Discussion Notes for Hebrews 4 :1-11 • Understanding the Sabbath

- The theme of this section is all about entering God's rest. That basically means resting from personal effort to earn salvation and resting in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. The author will show in these verses how the Sabbath commands of the Mosaic Law were a foreshadowing of our need to rest in Christ instead of working for our salvation.
- Read **Psalm 95:7-11**. In this section what Old Testament event is being referred to as "entering God's rest"?
- You can see that the author of Hebrews likes to use Old Testament events to illustrate New Testament revelations. In this case he is using the idea of entering the promised land as a foreshadowing of walking in faith. What commonalities are there between entering the Promised Land and walking by faith?
- **Something to ponder**: **Verse 8** tells us that the "rest" Joshua gave the Israelites was incomplete, otherwise God would not have continued to speak of a rest that was yet to come. In other words, the "rest" that came from entering the Promised Land was not the ultimate fulfillment of what God had in mind for His people.
- **Read verse 9**. This is the first time that the author connects the idea of entering God's rest with another picture of resting in the Old Testament — the Sabbath. How did God tell the Israelites to keep the Sabbath?
- How is the Sabbath an Old Testament way of understanding what we must do to be saved?
- Read **Isaiah 30:15**. How does this verse connect rest and salvation?
- How was the celebration of Passover also a picture of resting in Jesus?
- According to **verse 3** how do we enter the rest of God?
- What (or who) is our faith to be in so that we can enter God's rest?
- Apparently the observance of the Sabbath was a challenging one for the early church. Read the following passages and discuss why they were written to the early church. **Romans 14:5-6** and **Colossians 2:16-17**.
- In the Colossians passage, what does Paul mean when he says of the Sabbath, "**the substance belongs to Christ**"?
- Read **verse 11**. What does it mean to "**strive to enter that rest**"?