

DILIGENCE AND THE PROMISE OF REST

Obedience is required for us to enter into heaven. We are told that Jesus *"became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him"* (Heb. 5.9). The children of Israel failed to enter into the land of promise because of their disobedience (Heb. 3.16-19). But there is another component that is necessary for our assurance of heaven. In Hebrews 4.11, the Holy Spirit wrote, *"Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience."* Entering the eternal rest of heaven requires diligence.

The word "diligence" translates the Hebrew word "spoudazo." Literally, it means "speed." We are not to have the attitude of apathy or lethargy. We are not to look at our salvation as something we will some day get around to addressing. We are to use speed. In other words, to enter into eternal life, we must see our salvation as a matter of urgency. Paul himself wrote that we need to *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God"* (2 Tim. 2.15). Approach your having God's approval as an urgency.

To approach our eternal destination as an urgency, you need to spend more time with your Bible. After we are told to "be diligent to enter that rest," the very next verse says *"For the word of God..."* (Heb. 4.12). The word "for" connects what is said about the word of God to the command to be diligent. In this verse, the word of God is described as a *"discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* The word translated as "discerner" is "kritikos" from which we get our English word "critic." The Bible is your critic. When you read your Bible, you need to let its teachings criticize you. Urgency can be brought into your life when you allow the Bible to criticize your inner thoughts and feelings.

Something else that will encourage you to approach your eternal destiny with diligence is to remember that God is always watching. The text goes on to say, *"And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account"* (Heb. 4.13). God knows what you think and how you feel. He is always watching (Ps. 139.1-4). Knowing that can help you live your life with a sense of urgency.

Hebrews 4 teaches us that there is a place of rest waiting for the people of God. But to enter that rest, learn from the example of ancient Israel and approach your salvation with a sense of urgency to eagerly obey the teachings of scripture. CLP

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST
2424 McCARRAN ST.
NORTH LAS VEGAS, NV 89030
(702) 642-3141

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WWW.NLVCHURCHOFCHRIST.COM

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

2424 McCarran St. † North Las Vegas, NV † 89030
Phone: (702) 642-3141 Email: pruittc@nlvchurchofchrist.com
Watch us live at www.nlvchurchofchrist.com
Youtube: Northside Las Vegas Church of Christ

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
-Mark 16.15

August 2, 2026

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:00 PM

Everyone Loves Jesus Until...

It doesn't matter who you are. Generally speaking, everyone will say that they love Jesus. A Mormon will profess to love Jesus just as much as you do. A Muslim will declare a love and respect for Jesus though they see Him only as a prophet. Even people of the world will claim to love Jesus. But that changes when they learn His identity.

Jesus is the Lawgiver. It is true that the Old Law came through Moses, but *"grace and truth came through Jesus Christ"* (John 1.17). But Jesus also gave us a law to follow. In James 4.12, it says that *"there is one Lawgiver."* Galatians 6.2 refers to *"the law of Christ."* There are commands that we are to obey. Many claim to love Jesus until they learn that love requires obedience (John 14.15).

Jesus is the Judge and the One who decides your eternal destiny. We know that Jesus is our Savior. It is only through Him that we can enjoy the forgiveness of sins (Acts 4.12). But salvation is only given to those who believe and obey Him (Heb. 5.9). All of humanity will be judged by Jesus (Acts 17.31; 2 Cor. 5.10). If you reject His teachings, though you say you love Him, *"the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day"* (John 12.48). Everyone says they love Jesus, but they don't want to think of Him as Judge.

Everyone wants to see Jesus as the kind, loving, forgiving Savior that will overlook their poor choices and unconditionally grant them eternal life. But eternal life is conditioned on obedience to His Law by which we will ultimately be judged. CLP

JESUS: THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE

Acts 13:23

INTRODUCTION:

1. The apostles were commanded to be witnesses of Jesus. (Acts 1.8). In Acts 13, their witness is taken to the world.
2. There is no one whose life has been as transformed as the life of the apostle Paul. He went from persecutor to preacher.
3. What Jesus meant to Paul is what Jesus should mean to us.

I. BREAKING DOWN THE TEXT

- A. There is a place.
 1. **Acts 13.13,14:** *"But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia"*
 2. **Acts 13.14,15:** They went into a synagogue where there was a reading of Old Testament scripture.
 3. **Acts 13.16:** These were people who were very religious.
- B. There is preaching.
 1. **Acts 13.17-22:** Paul takes them through Old Testament history from Egyptian slavery to the time of David.
 2. **Acts 13.23:** *"From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior—Jesus"*

II. WHAT DOES JESUS MEAN TO PAUL?

- A. To Paul, Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promise.
 1. The message of the word of God is a message about Jesus as the One God promised. (Acts 13.5,7,26)
 2. Paul knew his Bible and used it to preach a good news message of Jesus. (Acts 22.3; Phil. 3.5,6; Acts 13.32,33)
 3. In his preaching, Paul referenced Jesus as fulfilling the promise of God. (Gen. 12.3; Ps. 132.11)
- B. Do you see Jesus the way Paul saw Jesus?
 1. **Acts 13.36,37:** The promise of salvation was not fulfilled in David. (cf. Acts 2.29)
 2. **Acts 13.38,39:** The promise of Jesus is the promise of the forgiveness of sins.
 3. Through Jesus, heaven is yours. (1 John 2.25; Titus 1.2)

CONCLUSION: The promise of forgiveness is *"to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off"* (Acts 2.38,39)

Obedience and the Promise of Rest

There is a promise made to you and me that we can enter into heaven and find eternal rest. The apostle John was told to write that those who die in the Lord are blessed because *"they may rest from their labors"* (Rev. 14.13). But the promise of rest is conditional. It is possible that we will not enter that rest if we fail to meet the conditions God has established. In Hebrews 3, the children of Israel who failed to enter into the land of Canaan are set before us as an example. In Hebrews 4, we are told, *"Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience"* (Heb. 4.11).

Why did the children of Israel fail to enter into His rest? What can we learn from their example? Hebrews 4.11 tells us that they failed to enter because of disobedience. The concept of obedience is submitting yourself to the will of God. To put it simply, obedience means that you do what God tells you to do. But the Bible is clear that on the day of Judgment, God will take *"vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Thess. 1.8). If you want to go to heaven, you must do what God tells you to do. You must be obedient to God.

To be obedient, you need to fear God. If you back up to the beginning of the chapter, the Holy Spirit says in reference to the rest in heaven, *"let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it"* (Heb. 4.1). To fear God means to respect Him. In Hebrews 11, Noah is an example of someone who obeyed God being *"moved with godly fear"* (Heb. 11.7). To fear God also means to be afraid of Him. Jesus warned His disciples to *"fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"* (Matt. 10.28). When you have both a respect for God and a dread of God, you will be moved to obey Him.

To be obedient, you need to have faith in God. In the previous chapter, the children of Israel were described as rebels, sinners, and disobedient. Then the end of the chapter tells us why they failed to obey God. *"So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief"* (Heb. 3.19). Their disobedience came because they did not believe God would bring them into the land of promise. To obey God, you must believe in God. If you do what God says without faith, then you are merely going through the motions. True obedience is when you are moved to what God says because you listen and trust in God.

Obedience can be challenging. Nobody likes to be told what to do. But if we truly love God and give our hearts entirely to Him and His Son, then obedience will never be burdensome (Matt. 22.37; John 14.15; 1 John 5.3).