

A Biblical Theology of Rest

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Description

Rest is important to God—important enough to feature as a major theme developed in the storyline of Scripture, beginning in creation, hindered by the fall, and consummated in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This talk will describe the Christian experience of rest in the present age of suffering and labor, as Christians await their final rest.

A Summary Description of Rest as a Biblical Theological Theme

Rest is the personal satisfaction in God and in his creation that every person was designed to experience. This satisfaction involves

- *a place* of safety,
- *productivity* in work,
- *pleasure* in goodness, and
- *peace* in relationship.

In a fallen world, these benefits require threats to be eliminated, futility to be removed, hearts to see clearly, and sin to be atoned for. Jesus Christ accomplished the promised rest for God's people. Faith is the means by which the people of God enter his rest.

Our Strategy to Establish a Biblical Theology of Rest

Psalm 90, A Song About Rest

- A weary Moses reckons with God about the restlessness of life in the wilderness.
- A compassionate Lord compels him to a rest not yet fully known.

This song of Moses compels us to look back to creation, the fall, and the exodus to understand the theme of rest. It also compels us to look forward to Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of God's promise of rest.

A Biblical Theology of Rest in Psalm 90

1. The Lord compels us to see the stark contrast between his rest in creation and our lack of rest from the fall. (v.1–6)
2. The Lord withholds rest from us in this life to accomplish the deeper work of trust, as demonstrated in the Exodus. (v.7–11)
3. The Lord gives rest from the wealth of his compassion, in part now and in full later. (v.12–17)

Application to Care & Counseling Ministry

1. Help people see the rest they're longing for as dimensional; specifically, as a *place* of safety, *productivity* in work, *pleasure* in goodness, and *peace* in relationships.
2. Present Christ as the fulfillment of all God's promises of rest.
3. Call people to trust as the means of rest.
4. Set biblical expectations of the first fruits of rest in this life and the harvest of rest we wait for.