OUR ANCHOR OF HOPE

**DATE: 1/8/2014 Wed.**

**TEXT: Hebrews 6:9-20**

**INTRODUCTION**

The last time we were in the Book of Hebrews we were being warned of the Danger of Falling Away

Because of their spiritual immaturity these Hebrew believers were in Danger of Falling Away

The writer calls them to move from the ABC's onto the deeper things of the Word of God

- Growing in Grace will **“Protect”** us from Falling away

- Then we saw the **“Possibility”** of Falling Away

- Finally we looked at the **“Price”** for Falling Away

Tonight, we want to look at the encouragement offered after this Warning is given

Tonight we want to look at **The Anchor of Our Hope**

**vs,18, 19 *-  “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:” “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;”***

When folks use the word *“****hope”*** today …

…it often carries with it the connotation of uncertainty

They may say something like …

- *I hope I have enough money to pay my bills*

- *I hope I get a good report from the doctor*

However, in the Bible the word *“****hope”*** carries the idea of Certainty

Why? Because when God says something is going to happen we can expect it to happen, without any doubt

Every believer has a wonderful Hope

Let’s pray and look at this wonderful thought

***“Our Anchor of Hope”***

***~~~Prayer~~~***

**I. THE “ANTICIPATION” OF HOPE – v.9**

***“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak”***

**A. Persuaded of Better Things**

Having warned them of the possibility of falling away,

The writer goes on to offer Hope for their situation

The Hebrew Christians were neglecting their salvation

**Hebrews 2:3 – *“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation”***

They had remained spiritual infants

**Hebrews 5:12, 13 – *“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” “For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe”***

However, the writer expected and anticipated better things from these Hebrew believers

In fact, he was ***“persuaded*** (convinced) ***better things”***

The better things are in contrast to the bad things that falling away would bring described in **vs. 4-6**

Because of their salvation and the work of God in their lives,

The writer was persuaded that these Hebrew Christians could produce and enjoy better things

**B. Things That Accompany Salvation**

Notice that he speaks of these *“****better things”*** as...

*“****things that accompany salvation”* – v.9b**

When someone comes to Christ and is saved, there are better things that will accompany our salvation

The word ***“accompany”*** comes from a word that carries the idea of *holding, possessing, going with*

Webster defines it as *to go with* or *attend as a companion or associate; to keep company with; to go along with*

Salvation is more than a fire escape

In fact, salvation is more than being saved and going to heaven

Salvation does more than merely secure the soul,

It ought to permeates the whole being

If you’ll remember, the writer of Hebrews had just used the illustration of the earth drinking up the rain and producing fruit in **v.7**

*“****For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:”***

When the rain falls and waters the ground, it doesn't remain dry and barren

Instead it brings forth life and fruit

Likewise when someone is saved, new life and fruit is produced out of that which was once dead and barren

**THE “ANTICIPATION” OF HOPE**

**II. THE “ALMIGHTY” AND HOPE – v.10**

***“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister”***

These Hebrews had come to Christ

They knew Him as their Saviour

It wasn't mere religion, it was genuine Christianity

They had even labored and produced fruit—at least to a degree

Even though the persecution and problems they faced had gotten them off course a bit

They had stalled in their growth, but there was still hope

Some of you were just like that until you came to this church

**A. The Saviour's Loyalty – v. 10a**

***“For God is not unrighteous to forget...”***

The writer reminds them of God's Faithfulness

Our hope is based upon the Unchanging Faithfulness of God

**Malachi 3:6 –** ***“For I am the LORD, I change not;”***

**Lamentations 3:21-23 – *“This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope”***

***“It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” “They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness”***

We have hope because God is faithful even when we fail

God's compassion and mercy aren't dependent upon our faithfulness to Him,

But rather His Faithfulness to us

**B. The Saint’s Love – v.10b**

The question then begs …

What was it that the Lord did not forget?

***“… (their) work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His Name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister”***

A couple of thoughts here –

**1.** First we see that the Hebrew's service was a ***“work and labour of love”***

They didn't have to be persuaded, prodded, or pushed to serve

They weren't manipulated, threatened or thrown into service

No one laid a guilt trip on them

They labored because they loved the Lord and His people

Love is more than a warm, fuzzy feeling of emotion

Love is a verb, a word of action

Jesus Christ demonstrated the labour of love when He went to the cross for the sins of the world

**Romans 5:8 - *“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”***

If you want to see true and pure love—look to Jesus

He loved and, as a result, He died for those He loved

As believers we must go beyond the mere profession of love

We are to demonstrate our love by serving the Saviour by serving others

**2.** The writer then states – *“****which ye have shewed toward His Name”***

Christ received the glory for their work

Their labor and ministry was done in Christ's Name

All service for Christ must be done in His Name and for His glory

**Mark 9:41 *– “For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My Name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward”***

**THE “ANTICIPATION” OF HOPE**

**THE “ALMIGHTY” AND HOPE**

**III. THE “ASSURANCE” OF HOPE – vs. 11, 12**

***“And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:”  
“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises”***

Many Christians unfortunately live their lives with little or no Assurance

The writer explains that such Hopelessness is due to a lack of Diligence

**A. The ‘Perseverance’ – v.11**

***“And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:”***

When I use the term Perseverance I mean steady and continued action or belief, usually over a long period and especially despite difficulties or setbacks

Couple of thoughts here -

**1.** Diligence **- v. 11a**

***“And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence”***

The writer called upon the Hebrews to be diligent in their work

The word ***“diligence”*** comes from a word that means *earnestness and haste*

It conveys the idea of *intense effort coupled with speed & eagerness*

This word shows up many times in the Bible in relationship to the believer

**Proverbs 4:23 – *“Keep thy heart with all diligence...”***

**II Peter 1:10 – *“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure...”***

**II Peter 1:5 –** ***“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith …”***

**Hebrews 11:6 …**

God's people are to be diligent concerning the things that accompany salvation

We are to make every effort to do what God requires

And do it with *earnestness & steady haste*

Also when it comes to our **‘Perseverance’**

We have …

**2.** Assurance **- v.11b**

***“to the full assurance of hope unto the end:”***

As we continue on, steadily by faith,

…despite the difficulties and setbacks

We find a Confidence

***“Assurance”*** speaks of our absolute and total Confidence

This word was used of Abraham's Assurance

…that God would keep His promise and give him a son

**Romans 4:20, 21 – *“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;” “And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform”***

This is an unshakable faith and confidence that holds out unto the end

The word *“****end”*** speaks of a *definite point or goal*

And that ***“end”*** is the ***“perfection”*** or *our maturity* found in **v. 1**

**Philippians 3:14 *– “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”***

**B. The ‘Precaution’ – v. 12a**

***“That ye be not slothful …”***

We have to be careful not to get lazy in our Christianity

The word *“****slothful”*** means *sluggish, lazy, dull*

It describes someone who is undisciplined

**Quote:** Charles Spurgeon said – *“An idle man, makes himself a good target for the devil; and the devil is an uncommonly good shot”*

**Quote:** G. B. Foster said – *“An idle man's heart is the devil's nest; his hands the devil's tools; while the devil lays in wait for active, busy men, the idle man is actually waiting for the devil to send him a job”*

Such people are headed for trouble

They will be like the bunch; the writer was talking about in **chapter 5**

They will be spiritual babies who never reach maturity

Solomon said in **Proverbs 15:19 – *“The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns...”***

The lazy man is pictured as being stuck in a briar patch!

Like a man surrounded by thorns, he makes no progress, he doesn't get far in life

Paul warns us not to become sluggish and slothful

When it come to **the Assurance of our Hope**

There must be – **‘Perseverance’**

There must be – **“Precaution’**

Notice last in this thought …

**C. The ‘Promise’ – v.12b**

***“... but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises”***

It’s obvious that some in this group were working hard

God is faithful to deliver on His promises

We need to look at the faithful men and women of the Bible and follow their example

Down through Church history there are numerous examples of Diligence

**For Example:** In his 52 years of ministry, John Wesley rode 280,000 miles on horseback. He preached 40,000 sermons. He learned 10 languages. He wrote 400 books. At age 83 he complained about the fact that his eyes would not hold up for him to write more than 15 hours a day. At age 86 he was concerned that his energy would not hold out for him to preach more than twice a day. What diligence!

The Lord doesn’t expect you to be John Wesley, but it sure puts us to shame at all the complaining we do about how busy we are

The devil’s got us busy with everything, but what is really important

**THE “ANTICIPATION” OF HOPE**

**THE “ALMIGHTY” AND HOPE**

**THE “ASSURANCE” OF HOPE**

**IV. THE “ANCHOR” OF HOPE – vs. 13-20**

In the remaining verses the writer explains why believers have Hope

He likens our Hope to an Anchor that not only secures

… but guarantees the safety of our soul

Let’s Notice the 3 Reasons for our Hope

**A. God’s ‘Promise’ – vs. 13 -15**

**1. Are Sure – vs. 13, 14**

***“For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself,” “Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee”***

Paul draws an illustration from the life of Abraham to show us that we have Hope because we can have confidence in God's promises

**Genesis 22:16, 17 – *“And said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:” “That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;”***

This was God's promise to Abraham

God would bless Abraham and multiply his descendants

God’s Promises …

**2. Are not always immediate – v.15**

***“And so, after he had patiently endured,***

***… he obtained the promise”***

God's promises are not always fulfilled immediately

This is faith and perseverance!

Abraham took God at His Word and stayed the course

Abraham had to rest on promises which he did not possess

In **Romans 4:18** Paul tells us *– “****Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be”***

By faith Abraham had hope when there was no human reason to hope

**Romans 4:19 – *“And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:”***

If Abraham had focused on his and Sarah's age,

He would have no choice but to say …

*“This is a hopeless situation”*

However, Abraham looked at Almighty God and by faith rested in God's sure promise

The point the writer of Hebrews is making here is that we can count on God

Notice that God's promise to Abraham was unconditional

God promised, and God delivered on His promise

This promise was not based on Abraham's faithfulness, but on God's faithfulness

Regardless of Abraham's failures, God kept His promise to bless Abraham and multiply his seed on the earth

We have Hope because of God's Promise

Remember we are talking about being anchored

Being held in place

**God’s ‘Promise’**

**B. God’s ‘Pledge’ – vs.16 – 18**

When I use the word Pledge, I’m referring to something that is solemn, not to be broken

We are told that it is impossible for God to lie in **v.18**

When He makes a pledge, it’s a pledge that we can count on

God does not go back on His word …

**1.** God’s Confirmation **- v.16, 17**

- God confirmed His Promise with an oath

***“For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife”***

- God did this to cement this promise

***“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath:”***

An oath is a solemn affirmation that guarantees a promise

The writer says - ***“For men verily swear by the greater”***

**Ill.** When our President takes the oath of office, he lays his hand on the Bible and says *"so help me God"* to be sworn in

By using the Bible and God's name he is swearing by something greater than himself and thus verifying that what he says is true

God doesn’t need to affirm anything to us, but because of His Love, does

He knows our need to be shored up

God is trustworthy

We can know God’s faithfulness

**I Corinthians 1:9 – *“God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord”***

David said in **Psalm 36:5 –** *“****Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds”***

Yes! God is faithful and when He makes a promise we can count on it

However, for our assurance, God goes beyond His promise and pledges by oath to keep His Word

We notice that God's promise and oath was not just for Abraham, but also for the heirs of promise

And who are the heirs of promise?

**Galatians 3:29 – “*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise”***

**Romans 4:16 –*****“Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,”***

By faith we are the children of Abraham

The promise and the pledge extends to the New Testament believer

Earlier the writer said in **v.13 – *“For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself...”***

God sware by Himself, because there was no one who was greater

God put His name on the line

God's promises are as good as His perfect character

The guarantee of fulfillment is the integrity of God's Word

**2.** God’s Consistency **– v.18** (reliable)

***“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:”***

The 2 *“****immutable things”*** are the Promise and the Oath which God made to Abraham and his heirs

The word *“****immutable”*** means *unchangeable*

Webster defines it as *the quality that renders change or alteration, impossible*

In our context it means that, what God Promised and Pledged will not change

Not only is God's Word immutable, God Himself is immutable

**James 1:17 – *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”***

**Hebrews 13:8 – *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever”***

And of course I’ve already quoted **Malachi 3:6 –**

***“For I am the LORD, I change not...”***

God is not double minded

**Quote:** Jerry Vines said – *“If God could change for the worse, then He would cease to be God. If God could change for the better, He wouldn't have been God in the first place”*

Since God is Immutable, His Promises are dependable

The writer also points out that we have a *“****strong consolation”***

The word *“****consolation”*** comes from the Greek word that means *solace, comfort and encouragement*

Our Comfort and Encouragement comes from the fact that it is *“****impossible for God to lie”***

What a hope we have

Paul said in **Titus 1:2 – *“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”***

The writer also speaks of believers as those

***“who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:”***

The phrase fled for refuge takes us back to the OT

In **Numbers 35** and **Joshua 20** we find what are known as – ***“Cities of Refuge”***

These cities of refuge were given by God as places of safety and security for someone who accidently killed another (manslaughter)

In such a case the next of kin of the victim became the avenger of blood and could exact revenge on the one who killed him

The only place the manslayer was safe was in the city of Refuge

The avenger of blood could not avenge himself so long as the man remained in the city

The writer of Hebrews uses the City of Refuge as an illustration of our security and safety in Jesus Christ

The idea is that we have fled to Jesus Christ and He is our eternal refuge

**C. God’s ‘Position’ – vs. 19, 20**

The Soul is likened to a Ship and our Hope to an Anchor

**1.** The Surety **– v.19a**

***“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul”***

The ship is held and secured amidst the storm by its Anchor

The Purpose of an Anchor is to keep the ship from drifting

It is the Hope of our salvation that serves as an anchor to keep us from drifting

Think about if you were not eternally secure?

That’s why the false doctrine of losing your salvation is a damnable heresy

Our salvation is not based upon who we are, but on Who God is

Our Anchor is our Hope in the immutable promises of God

**2.** The Setting **– v.19b**

***“both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;”***

An Anchor is only as good as its placement

A ship will drag its anchor unless that anchor is set right

When the anchor is dropped it must be grappled and fixed in a good spot before it will hold

Otherwise the ship will simply drag the anchor along the ocean floor

We are told that our anchor is set ***“within the veil”***

We are anchored to Jesus Christ who has entered into the holy of holies; that is within the veil of Heaven

Believers may well enter into the storm where the seas rage, the winds beat and the waves crash against our soul

The old ship may be tossed about a bit, but our anchor is set firmly in Christ

**3.** The Sanctuary **– v.20**

***“Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”***

The word ***“forerunner”*** means *an advance guard that was sent in ahead of a marching army*

Talk about having a friend on the inside!

Jesus Christ has gone before us

He is within the veil, in the Most Holy Place

But not only is He there, He split the veil and made it possible for us to...

**Hebrews 4:16 – *“come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”***

No OT High Priest was called a forerunner

Sinful man could never follow the earthly High Priest into the Holy of Holies

But we can follow Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest into the very presence of God

**CONCLUSION**

**INVITATION**