Grace (v. 1), it is not too late for **us** to trust His **promises** completely and enter into **His rest**. My primary emphasis throughout 2013 will be the **promises** of God and how we can claim them for ourselves. A separate heading on our website is designed to help you in **Praying God's Promises**. Our Lord finished the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day (v. 4). On the cross, Jesus proclaimed "It is finished" (John 19:30) declaring His plan of salvation to be complete. I challenge you to trust His Word completely in order to enter His **promised rest!**

### Monday -- February 25 (Hebrews 4:6-11)

Those who fail to receive God's promises **by faith** will fall short of entering into **His rest** (v.2). As a result of their disbelief, they will never fully obey His written word or His preached word (v. 6). The text reminds us, however, that we are still living in the Day of Grace, so it is not too late to totally turn over our hearts to Him (v. 7). None of the Old Testament saints brought complete rest to God's people. Joshua and all the others only pictured the great **promises** to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ (v. 8). Our Lord still offers complete rest to anyone who is willing to let go of his/her own "acts of righteousness" and trust Him completely for uninterrupted rest on this earth (v. 9-10). The Holy Spirit commands us (v. 11) to "make every effort to enter that rest." Will you make that your personal resolution?

### Tuesday -- February 26 (Hebrews 4:12-13)

The remainder of chapter 4 is written to all who truly desire to enter into the rest that God offers to His children. Those who doubt the inerrancy of God's Word will have no chance of entering into this blessed experience of total trust. His Word is alive and active today (v. 12). As you accept and obey each new concept, God opens your heart and your eyes to see and understand truths that have been hidden from your understanding. Note that His Word judges your **thoughts** and **attitudes** (motives), because, "God looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). We can hide nothing from the Lord (v. 15), so let's start now to prepare for the Day when we see Him face to face.

### Wednesday -- February 27 (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Not only do we have the Word of God to guide us into the **rest** that our Lord desires for His followers, but we also have a great high priest (Jesus) to intercede for us (v. 14). He has gone “through the heavens” having ascended from this earth’s atmosphere (1<sup>st</sup> heaven), through outer space (2<sup>nd</sup> heaven), and into His original home (3<sup>rd</sup> heaven). He withstood every temptation Satan could throw at Him (pleasure, popularity, power) while He lived on earth. Therefore, He is able to relate to our personal weaknesses, even though He never yielded to the sins that plague us (v. 15). Since Jesus understands our trials, we are invited to “approach the throne of grace with confidence” (v. 16). There we will find **mercy** (God does not give us what we deserve—hell) and **grace** (He gives us what we don’t deserve—heaven). Pray to Him and claim His promises! You will find rest for your souls (see Matthew 11:28-30).

### Thursday -- February 28 (Hebrews 5:11-14)

The third warning in Hebrews is featured in the balance of this week’s devotions. We have already been warned against **drifting** away from His Word (2:1-4) and **doubting** His Word (3:7-4:13). In this text, He warns us against **dullness** toward His Word. Many church members never grow up enough in their faith to be qualified to teach others (v. 11-12). They prefer sermons that emphasize facts they have already accepted (milk) over those that challenge them to a deeper commitment. These people reject messages about righteousness, often labeling them as “salvation by works” sermons (v. 13). Most of life’s greatest truths will be learned by constant use of His precepts (v. 14). Those who desire to enter into God’s special rest must learn and practice righteousness. Are you willing to move up higher?

### Friday -- March 1 (Hebrews 6:1-6)

Following yesterday’s rebuke, the author lists some of the subjects associated with basic salvation, commanding us to “leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity” (v. 1-4). Many pastors never preach anything beyond these elementary topics. Some preachers use v. 4-6 to scare folks into thinking they can lose their salvation. I was among them at one time! The book of Hebrews is written for **assurance**, not condemnation of the readers. It pictures Jesus interceding for us so that we will **never** fall. I believe the writer is making a hypothetical point that if it were possible to lose your salvation, it would be **impossible** to get it back. Jesus would have to be crucified again (v. 6). Our place in heaven is determined by His promise, not by our performance. (Ref. John 3:16; 5:24; 10:27-30; 11:25-26)

### Saturday -- March 2 (Hebrews 6:7-12)

God reminds us in v. 7-8 that we are placed here for the purpose of bearing fruit. Because we have God’s Word to guide us (4:12) and because we have Jesus to intercede for us (4:15), we should be moving constantly toward maturity so that we can teach others (5:11-14). The writer is confident that his readers will produce those “**things that accompany salvation**” (v. 9). None of our righteous acts will produce salvation; Jesus accomplished that on Calvary. Our Father wants us to do good works because of our love for Him, not for personal gain. He will reward us for our deeds (v. 7 & 10), but we must determine to do these good works until the end of our journey. We can be assured that **all** His promises will be fulfilled (v. 11-12).