

"Faith and the Rest of God"... B. Keith Chadwell, January, 2011

The traditional Christian Buzz word; "believer", may cement in a narrow understanding of this scriptural term that does not necessarily apply across the board. A "believer" is often narrowly interpreted by Christians as "one who is born again" or one who is a "believer" in Jesus Christ. This definition does apply to this word or its extensions as used in the Bible, in some instances. However, this traditional understanding of the term "believer" can be limiting. It can even result in misunderstanding, if this is the only definition considered, when one sees this term or its extensions when studying scriptures.

There are places in scripture where the word "**believer**" or its extensions are used in a different context. Hebrews, Chapter 4: is one such case where "**believer**," or its extension; "**we which have believed**", is not to be interpreted, solely, as "*one born again*". This "**believer**" based phrase is used here in a totally different context.

Hebrews 4:1-6 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, if they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

I believe; "**We that have believed**", in Hebrews 4:3, is referring to those Christians who at that time were fully and progressively **believing**, embracing by faith and applying, the good news of the grace of God through Jesus Christ, and were not **turning back** to the Jewish law and the works of the flesh to perfect themselves, as some Christians at that time were doing, according to the writings of Paul.

The implications of the phrase; "**we that have believed**" here in Hebrews 4:3 is that a believer in Christ (born again Christian) must also further "**believe**" other truths of Gods word and **mix that belief with faith**. Then, **acting on** those beliefs in faith, by putting those beliefs into practice. This in order to appropriate and ultimately manifest the fruit of "**the Rest**" that God promised.

Hebrews 4:9.-11 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Being a Born again Christian alone, will not automatically cause entry into this "**Rest**" which the Bible speaks of. No more than being a born again Christian will automatically appropriate some of the other promises of God. Some of Gods promises to his people are "conditional". This is one of them. Otherwise, God would not have said; "**If you will harden not your heart...**"

There is an old saying that, I think, is applicable here;

Awareness of...Belief in...Reliance on

We can be aware of "the Rest" and even believe in "the Rest"However unless we rely on or act or labor to enter into "the rest" by actually doing what is required, we will never fully appropriate it, because; faith, without works is dead.

A good example of the true meaning of Christian baptism is applicable here: As a Christian who "**labors to enter**" into **the rest** God promised, we must not only be immersed in the Spirit, but there should also be subsequent change. The Emphasis is on CHANGE. This change can only be wrought by the Spirit of God as we **choose** to **humbly submit** ourselves, not only to be immersed into Christ, but to **remain immersed in Christ**.

Christians can enter "**His rest**"... IF...we will choose to die to our old desires daily and turn to Jesus in faith, seeking his aid to help our weaknesses. Then, we are righteous **by faith** as we continue to walk after the Spirit and He works in us to progressively cleanse us and change us into His image, **in fact**.

Entering "**His rest**" can only to be accomplished by "**His work**" in us. We can't do it in our own strength, so we must trust in Him to do it. We must choose to be a "**BELIEVER**" that He can do it without our help,"**IF**" we will let him. However, if we do not **remain immersed** in Him, believing He will change our inner motivations which will ultimately manifest in our outward actions, from the heart, we will not fully enter and remain in "His Rest".

For faith is the substance of what we hope for which we have not fully appropriated, in fact.

Peace...not yet fully?

Joy...not yet fully?

Righteousness...not yet fully?

Would we baptize a cucumber by **only dipping it** in the pickling solution and be disappointed that it was not yet a pickle when we removed it from the solution after

only dipping it? No!! We understand that it must remain immersed for some length of time until the process is complete. So it is, as we labor to enter into His Rest.

Here is just one example; If we pray in the spirit and do not continue praying in the Spirit on a continuing basis, no matter how we feel, or what our circumstances are, we are not remaining, not continuing.

We may be aware of and even believe in....but we also must continue to rely on what we believe, in faith, until what we hope for is fully manifest.

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