

Strong Encouragement to Hold Fast

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Preacher: Mike Salvati

[0 : 00] You may be seated, kids, you may be excused to your King's Kids class.! If you would open up your Bible to Hebrews chapter 6.! Last week was quite the warning, and this week we have quite an assurance.

! In fact, what we're about to read is strong encouragement for your soul.

Do you know how Jesus on Palm Sunday entered Jerusalem? Jesus has entered the holy place, the heavenly holy place.

Hear God's Word, Hebrews chapter 6, verses 13 through 20. For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, Surely I will bless you and multiply you.

And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes, an oath is final for confirmation.

[1 : 12] So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise, the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath.

So that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. A hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

May God bless the hearing of his word. Would you all repeat after me? Christ is my. Risen and reigning.

Priest and king. The anchor of my soul. Hopelessness is a real experience among Christians.

[2 : 33] Christians can find themselves hopeless in a strained relationship. Amidst chronic health problems.

Chronic financial difficulties. And of course, when you string together a series of sinful choices, you can go the hopeless route.

You're going to start asking questions. Can I, will I ever change? You may be having asked this. Am I even a Christian? Hopelessness is a state of being where there is seemingly no promise of good on the horizon.

It's like being in an unfamiliar neighborhood. And you're in your car and you're just wanting to get home.

And you're taking turn after turn, trying to find your way out. And turn after turn, there's just another dead end. Hopelessness. Hopelessness.

[3 : 45] When Christians suffer for Jesus, as the original audience of Hebrews was experiencing, you can be tempted to a certain kind of hopelessness.

Is Jesus worth it? Hopelessness. When we get weary, when we get faint-hearted, we can become dull and start to drift.

Hopelessness is a spiritually risky condition. Hopelessness is a Christian.

The hope that you want. The hope that you need. The hope that is in Christ. Health is good, but it's not going to give you the hope that is in Christ.

Money. A full bank account. That's a good thing, right? But that's not going to give you the hope that only Christ can give. When we go hopeless, we are prone to drift.

[5 : 17] We lack being anchored to a promise of good, a promise of blessing. And without that anchor, we drift.

Did you come into the building hopeless? Did you come into the building adrift? You're in the right place. Because of what moves us from hopelessness to hopefulness is trusting in God's promises.

It's anchoring to Christ. And this morning, we have a supercharged promise to anchor your soul to Jesus. So three moves this morning.

The example of our hope. The certainty of our hope. And the name of our hope. What moves us from hopelessness to being hopeful is trusting in God's promises.

And Christian, you are anchored to Christ. You are held fast by Christ.

[6 : 29] So hold fast to Christ. So the example of our hope, Abraham. We see this in Genesis.

Excuse me. We'll see it in Genesis. But here in our text, it's 6.13-15. And what the writer of Hebrews does right out of the gate is he name drops Abraham.

You see it in verse 13. For when God made a promise to Abraham. Abraham. And then in verse 15. And thus, Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.

And what I want you to notice is a little word in verse 13. It's the word for. That starts the sentence out. For when God made a promise to Abraham. You see what's going on here is the writer of Hebrews is making a connection to what he's just said in 11 and 12.

And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end. So that you may not be sluggish, dull, adrift.

[7 : 32] But imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. And the reader is saying, well, an example to imitate? Like who? For when God made a promise to Abraham.

He's an example of faith and patience to inherit the promises. Do you see in verse 15? And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise.

What promise is he talking about? Well, that's in verse 14. Surely I will bless you and multiply you. It comes out of Genesis chapter 22, verse 17.

It happens right after Abraham has offered Isaac on an altar and was about to kill him and sacrifice him. And then God, Jehovah Jireh, provides a ram in the thicket.

Do you remember that? And an angel of the Lord appears. And God says, I swear by myself, I will surely bless you and multiply you. I will bless all the nations of the earth through you.

[8 : 40] But you know what? That promise didn't begin in Genesis 22. It actually starts way back when Abraham was 75 years old. And he was in Genesis chapter 12, 3.

That the promises begin. That God is going to bless Abraham. And through him, he will bless all the nations of the earth. And in chapter 15, there's the promise again to Abraham.

But this time, he's promising a son. And then in chapter 17, he reiterates the promise. God's going to bless all the nations through an offspring from him.

And then in chapter 18, when Abraham was 99 and then Sarah was 98. I mean, we're talking about 25 years after the original promise was made. That's a long time.

That's a long time to be waiting on a promise to be fulfilled. It's at that time, God says, hey, in about a year, you're going to have a little baby boy. Sarah laughs.

[9 : 37] Ha, ha, ha, ha. That's right, Sarah. You're going to name him Laughter. Isaac. 25 years later, that promise is fulfilled in a son.

The promise of this offspring through whom God will bless all the nations. That's why Abraham is here.

To show us an example of someone who through faith and patience held fast to the promise. Until it was fulfilled.

Until it was obtained. Now, Abraham didn't live long enough to be able to see all the nations blessed through this offspring. But, surprise, surprise, the ultimate offspring of Abraham.

Do you know who that is? Jesus. What we have here is an example to imitate. Someone to look to and say, okay, I'm going to trust God's promise as Abraham did.

[10 : 44] I'm going to wait on the Lord until I obtain the promise. Now, wouldn't it be great if Abraham was here and we can ask him some questions? So, let's pretend. Abraham.

Was it easy waiting those 25 years for God to give you a son? Abraham. No.

It was not easy. Especially. As I watched Sarah's body and my body age out.

We thought we were beyond having children. We were tempted to think that this was not possible.

But as we learned, all things are possible with God. Question number two, Abraham. Abraham, how did you not lose hope in those 25 years you were waiting for this promise to be obtained as you watched your body's age?

[11 : 52] How did you do that? Abraham. Well, God mercifully repeated his promise to us over and over and over again. And then Sarah and I would repeat the promise to each other just to remind

ourselves of this.

But when I was on the mountain about to sacrifice Isaac, do you know what went through my mind? What, Abraham? I thought God could raise the dead.

Hebrews 11.19. So even in that, you thought nothing was impossible for God. Question three, Abraham.

What would you say to Christ the King Church? Because many of us are dealing with some degree of hopelessness. Abraham would say, Christ the King Church.

Heirs. My heirs. Heirs. Heirs. Heirs. Follow my example. You can trust this promise in Genesis 22. [13:02] You can trust this promise, Christ the King Church. Because you are heirs of this promise, Christ the King Church.

He is an example for us. Of someone who is going from hopelessness to hopefulness, trusting in God's promises.

Now let's move to the certainty of our hope. We see this in verses 16 through 18, but I'm going to point back to 13 through 15.

The certainty of our hope. In 16 through 18, in Hebrews 6, the writer of Hebrews highlights something unique about the particular promise he made to Abraham in Genesis 22.

Would you turn back to Genesis 22? If you've got your pew Bible in front of you, it's on page 19. What's unique about this is that it's a promise and God swears to keep the promise.

[14:17] That's what's unusual. God makes an oath to keep the promise. He didn't swear an oath in any of the previous promises in Genesis 12 or 15 or 17 or 18, but here he does.

Verse 15, and the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, by myself I have sworn, declares the Lord. Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply your offspring.

That's what's quoted here in Hebrews 6. Surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, as the sand that is on the seashore, and your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemy, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

What we have here is what I call a supercharged promise.

The idea is God not only promises it, but he seals it with an oath. That is a supercharged promise.

[15:38] There is a lot of references to swearing, not cussing, and oath-taking. Look at verse 13. Since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself.

Verse 16. For people swear by something greater than themselves in all their disputes, an oath is final for confirmation. And so the way that the writer of Hebrews is using swear and oath is he's using them interchangeably.

So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath. Supercharged promise. Supercharged promise. We're familiar with oath-taking.

If you've been a witness in the court of law, you will stand in the witness box. The bailiff will have you put your left hand on the Bible and raise your right hand, and he will have you swear this oath. She will have you swear this oath. I swear to tell the truth. The whole truth and nothing but the truth. So help me God.

[16:54] You swear by something greater than yourself. You're saying, I promise to tell you the truth, and I swear by God who will judge me on that day that I am telling the truth right now.

So when you swear to a promise, you are saying, not only will I do this, I swear I will do it. It's a way to confirm the promise to tell the truth in a court of law.

And we all know that at least theoretically speaking, our legal system is based on truth-telling. So we swear oaths to assure that those listening can count on what you're saying to be truthful.

And so in verse 16, when we're hearing about God swearing, about God taking an oath in verse 17 to guarantee it, it should get your attention.

Again, a promise is a commitment. You're just like, I'm going to do that. And when you swear or oath to it, you're verbally guaranteeing you will do it. I'll take out the trash. Yes, I swear I will take out the trash.

[18:15] Which may raise some questions. Why would God swear by himself? In verse 13, we're told, well, he didn't have anybody else greater to swear by.

He was as far as he can go when it comes to swearing by somebody. To be held accountable by somebody. Which may raise another more basic question.

Why would God take an oath? Why would God seemingly need to do that? I mean, God never lies. He's completely truthful all the time. Why is he swearing by himself? Why is he taking an oath guaranteeing this promise? What is all that about?

It's not for God. He's not swearing by himself. He's not taking an oath for himself. It's for us.

[19 : 23] To convince us. To assure us. That the promise that he has made, he will follow through on.

In verse 18, the writer calls this promise and oath strong encouragement.

It's a supercharged promise. It's on the basis of two unchangeable things. The unchangeable nature of God making a promise.

And the unchangeable nature of God making an oath. Both are his word to us that he will do it. Surely he will. But I made a pivot here.

I'm not sure if you noticed. Genesis chapter 22 is a promise that God made to Abraham. And I'm talking like it's God's promise to us.

[20 : 41] What's up with that? In verse 17. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of promise.

Do you know who he's talking about? He's talking about you and me. We're the heirs of the promise. The promise of Genesis chapter 22 verse 17.

To bless and multiply. Did you notice the plural? Heirs of the promise?

Father Abraham had many sons. And many sons had.

I am one of them. And so are you. So let's all praise the Lord. We are all sons and daughters of Abraham.

[21 : 52] If we have believed in Christ. The ultimate offspring of Abraham. Abraham. So what's going on here is.

That the writer of Hebrews is seeking to convince that first century church. And this 21st century church. That we are actually somehow heirs of this promise. Now.

That the nature of this promise. That the nature of this promise. That the nature of this promise. Now. I want to help you understand. The nature of this promise.

The writer of Hebrews talks about it like this. In verse 17. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise. The unchangeable character of his purpose.

The unchangeable character of his purpose. God has a purpose in the promise. What's the purpose? And that is all the references by which God is going to bless the nations of the earth.

[22 : 59] Through the offspring of Abraham. His purpose is to bless. And I'm not talking about like. How you doing?

I'm blessed man. I'm blessed. Like I'm having a good day. Like everything's right. Not that. The blessing we're talking about here.

And God. This promise to bless the nations. Is for all the nations who were born into sin. To be reconciled to God. That's the blessing.

It's the blessing of salvation. It's the blessing of being brought into a right relationship with God. You're delivered. You fled to God from the refuge of the curse.

And you've been brought into a saving relationship with him. That is marked by blessing after blessing after blessing. So the purpose.

[24 : 02] The unchangeable nature of his purpose. God has resolved to bless the nations. Salvation. So who's the offspring?

If you want to turn back in your Bibles to Galatians chapter 3 verse 16. Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring.

And it's here Paul makes a very interesting argument. 3.16, now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say into offsprings, referring to many, but referring to one. And to your singular offspring, who is Christ, says the Apostle Paul. Now if you want to look at something more interesting. Maybe not more interesting, but interesting.

Look at Genesis chapter 3 verse 15. It's one of the early uses of the word offspring in the book of Genesis. This is where God is speaking curse.

[25 : 09] On the serpent, God says, I will put enmity between you, the serpent, and the woman, Eve. And between your offspring and her offspring.

The offspring of Eve. The offspring of Eve, he shall bruise, crush your head. And you'll just bruise his heel.

It's the earliest, earliest reference to the gospel. Because the offspring spoken of in Genesis 3. Well that's neither Cain nor Abel.

That's not Abraham. It's not Isaac. It's not Jacob or Esau. It's not Moses or Joshua. It's not David. The Genesis 3.15 offspring who will crush the serpent's head is Jesus.

And so this anticipation of an offspring that starts in Genesis and is repeated. Who will bless all the nations. Who Paul says, it's Christ. It's in Christ.

[26 : 29] That you will find the blessing of Abraham. Of being reconciled to God. For those of us who have believed in Christ.

We are heirs of this promise of God's blessing in Genesis chapter 2. And he guarantees it with an oath. It is supercharged.

It's not just for Abraham. It's for you. God's making this promise to you. So if you're hopeless. Let this promise drop into your heart.

And it will make you hopeful. Convincing you of God's unchangeable purpose. To bless you in Christ. It is unalterable. It is unwavering.

It is unstoppable. God will carry out his purpose. To finish what he starts. And blessing you for eternity. Do I have an amen? It's only through believing that Jesus is God in the flesh.

[27 : 47] He died on the cross. Was raised from the dead. That you become an heir to this promise. And it's guaranteed with an oath.

This isn't me guaranteeing with it. It's God guaranteeing with an oath. His oath. His promise. His oath. His word. Two unchangeable things.

And the effect of this supercharged promise is in verse 18. So that. So that. So that. So that you. Sorry. I'm still in Galatians. So that by two unchangeable things.

It's impossible for God to lie. We who have fled for refuge. We who have fled for refuge. Might have strong encouragement. To hold fast to the hope set before us.

[28 : 50] We who have fled for refuge. Are Christians. Those who have fled God's curse over our sin. We have fled to Christ. For God's blessing.

And this strong encouragement. Is to strengthen us. To hold fast. To this hope set before us. All the way to the end. Are you in a strained relationship?

You don't need to be hopeless. Are you super discouraged? You don't need to be hopeless. Have you become dull?

Are you adrift? Are you not aware of something happening? It's very unsettling. Guess what? You don't need to be hopeless. You never have a dead end. Because this promise stands.

Have you heard of identity politics? I know you have. What we have here is identity theologies.

[30 : 01] It's believing what God says to be true of you from his word. Theologically informed identity. And if you're a Christian in the room.

You are an heir of this promise in Christ. And so you know what the application is. Believe it. Trust it.

Hold fast to it. And then you exhort your brothers and sisters. While it's called today. To tell them. Remember who you are.

You're an heir of the promise. You fled for refuge. He has promised an oath that he will do it. He's always faithful. He never lies. He's always faithful. He never lies. You're never at a dead end.

Which brings us to the name of our hope. In verses 19 through 20. We've seen the certainty. Promise and an oath from God to you. That you will experience his blessing.

[31 : 08] Now the name of our hope. 19 and 20. Hope is the confidence that God will do what he has promised to do. And we have that hope sealed with an oath.

We have that promise sealed with an oath. And in verses 19 and 20. We are told the name of this hope. But let me just draw a couple things to your attention. First. In verse 19.

We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. The this. Is a reference to the hope set before us. The hope set before us. Is a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.

Do you know. That the largest anchor in the world. Is on the USS Gerald Ford.

An American aircraft carrier. Do you know how much it weighs. 33,000 pounds. It's 15 tons. When that baby slashes into the water.

[32 : 09] And drops to the sea floor. Do you know what that does. For the USS Gerald Ford. It anchors it. Secures it. It will not drift.

This anchor of the soul. Is described as an anchor. For your inner being. Who you are. To keep you from drift.

It's sure and steadfast. Not wavering and weak. It's a picture of security. This hope set before us. Whatever its name is.

Is an anchor for your soul. And notice. Notice. Where this. Hope. This. Anchor.

Is lodged. Verse 19. We have this. As a sure and steadfast anchor. Where is it? Where is it anchored?

[33 : 16] It's a hope that enters. Into the inner place. Behind the curtain. What? A hope that enters. Anchored in the inner place.

Behind the curtain. What's being talked about that? It's talking about the temple. About the tabernacle. The holy of holies. It's where the abiding presence. Dwelled. You come in through the holies. There's a curtain.

And then there's the holy of holies. The curtain was rend. When Jesus gave up his life. When died. Opening up the way. Between sinful man. And a holy God. But this isn't talking.

About the earthly temple. This is talking about. The heavenly temple. God's heavenly. Dwelling place. God's presence.

In heaven. Right now. What is being told to us. Is that this anchor of the soul. Whatever its name is. Is an anchor. For us. From on earth.

[34 : 13] To heaven. And it is secure. In verse 20.

We're told the name. Where Jesus has gone. As a forerunner on our behalf. Having become a high priest forever. After the order of Melchizedek.

Jesus entered. The holy of holies. Jesus has entered. The very presence of God. In the dwelling place of God.

Not 2,000 years ago. Well he did. But he's there now. Would you turn your page. Of your Bible. To chapter 9. Listen to 11 and 12.

But when Christ appeared. As a high priest. Of the good things that have come. Then through the greater. And more perfect tent. Not made with hands. That is. Not of this creation.

[35 : 17] A heavenly tent. He entered. Christ entered. Once for all. Into the holy places. Not by means. Of the blood of goats. And calves. But by means of his own blood.

Thus. Securing. An eternal redemption. salvation. How's that for an anchor? Look at verse 24. For Christ has entered.

Not into holy places. Made with hands. Which are copies of the true things. But into heaven itself.

Now to appear in the presence of God. On our behalf. He is the anchor of our soul.

We are on earth. Slogging our way through. And sometimes we go hopeless. And then we remember. God has.

Supercharged a promise. That our. Salvation and blessing. Has been secured. Because Jesus has entered.

[36 : 14] The holy of holies. Through his death and resurrection. And you're not going anywhere. In the old covenant.

There was only. One man. Who could enter. Into. The earthly. Holy of holies. And only on once. A year. Yom Kippur. To offer blood.

Of bulls and goats. For the people. On the mercy seat. Of the ark. Do you know who that was? The high priest. And then he'd have to come back. Every year. And every year. And every year.

Not our high priest. He has gone. Before us. Once and for all. He has entered. The very holy of holies. In heaven. And he.

There. On our behalf. Has secured for us. An eternal redemption. Our salvation. You're locked in. Because. You are held.

[37 : 12] By Christ. We. Hold fast. To Christ. He's an anchor. Of our souls. And so now. We can go to him.

In boldness. So now. We. Can. Fear not. Drifting away. From him. Because we're anchored. To him. And this is what. Will move you. From hopelessness.

To hopefulness. No matter. What your circumstances are. You're never in a dead end. Because Jesus. Is the anchor. Of your soul. And he. Is. Has an indestructible life.

And he's in there. On our behalf. He's on there. In there. On the. Behalf of the heirs.

Of promise. Those who've. Fled. To him. For refuge. Those who are holding fast. To him. To the end. He is. Our. Strong. Encouragement. You tell me.

[38 : 03] What is his name? Jesus. And we know. From. Second Corinthians. One. Twenty. That all of God's promises. Are yes.

And amen. In Christ. This morning. We've had an example. Of our hope.

Abraham. We've seen the certainty. Of our hope. Two unchangeable things. God's promise. And God's oath. And they're to you.

And now we've seen. The name of our hope. Jesus. The great high priest. Who lives forever. In the order of Melchizedek.

Do you know what? Do you know what? The writer of Hebrews. Is doing right there. He's getting Psalm 110. Four back on your head. We left Psalm 110.

[39 : 03] At the beginning of chapter five. Talking about Melchizedek. And the writer took a break. Because you're like. You guys are dull. Let me explain. And warn you on some things. And now he's coming back. To talking about Jesus.

As this priest forever. In the line of Melchizedek. And just so you know. That too is a promise. When God says to him.

In Psalm 110. Four. You are a priest forever. After the order of Melchizedek. It's a promise. And do you know what? He swears it by an oath. If you look down. In chapter seven. Verse 21.

The Lord has sworn. And will not change his mind. You are a priest forever. After the order of Melchizedek. Which means. We actually have. Two supercharged promises here.

It's all yes and amen. In Christ Jesus. How do you respond? How do you move from hopelessness.

[40 : 01] To hopefulness? Well you remember. Your anchor is Jesus Christ. And all of God's promises. Are yes and amen. In them. To you.

This is good news for the weary. For the faint hearted. For the discouraged. For the drifting in the dull. It's good news for us. Who are just seeking to daily. Hold fast to him.

He is our hope. This is tremendous assurance. Strong encouragement. To hold fast. We are held fast. By Christ.

So we hold fast. To Christ. Would you repeat after me? Christ is my. Risen and reigning. Priest and king.

The anchor of my soul. Lord Jesus. We are so grateful. That you have gone before us. On behalf of us.

[41 : 02] Into the heavenlies. Into the holy of holies. And you are our anchor. And our hope. Is not in ourselves. But in you.

And that you are God's. Yes and amen. To God's promises. And you are our life. God would you rescue.

Us who are hopeless. Feeling like we are staring at a dead end. When in fact we are. To fix our eyes on you Jesus. The risen one.

Our hope. Our anchor. Our great high priest. Amen. Amen. Amen.