

“Jesus Is Lord, Sword, & Savior!”

Hebrews 4:13

September 2, 2018

VIDEO: *“Why Read The Bible?”*

INTRO: So why do YOU read the Bible?

- Do you *treat* it as **God’s Word**?
- Do you *trust* it as **God’s Word**?
- Do you *treasure* it as **God’s Word**?

T/S: Welcome back to THE BRIDGE & our series...

- Today marks the **end of Hebrews’ #2 warning...**
- Today is **the exclamation mark on last week...**
- Our emphasis will again be: ***“the word of God is”***

PREVIEW

1. **Jesus is LORD**
2. **Jesus is SWORD**
3. **Jesus is SAVIOR**

BIG IDEA: God wrote to us & walks with us to display His glory & deliver His gospel!

TEXT: **Hebrews 4:13**

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.

I. JESUS IS LORD!

“And...”

- *This word is contextual & connects past & present*
- **This word unites 2 aspects of “the word”**
 - *The **WRITTEN** word... **Scripture***
 - *The **WORSHIPPED** Word... **Savior***
- Last week we focused on the written...
- **Today** we focus on the worshipped!

VIDEO: *“Who Did Jesus Claim To Be?”*

Jesus is Lord in Hebrews 1:1 - 4:13...

Hebrews 1:1-3 (ESV)

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- Jesus speaks to us as God the Son
- Jesus is heir of all things
- Jesus created the world
- Jesus is the radiance of the glory & nature of God
- **Jesus upholds the universe *by His word!!!***
- Jesus made purification for Christian's sins
- Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty

Hebrews 1:6b (ESV)

⁶ "Let all God's angels worship him."

- Jesus is worthy of worship!

Hebrews 1:8 (ESV)

⁸ ...of the Son (God the Father) says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever..."

- Even God the Father refers to Jesus as God!

Hebrews 1:9-10 (ESV)

⁹ You/Jesus have loved righteousness and hated wickedness...

*¹⁰ And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth **in the beginning**, and the heavens are the work of your hands;*

- Jesus loves righteousness & hates wickedness!
- In the beginning Jesus laid the earth's foundation
- The heavens declare the works of Jesus's hands

Hebrews 1:12 (ESV)

¹² ...your years will have no end."

- Jesus has & will exist forever

Hebrews 2:1 (ESV)

*¹ **Therefore** we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, **lest we drift away** from it.*

- Ch.1's teaching about Jesus is eternally essential
- Hebrews' Warning #1 is in this verse...
- Do NOT drift away from this word/Word of God

Hebrews 2:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,

- Jesus is bringing God's children to glory
- Jesus is the founder of the faithful's salvation
- Jesus suffered to empower salvation
- Jesus suffered to empower sanctification
- Christ & Christ-followers share in One Source
- Christ is not ashamed to call His followers family

Hebrews 2:14b-15 (ESV)

¹⁴ ...through death he destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

- Jesus died to destroy the Devil
- Jesus died to demonstrate His power over death
- Jesus died to deliver those who fear death
- Jesus died that we could live w/ eternal freedom

Hebrews 2:17 (ESV)

17 ...he (became) a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

- Jesus demonstrated divine faith & mercy
- Jesus serves as our merciful & faithful High Priest
- Jesus paid the price for the sins of God's people

Hebrews 3:1 (ESV)

*1 Therefore, **holy brothers**, you who **share in a heavenly calling**, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,*

- Hebrews Warning #2 begins in this verse...
- Note: "**holy brothers... share in a heavenly call**"

VIDEO: "Is Love A Feeling?"

- Warning begins with exhorting: "*consider Jesus*"
- Jesus is The Apostle (brings God to man)
- Jesus is The High Priest (brings man to God)
- Jesus is the Christ, the center of our confession

Hebrews 3:6 (ESV)

*6 ...Christ is faithful **over** God's house as a son (and as THE Builder). And we are his house **if indeed** we **hold** fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.*

- Jesus is the faithful Heir over God's house/oikos
- Jesus is The Builder of God's house/oikos
- We are His "house/oikos" IF...
 - We "HOLD ON" to our confidence in Christ

Hebrews 3:7-11 (ESV) = QUOTE of Psalm 95:7-11

*⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸ **do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion...** ¹¹ As I swore in my wrath, “They shall not enter my rest.””*

- See the timelessness of God’s truth-in-love
- See the word of God’s power in human history

Hebrews 3:12-14 (ESV)

*¹² 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.*

- Herein we find the crux of Warning #2...
- Be careful, “take care” don’t assume you’re saved
- Check to see if you have an evil heart
- Check to see if you have an unbelieving heart
- Check to see if you’re falling away/disconnecting
- Exhort one another every day (so long as you can)
 - Exhort to defend against heart-hardening
 - Exhort to defend against deceitfulness
 - Exhort to defend against subtle, slippery-sin
 - Exhort to defend against assuming salvation
 - Exhort to defend **against cheap grace!**

- Biblical grace is sovereign & saving

Saving grace is sanctifying & sweaty! - JDP

Hebrews 3:18-19 (ESV)

*18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to **those who were disobedient**? ¹⁹ So we see that **they were unable to enter because of unbelief**.*

- Jesus swore some would NOT enter His rest...
- Jesus is as serious as a heart attack at times...
 - The same Jesus who forgives also judges

Remember...

*Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb **AND...**
He made a whip for the Temple hypocrites!* -JDP

Jesus said both: worship Me... and Woe to you! -JDP

Make no mistake...

A pattern & predominance of disobedience is the very definition of biblical unbelief. -JDP

- **NOTE** the eternal consequences for disobedience
- Warning #2 is Do not Disconnect from God's rest

Hebrews 4:1-3a (ESV)

*¹ 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. ³ For **we who have believed enter that rest...**"*

- Jesus uses fear & reverence to save & sanctify
- Don't wait or waste this opportunity to come...
- A lack of fear & reverence reveals failure of faith!

You need to have God's fear to find God's rest. - JDP

Hearing without doing is disobedient & deadly! - JDP

- "Holy" brothers who share in "a heavenly calling" are "united by faith with those who listened"
- Only those w/ God's fear & faith enter God's rest!

Hebrews 4:3c (ESV)

³ ...his works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- See the reference taking us back to creation...
- Creator Christ made a promise in Genesis 1&2...
- Creation is complete & it is good!

Hebrews 4:7 (ESV)

⁷ again... (for the 3rd time in this warning)... "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."

- Hear the word of God warning again & again, etc.
- "Today, if **YOU** hear His voice, do not harden..."

Hebrews 4:9-10 (ESV)

⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,
¹⁰ for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

- When God rested, it was in completion (like court)

- Our Sabbath rest is not a remedy for exhaustion, **it is a celebration of Christ's completion!**
 - 2 Peter 1:3
 - Philippians 4:13
 - Acts 1:8
 - Matthew 28:20
 - Ephesians 2:8-10

II. JESUS IS *SWORD!*

Hebrews 4:11-12 (ESV)

¹¹ Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. ¹² 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.

- *“For”* ties this verse to the previous one...
- *“the word of God is”*
 - Tied to “striving for God’s rest”
 - LIVING
 - ACTIVE/POWERFUL
 - CUTTING/SHARPER...
 - PIERCING/PENETRATING
 - DIVIDING – dividing the indivisible...
 - JUDGING/DISCERNING – the human heart!
 - v.13...**REVEALS** (makes you naked...)
 - v.13...**EXPOSES** (prepares you for slaughter)

- Remember: You are who & what God's word says
- **ALL reality** is what & how God's word says it is!

Here's a beautiful portrait of the promise...

VIDEO: *"John Sullivan's Baptism"*

III. JESUS IS SAVIOR!

- *"the word of God is"*
 - Tied to "striving for God's rest"
 - LIVING
 - ACTIVE/POWERFUL
 - CUTTING/SHARPER...
 - PIERCING/PENETRATING
 - DIVIDING – dividing the indivisible...
 - JUDGING/DISCERNING – the human heart!
 - REVEALING
 - EXPOSING

- **You are who & what God's word says you are!**

T/S: To finish up...

[Hebrews 4:13](#)

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.

See the great Gospel Power, Plan, Promise,
Person, & People in Hebrews 4:13

“Creature/Creation”

VIDEO: *“A Poverty of Love”*
“hidden”

➤ *The Garden account looms large here...*

Hiding is hellish & follows sinning. - JDP

Ironically, hiding reveals sinning. - JDP

NO ONE is getting away with
ANYTHING! - JDP

“naked”

REMEDY: *“Put on Christ...”*

Galatians 3:27

Romans 13:14

Colossians 3:12-17

Romans 8:26-33!

1 Cor. 15:53

2 Cor. 5:2-4

Matthew 22:11-14

“exposed”

- Just read Hebrews 4:12 again... or 2 Tim. 3:16...
- Read Jude... Titus 1:10-16... See Judas & Demas...
- See Jesus on “fruit” & “wolves in sheep’s clothes”
- Jesus the Lamb is coming again as Judge & Lion

“to whom WE must give an ACCOUNT”

- “we” = intensely personal pronoun!
- “account” = “logos” we must give our word!
- *Every knee will bow & tongue confess Jesus is Lord*

REVIEW:

- Jesus is Lord!
- Jesus is Sword!
- Jesus is Savior!

CLOSE: Friends & family, hear & heed the Word of God!

Hebrews 4:13

¹² 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.

Let's PRAY!

RESEARCH Notes:

Hebrews 4:13 (ESV)

11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

12 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.

INTRO:

Jesus is Lord in Hebrews...

Hebrews 1:1-3 (ESV)

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- Jesus speaks to us as God the Son
- Jesus is heir of all things
- Jesus created the world
- Jesus is the radiance of the glory & nature of God
- **Jesus upholds the universe by His word!!!**
- Jesus made purification for Christian's sins
- Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty

Hebrews 1:6b (ESV)

⁶ "Let all God's angels worship him."

- Jesus is worthy of worship
- Jesus is worthy of all God's angel's worship!

Hebrews 1:8 (ESV)

⁸ ...of the Son (God the Father) says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever..."

- Even God the Father refers to Jesus as God!

Hebrews 1:9-10 (ESV)

⁹ You/Jesus have loved righteousness and hated wickedness...

¹⁰ And, "You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

- Jesus loves righteousness
- Jesus hates wickedness
- In the beginning Jesus laid the earth's foundation
- The heavens declare the works of Jesus's hands

Hebrews 1:12 (ESV)

¹² ...your years will have no end."

- Jesus will exist forever
- Jesus has existed forever!

Hebrews 2:1 (ESV)

*¹ **Therefore** we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.*

- Because of who Jesus is... we must pay more attn
- Ch.1's teaching about Jesus is eternally essential
- Hebrews' Warning #1 is in this verse...
- Do NOT drift away from this word/Word of God

Hebrews 2:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who

sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,

- Jesus is bringing God's children to glory
- Jesus is the founder of the faithful's salvation
- Jesus suffered to empower salvation
- Jesus suffered to empower sanctification
- Christ & Christ-followers share in One Source
- Christ is not ashamed to call Christ-followers family

Hebrews 2:14b-15 (ESV)

¹⁴ ...through death he destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

- Jesus died to destroy the Devil
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- Jesus died to deliver those who fear death
- Jesus died that we could live w/ eternal freedom

Hebrews 2:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ ...he (became) a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

- Jesus demonstrated divine mercy
- Jesus demonstrated divine faith

- Jesus serves as merciful & faithful High Priest
- Jesus pays the price for the sins of God's people

Hebrews 3:1 (ESV)

¹ Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession,

- Hebrews Warning #2 begins in this verse...
- Note: "holy brothers... share in a heavenly call"
- Warning begins with exhorting: "*consider Jesus*"
- Jesus is The Apostle (brings God to man)
- Jesus is The High Priest (brings man to God)
- Jesus is the Christ, the center of our confession

Hebrews 3:6 (ESV)

⁶ ...Christ is faithful over God's house as a son (and as THE Builder). And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

- Jesus is the faithful Heir over God's house/oikos
- Jesus is The Builder of God's house/oikos
- Jesus is Builder of all of creation...
- We are His "house/oikos" IF...
 - We "HOLD ON" to our confidence in Christ
 - We "HOLD ON" to our boasting in Christ
 - We "HOLD ON" to our hope in Christ

Hebrews 3:7-11 (ESV) = QUOTE Psalm 95:7-11

*⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “**Today, if you hear his voice,** ⁸ **do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness,** ⁹ **where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years.** ¹⁰ **Therefore, I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’** ¹¹ **As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’”***

- See the writer of Hebrews quoting Psalm 95
- Hebrews quotes David, who refers to Moses...
- I quote Hebrews... David... Moses... to Israelites
- See the timelessness of God’s truth-in-love
- See the word of God’s power in human history
- Note the role of God’s Word in human history!

Hebrews 3:12-14 (ESV)

*¹² **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.***

- Herein we find the crux of Warning #2...
- Be careful, “take care” don’t assume you’re saved
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 - Exhort to defend against cheap grace!
 - Biblical grace is sovereign & saving
 - Biblical grace is sanctifying & sweaty -JDP

Hebrews 3:18-19 (ESV)

18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

- Jesus swore some would NOT enter His rest...
- Jesus is as serious as a heart attack at times...
 - The same Jesus who forgives also judges
 - He wept at Lazarus' tomb & made a whip for Temple hypocrites
 - He said both: worship Me... and Woe to you!
- NOTE: the rest was in the Lord, not the land...
- A pattern & predominance of disobedience is the definition of biblical unbelief. - JDP
- NOTE: ...eternal consequences for disobedience
- Warning #2 is Do not Disconnect from God's rest

Hebrews 4:1-3a (ESV)

¹ 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. ³ For we who have believed enter that rest...”

- Jesus uses fear & reverence to save & sanctify
- Don't wait or waste this opportunity to come...
- A lack of fear & reverence reveals failure
- You need to have God's fear to find God's rest. - JDP
- Hearing without doing is disobedient & deadly -JDP
- “Holy” brothers who share in “a heavenly calling” are “united by faith with those who listened”
- Only those w/ God's fear & faith enter God's rest!
- True Christ-following family will rest together forever!

Hebrews 4:3c (ESV)

³ ...his works were finished from the foundation of the world.

- See the reference taking us back to creation...
- Creator Christ made a promise in Genesis 1&2...
- Creation is complete & it is good!
- See a sovereign power, plan, purpose & people

Hebrews 4:7 (ESV)

*⁷ again... (for the 3X/3rd time in this particular warning)...
“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”*

- Hear the word of God warning again & again, etc.
- Remember: repetition means emphasis with God
- “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden...”

Hebrews 4:9-10 (ESV)

*⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,
¹⁰ for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.*

- When God rested in Genesis 1&2 it was not from exhaustion...
- When God rested, it was in completion (like court)
- Our Sabbath rest is not a remedy for exhaustion, not it is a celebration of Christ’s completion!
 - 2 Peter 1:3
 - Philippians 4:13
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Hebrews 4:11-13 (ESV)

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- “For” ties this verse to the previous one...
- “the word of God is”
 - Tied to “striving for God’s rest”
 - LIVING
 - ACTIVE/POWERFUL
 - CUTTING/SHARPER...
 - PIERCING/PENETRATING
 - DIVIDING – dividing the indivisible...
 - JUDGING/DISCERNING – the human heart!
- You are who & what God’s word says...
- Reality is what & how God’s word says it is.

T/S: But wait... there’s more... A LOT MORE! The next verse begins with the word “AND” which, as a conjunction, means, what follows is attached to what preceded...

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.

And

- *This word is contextual...*
- *This word connects the past & present*
- *This word unites 2 aspects of “the word”*
 - *The WRITTEN word... Scripture*
 - *The WORSHIPPED Word... Savior*

“no creature”

- *“no” = NONE... zilch! zero!*
 - *NO one!*
 - *NO exceptions.*
- *“creature” = anyone created*
 - *“In the beginning God created...”*
 - *What follows thus applies to:*
 - *Any one/thing post “beginning”*
 - *ALL but the Creator Himself!*

“is hidden (or can-hide) from His sight”

- *No one is outside His view*
- *No one can ever get outside His view*
- *The Garden account looms large here...*
 - *Hiding is hellish. – JDP*
 - *Ironically, hiding is revealing. – JDP*

- *Hiding follows sinning. – JDP*
- *Ironically, hiding reveals sinning. – JDP*
- *Follow the progression of sin/events:*
 - It appears immediately (Satan is sinning)
 - It is cultivated by an active enemy (sin spreads)
 - It is fertilized with subtle, accusatory doubt
 - Deceptive doubt against the Word of God
 - Deceptive doubt against the word(s) of God
 - It draws near thru dialog vs. decisive rebuke
 - Jesus defeated deceptive doubt with the Word of God!
 - Take every thought captive to the Word...
 - Do not be double minded...
 - Believe & receive...
 - Pray & obey
 - Obey & abide
 - Sin's door-opener is reasoning & rationale
 - "Reason is the Devil's whore!" - Luther
 - Sin's incubation chamber is perverted pride. - JDP
 - Sin's life-line is made up of deceptive lies. - JDP

- Sin becomes fatal when it overtakes faith. - JDP
- Sin kills when human senses get trusted over God's word. - JDP

“but”

“all”

“are naked”

“and exposed”

“to the eyes of Him”

“to whom we”

“must give an account”

T/S (Exegetical Intro)

Hebrews 4:11-13

Verse 11 introduces the “so what” of the preceding section. In light of what has preceded, “Let us *then* make every effort to enter that rest” (emphasis added). The accent in this verse is on the exhortation to strive for God’s rest so that the threat of falling by disobedience will not come true for these believers as it did for the wilderness generation. We must not be like the Israelites in the wilderness. We must strive to enter God’s rest. In other words, we must work at resting. This means we

must work *against* all of our efforts to prove our righteousness. We must strive *against* all our efforts to justify ourselves.

- Dr. Albert Mohler

.... Structurally, [Heb 4:13](#) concludes the first major section of the epistle, which is bracketed (i.e., an *inclusio*) by God speaking in a Son in the prologue and speaking in his Word in [4:12-13](#).

Theologically, v. 13 indicates something else as well. Christ's high priesthood, which plays such a key role in the epistle, actually develops out of the revelation of Jesus as "Son." He is able to be "high priest" because he is first a "Son."

From an overall discourse perspective, we can now see how the author has very carefully made the case that Jesus is exalted above angels and Moses because of his high-priestly office and mediatorial work. If we remember that the entire discourse unit of [1:5-4:13](#) is bisected into two sections with the second section beginning in [3:1](#), we are able to discern a parallel structure developed by the author between these two sections. Christ is superior to the angels in [Heb 1:5-14](#), and he is superior to Moses in [3:1-6](#). The exhortation in [2:1-4](#) is paralleled by the exhortation in [3:7-19](#). In [2:5-18](#), Jesus raised humanity beyond the status of angels, and in [4:1-13](#) he did what Moses and Joshua failed to do: bring his people into true "rest." He is our high priest who helps us in [Heb 2:17-18](#), and he is again the same in [Heb 4:14-16](#).

- New American Commentary

Verse 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight.* There is no being who is not wholly known to God. All his thoughts, feelings, plans, are distinctly understood. Of the truth

of this there can be no doubt. **The *design* of the remark here is, to guard those to whom the apostle was writing from self-deception—since they could conceal nothing from God.**

All things are naked. Exposed; uncovered. **There is nothing that can be concealed from God,**

Psalms 139:11,12

*"The veil of night is no disguise,
No screen from thy all-searching eyes;
Thy hands can seize thy foes as soon
Through midnight shades as blazing noon."*

And opened τετραηλισμένα. The word here used—Τραχηλιζω—properly means,

(1.) ***to lay bare the neck, or to bend it back so as to expose the throat to being cut.***

(2.) To expose; to lay open in any way. Why the word is used here has been a matter of inquiry. Some have supposed that the phrase is derived from offering sacrifice, and from the fact that the priest carefully examined the victim, to see whether it was sound, before it was offered. But this is manifestly a forced exposition. Others have supposed that it is derived from the custom of bending back the head of a criminal, so as to look full in his face, and recognise him, so as not to be mistaken; but this is equally forced and unnatural. This opinion was first proposed by Erasmus, and has been adopted by Clarke and others, Bloomfield, following, as he says, the interpretation of Chrysostom, Grotius, (though this is not the sentiment of Grotius,) Beza, Alting, Hammond, and others, supposes the allusion to be to the custom of cutting the animal down the back-bone through the spinal marrow, and thus of laying it open entirely. This sense would well suit the connexion. Grotius supposes that it means to strip off the skin by dividing it at the neck, and then removing it. This view is also adopted substantially by Doddridge. These explanations are forced, and imply a departure, more or less, from the

proper meaning of the Greek word. **The most simple and obvious meaning is usually the best in explaining the Bible.**

The word which the apostle employs relates to *the neck*; τραχηλος—and not to the spinal marrow, or the skin. **The proper meaning of the verb is, to bend the neck back, so as to expose it in front when an animal is slain.** *Passow*. Then it means, to make bare; to remove everything like covering; to expose a thing entirely—as the naked neck is for the knife.

The allusion here is undoubtedly to the sword... referred to in the previous verse, as dividing the soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow; and the meaning is, that in the hand of God, who held that sword, everything was exposed. We are, in relation to that, like an animal whose neck is bent back, and laid bare, and ready for the slaughter. Nothing hinders God from striking; there is nothing that can prevent that sword from penetrating the heart any more than, when the neck of the animal is bent back and laid bare, there is anything that can hinder the sacrificing priest from thrusting the knife into the throat of the victim. If this be the true interpretation, then what an affecting view does it give of the power of God, and of the exposedness of man to destruction! All is bare, naked, open. There is no concealment; no

hinderance; no power of resistance. In a moment God can strike, and his dreadful sentence shall fall on the sinner like the knife on the exposed throat of the victim. What emotions should the sinner have who feels that he is exposed each moment to the sentence of eternal justice—to the sword of God—as the animal with bent-back neck is exposed to the knife! And what solemn feeling should all have who remember that all is naked and open before God!

Were we *transparent*, so that the World could see all we are, who would dare go abroad? Who would wish the world to read all his thoughts and feelings for a single day? Who would wish his best friends to look in upon his naked soul, as we can look into a room through a window? Oh, what blushes and confusion; what a hanging down of the head, and what an effort to escape from the gaze of men would there be, if every one knew that all his secret feelings were seen by every person whom he met! Social enjoyment would end; and the now gay and blithe multitudes in the streets would become processions of downcast and blushing convicts. And yet all these are known to God. ***He reads every thought; sees every feeling; looks through the whole soul. How careful should we be to keep our heart***

pure; how anxious that there should be nothing in the soul that we are not *willing* to have known!

With whom we have to do. Literally, ***with whom is our account.***

Our account; our reckoning is to be with him before whom all is naked and open. We cannot, therefore, impose on him. We cannot pass off

hypocrisy for sincerity. He will judge us according to truth, not according to appearances; and his sentence, therefore, will be just. A man who is to be tried by one who knows all about him, should be a pure and holy man.

(*) "naked" [Proverbs 15:11](#)

- Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.

And

The introductory *kai* in [v. 13](#) is best seen in an adversative sense where **the author changed the subject from Jesus in [v. 12](#) to God in [v. 13](#). Verse 12 is taken in a positive way, while [v. 13](#) is the negative counterpart.** In [Heb 4:12](#), Jesus as the Word is the "agent of interior change in man." In [4:13](#) he appears as an intercessor with God,

.... Structurally, [Heb 4:13](#) concludes the first major section of the epistle, which is bracketed (i.e., an *inclusio*) by God speaking in a Son in the prologue and speaking in his Word in [4:12-13](#).

Theologically, [v. 13](#) indicates something else as well. Christ's high priesthood, which plays such a key role in the epistle, actually develops out of the revelation of Jesus as "Son."

He is able to be "high priest" because he is first a "Son."

"And yet no creature is hidden before him, but all things are bare and exposed before his eyes, with whom on our behalf is the Word.... The Word is "with" God to act as one who pleads with God in favor of Christians who sin. This is why 4:14 follows logically from 4:13 with no break in the thought when it speaks of

the 'high priest'... and why 4:15-16 speaks about the sympathy of the high priest and the importance of turning to him for mercy."

New American Commentary

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must

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Entering with the Word

Hebrews 4:11-13

Verse 11 introduces the “so what” of the preceding section. In light of what has preceded, “Let us *then* make every effort to enter that rest” (emphasis added). The accent in this verse is on the exhortation to strive for God’s rest so that the threat of falling by disobedience will not come true for these (professing) believers as it did for the wilderness generation. We must not be like the Israelites in the wilderness. We must strive to enter God’s rest. In other words, we must work at resting. This means we must work *against* all of our efforts to prove our righteousness. We must strive *against* all our efforts to justify ourselves.

One of our chief responsibilities in the Christian life is to exhort one another to faithfulness.

This is one of the things we do every Sunday in corporate worship when we sit under the preaching of the Word of God. This is what we do when we sing together. This is what we do when we pray together. This is what we do when we fellowship together. We gather in corporate worship to encourage one another to be fully satisfied in Christ and in him alone, lest we fail to enter his rest.

The author also underlines the role of God’s Word in our perseverance in verses 12 and 13. The designation “word of God” requires some definition. **The author uses the phrase to point to the entirety of divine revelation—both written and incarnate.** Regrettably, many Christians divorce the Bible from Jesus. “I don’t need theology or the Bible, I just want Jesus,” some may say. This is a misguided assessment. Christ cannot be divorced from Scripture. **Our knowledge of Jesus as the divine Son of God and his accomplishments for us only come *through* Scripture. We cannot have Jesus Christ apart from the witness of the Bible. The two are inseparably wedded.**

The author establishes two characteristics about the Word of God in [verse 12](#). First, the Word of God is “living and effective.” This highlights the enduring vitality of Scripture. Since God is the author of Scripture, it is not a dead book. As God lives, Scripture lives. Furthermore, as we see throughout Scripture, when God speaks, God acts. This is what is meant by the adjective *effective*. For example, God created the heavens and the earth with his word. Thus, Scripture, because it is God’s Word, is alive and life giving. The Bible is not a bunch of dead, lifeless words. It is the living Word of God. It accomplishes everything God wills. As the Lord says through the prophet Isaiah, “so my word that comes from my mouth will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish what I please and will prosper in what I send it to do” ([Isa 55:11](#)).

Second, the author describes Scripture as “sharper than any double-edged sword.” As a sword, Scripture is “penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” The description of the Bible as a sword that can pierce and divide the soul demonstrates the invasive quality of the Word. When we approach Scripture with a humble hermeneutic of submission rather than a haughty hermeneutic of suspicion, then it is not we who read Scripture, it is Scripture that reads us. Scripture untangles the human heart and unearths sin like no other book can. No other book can discern the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. Only God’s Word can do that.

Scripture is like a scalpel wielded by God to perform spiritual surgery.

In conjunction with the Holy Spirit, the Word of God cuts through the sin and darkness of the human heart to restore spiritual health and vitality for Christ. **Without the Word, we are as good as dead. God's Word, however, eradicates the disease of the human heart and breathes life where there is death.**

Verse 13 shifts from the Word of God to God himself, which shows the intrinsic link between God and Scripture.

Just as God's Word graciously reveals God to man, it also makes man accountable before God as Judge. When God reveals himself to us, we in turn realize that we all "are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account."

Scripture strips us bare before our own eyes and before the eyes of God because it exposes God's ineffable character.

As **Calvin** famously stated,

"It is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked on God's face, and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself" (*Institutes*, I.I.2).

God gives us the gift of Scripture so that we will not follow the example of Israel's disobedience. The Bible is our guide to trusting God and finding full satisfaction in him.

Furthermore, God has revealed the truth about Christ to us in his Word. This is why we must be students of God's Word and maintain the centrality of its teaching. Scripture leads us to Christlikeness.

If we are to become like the incarnate Word, we must study the inscripturated Word.

- Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary

In this latter part of the chapter the apostle concludes, first, with a serious repeated exhortation, and then with proper and powerful motives.

I. Here we have a serious exhortation: Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, [v. 11](#). Observe,

1. The end proposed-rest spiritual and eternal, the rest of grace here and glory hereafter-in Christ on earth, with Christ in heaven.

2. The way to this end prescribed-labour, diligent labour; this is the only way to rest; those who will not work now shall not rest hereafter. After due and diligent labour, sweet and satisfying rest shall follow; and labour now will make that rest more pleasant when it comes. The sleep of the labouring man is sweet, [Ecclesiastes 5:12](#). Let us therefore labour, let us all agree and be unanimous in this, and let us quicken one another, and call upon one another to this diligence. It is the truest act of friendship, when we see our fellow-christians loiter, to call upon them to mind their business and labour at it in earnest. "Come, Sirs, let us all go to work; why do we sit still? Why do we loiter? Come, let us labour; now is our working time, our rest remains." Thus should Christians call upon themselves and one another to be diligent in duty; and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

II. Here we have proper and powerful motives to make the advice effectual, which are drawn,

1. From the dreadful example of those who have already perished by unbelief: Lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. To have seen so many fall before us will be a great

aggravation of our sin, if we will not take warning by them: their ruin calls loudly upon us; their lost and restless souls cry to us from their torments, that we do not, by sinning as they did, make ourselves miserable as they are.

2. From the great help and advantage we may have from the word of God to strengthen our faith, and excite our diligence, that we may obtain this rest: The word of God is quick and powerful, [v. 12](#). By the word of God we may understand either the essential or the written word: the essential Word, that in the beginning was with God, and was God ([John 1:1](#)), the Lord Jesus Christ, and indeed what is said in this verse is true concerning him; but most understand it of the written word, the holy scriptures, which are the word of God. Now of this word it is said,

(1.) That is quick; it is very lively and active, in all its efforts, in seizing the conscience of the sinner, in cutting him to the heart, and in comforting him and binding up the wounds of the soul. Those know not the word of God who call it a dead letter; it is quick, compared to the light, and nothing quicker than the light; it is not only quick, but quickening; it is a vital light; it is a living word, *zōn*. Saints die, and sinners die; but the word of God lives. All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever, [1 Peter 1:24, 25](#). Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words, which I commanded the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? [Zechariah 1:5, 6](#).

(2.) It is powerful. When God sets it home by his Spirit, it convinces powerfully, converts powerfully, and comforts powerfully. It is so powerful as to pull down strong holds ([2 Corinthians 10:4, 5](#)), to raise the dead, to make the deaf to hear, the blind to see, the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk. It is powerful to batter down Satan's kingdom, and to set up the kingdom of Christ upon the ruins thereof.

(3.) It is sharper than any two-edged sword; it cuts both ways; it is the sword of the Spirit, [Ephesians 6:17](#). It is the two-edged sword that cometh out of the mouth of Christ, [Revelation 1:16](#). It is sharper than any two-edged sword, for it will enter where no other sword can, and make a more critical dissection: it pierces to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, the soul and its habitual prevailing temper; it makes a soul that has been a long time of a proud spirit to be humble, of a perverse spirit to be meek and obedient. Those sinful habits that have become as it were natural to the soul, and rooted deeply in it, and become in a manner one with it, are separated and cut off by this sword. It cuts off ignorance from the understanding, rebellion from the will, and enmity from the mind, which, when carnal, is enmity itself against God. This sword divides between the joints and the marrow, the most secret, close, and intimate parts of the body; this sword can cut off the lusts of the flesh as well as the lusts of the mind, and make men willing to undergo the sharpest operation for the mortifying of sin.

(4.) **The word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, even the most secret and remote**

thoughts and designs. It will discover to men the variety of their thoughts and purposes, the vileness of them, the bad principles they are actuated by, the sinister and sinful ends they act to.

*The word will turn the inside of a sinner out,
and let him see all that is in his heart.*

Now such a word as this must needs be a great help to our faith and obedience.

v.13:

3. From the perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ, both of his person and office.

(1.) His person, particularly his omniscience: Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, [v. 13](#). This is agreeable to what

Christ speaks of himself:

All the churches shall know that I am he that searches the reins and hearts, [Revelation 2:23](#).

None of the creatures can be concealed from Christ; none of the creatures of God, for Christ is the Creator of them all; and there are none of the motions and workings of our heads and hearts (which may be called creatures of our own) but what are open and manifest to him with whom we have to do as the object of our worship, and the high priest of our profession. He, by his omniscience, cuts up the sacrifice we bring to him, that it may be presented to the Father. Now **as the high priest inspected the sacrificed beasts, cut them up to the back-bone to see whether they were sound at heart, so all things are thus dissected, and lie open to the piercing eye of our great high priest. An he who now tries our sacrifices will at length, as Judge, try our state.**

We shall have to do with him as one who will determine our everlasting state. Some read the words, to whom with us there is an account or reckoning. **Christ has an exact account of us all.** He has accounted for all who believe on him; and he will account with all: our accounts are before him. *This omniscience of Christ, and the account we owe of ourselves to him, should engage us to persevere in faith and obedience* till he has perfected all our affairs.

(2.) We have an account of the excellency and perfection of Christ, as to his office, and this particular office of our high priest. The apostle first instructs Christians in the knowledge of their high priest, what kind of high priest he is, and then puts them in mind of the duty they owe on this account.

[1.] What kind of high priest Christ is ([v. 14](#)): Seeing we have such a high priest; that is, First, A great high priest, much greater than Aaron, or any of the priests of his order. The high priests under the law were accounted great and venerable person; but they were but faint types and shadows of Christ. The greatness of our high priest is set forth, 1. By his having passed into the heavens. The high priest under the law, once a year, went out of the people's sight within the veil, into the holiest of all, where were the sacred signals of the presence of God; but Christ once for all has passed into the heavens, to take the government of all upon him, to send the Spirit to prepare a place for his people, and to make intercession for them. Christ executed one part of his priesthood on earth, in dying for us; the other he executes in heaven, by pleading the cause, and presenting the offerings, of his people. 2. The greatness of Christ is set forth by his name, Jesus—a physician and a Saviour, and one of a divine nature, the Son of God by eternal generation; and therefore having divine perfection, able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him. Secondly, He is not only a great, but a gracious high priest, merciful, compassionate, and sympathizing with his people: We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, [v. 15](#). Though he is so great, and so far above us, yet he is very kind, and tenderly concerned for us. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities in such a manner as none else can be; for he was himself tried with all the afflictions and troubles that are incident to our nature in its fallen state: and this not only that he might be able to satisfy for us, but to sympathize with us. But then, Thirdly, He is a sinless high priest: He was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin. He was tempted by Satan, but he came off without sin. We seldom meet with temptations but they give us some shock. We are apt to give back, though we do not yield; but our great high priest came off clear in his encounter with the devil, who could neither find any sin in him nor fix any stain upon him. He was tried severely by the Father. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; and yet he sinned not, either in thought, word, or deed. He had done no

violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth. He was holy, harmless, and undefiled; and such a high priest became us. Having thus told us what a one our high priest is, the apostle proceeds to show us,

Matthew Henry's Commentary

***This experience enables us to be honest with God,
to trust His will, and to obey Him.***

**All of this is possible because of the finished work of
Jesus Christ**

- Bible Exposition Commentary – Be Confident
(Hebrews).

one who is still "dead in trespasses and sins" has no realization of his awful condition before
God.

**If the Word of God has searched you out, then you cried
with Isaiah "Woe is reel for I am undone" (Heb. 6:5); with
Job, "I abhor myself" (Heb. 42:6); with the publican,
"God be merciful to me the sinner" (Luke 18:13). But
if you are a stranger to these experiences, no matter
what your profession or performances, no matter how**

highly you may think of yourself or Christians think of you, God says you are still dead in sin.

when a child of God is walking in communion with Him, His word does not come to *him* as a "sword"; rather is it "a lamp" unto his feet.

It shows the *sufficiency* of His Word.

It is striking to note that just **7 things** are here **said of it.**

1. **First**, it is the "Word of God."
2. **Second**, it is **living**, or "quick."
3. **Third**, it is **mighty**, "powerful."
4. **Fourth**, it is **effectual**, "sharper than any two edged sword."
5. **Fifth**, it is **penetrating**, "piercing."
6. **Sixth**, it is **regenerative**, "even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."
7. **Seventh**, it is **revealing** and **exposing**, bringing to light the "thoughts and intents of the heart, etc."

An Exposition of Hebrews.

the thoughts and intents of the heart are brought out to view by the word of God.

The exhibition of the truth is like pouring down the beams of the sun at midnight on a dark world; and the truth lays open the real feelings of the sinner, as that sun would disclose the clouds of wickedness that are now performed under cover of the night. Many a man has a deep and fixed hostility to God, and to his gospel, who might never be sensible of it, if the truth was not faithfully proclaimed.

- Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.

it may seem that the writer suddenly shifts topics, from rest to the Word of God. Actually, he is emphasizing a point. He began his discussion of rest at 3:7 by quoting from scripture, attributing not a psalmist, but the Holy Spirit for the text. The psalm is a warning against hardening one's heart and rebelling against God.

So the point he makes in 4:12 is that God's Word is nothing to be taken lightly.

It is the living voice of God that gets right to the bottom of things. Someone may look fine in the eyes of other people, but God's Word exposes the true condition of the heart, the real character of one's faith, and reveals a genuine spirit.

- Layman's Bible Commentary

the author of Hebrews clearly thought the first generation of Jewish Christians found themselves in a parallel situation with their exodus generation counterparts.

Forty years of wilderness wandering was the lot of the exodus generation prior to entrance into the land. From the crucifixion of Jesus until the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans was also a period of forty years.

- The New American Commentary

Christ cannot be divorced from Scripture.

Our knowledge of Jesus as the divine Son of God and his accomplishments for us only come through Scripture. We cannot have Jesus Christ apart from the witness of the Bible. The two are inseparably wedded.

“living and effective.” This highlights the enduring vitality of Scripture.

As God lives, Scripture lives.

When God speaks, God acts.

In conjunction with the Holy Spirit, the Word of God cuts through the sin and darkness of the human heart to restore spiritual health and vitality for Christ. Without the Word, we are as good as dead. God’s Word, however, eradicates the disease of the human heart and breathes life where there is death.

- Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary

The word will turn the inside of a sinner out, and let him see all that is in his heart.

Matthew Henry's Commentary

This verse and the one which follows appear to be brought in for the purpose of testing profession and enabling exercised souls to

*discover whether or not they have been born
again.*

It should be evident that the first thing emphasized here is that Christianity consists not so much of external conduct, as the place which the Word of God has *within* us.

He sees himself a lost, ruined, undone sinner. This is ever the first conscious effect of the new birth, for one who is still "dead in trespasses and sins" has no realization of his awful condition before God.

WORD

The Word of God is an utterance or saying that may refer to a single work, the entire law, the gospel message, or even Christ.

Old Testament *Dabar* is the primary Hebrew expression for word.

Three aspects of this word demand special attention.

1. A prophetic word. The prophets claimed to deliver the “word of God” (Jer. 1:9). For this purpose they were commissioned (Isa. 6:8). This word of God addressed human beings and demanded a response.

2. A legal word. The entire law represents the will of God and so can be called a single “word” (Deut. 4:2 KJV). This word also demands response: faithful obedience will bring God’s blessing while disobedience will lead to a curse (Deut. 30:15-20).

3. Creative word. God created the world by His word (Gen. 1; Isa. 48:13; Ps. 33:9).

New Testament *Logos* and *Rhema* are the two primary Greek words meaning “word.” They are used interchangeably

The New Testament can use these words to apply to Jesus’ message, the message about Jesus, and Jesus Himself.

As in the Old Testament, so also Jesus’ word demanded decision on the part of the hearers (John 8:51; 12:47).

The message concerning Jesus can also be called “a word.” Paul spoke of “the word of God that you heard from us” that is mediated by his human words ([1 Thess. 2:13](#) NRSV). The content of this word is certainly the good news story concerning Jesus’ death and resurrection—the heart of the gospel ([1 Cor. 15:3-5](#)). This message is the word of the cross ([Gal. 3:1](#)) and is the core content of Paul’s preaching ([1 Cor. 2:2](#)). Because of His sacrifice and resurrection, the gospel message is a “word of reconciliation” ([2 Cor. 5:19](#)) and a “word of life” ([Phil. 2:16](#)). The word is witnessed and proclaimed by Jesus’ followers ([Luke 1:2](#); [Acts 4:2](#); [6:7](#)). The word revealed through His son ([Heb. 1:1-4](#)) brings illumination and judgment.

- Randy Hatchett - Holman Bible Dictionary.

The use of *zōn* ("living") to qualify "word" implies personality.

Taking the "word" in 4:12 to refer to Jesus is the connection of these verses with the prologue, Heb 1:1-2 to form an *inclusio*.

- The New American Commentary