Hope and Anchor

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 September 2026

Preacher: Richard Gibson

[0:00] Thank you.

Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you.
[3:02] Thank you.

Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
Thank you. Thank you. given us the spirit as a guarantee. So we are always of good courage.
We know that while we're at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage. And we would rather be away from the body than at home in the world.
[5:29] That's the verse my father has on his gravestone. And it's the hope that my mum has, that we have, and my dad has, that he struggled with Alzheimer's at the end of his life. That really precious verse.

Away from the body, and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether it's good or evil.
And then we'll just skip to Hebrews chapter 6, verse 19. It's a lovely little familiar verse, I'm sure, to many of us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain.
Well, let's pray. Father, we just pray that you would help us to concentrate, focus our minds, open the ears of our understanding, that we might not just be hearers of your word, but doers of your word also.
And we ask this in June's precious name. I wonder if you've ever wondered how pubs get their names.
[6:46] I'm quite an inquisitive person by nature, and driving around, I see pub names, and I wonder why do they call it that? I wonder if you've ever heard of the pub called, very typically, the old 13th Cheshire Astorley Volunteer Rifle, and then caught in, in Staley Bridge, in Greater Manchester.

I'm sure somebody has a laugh, and go after three pints, you're going to be able to say that one. Or then there is the one in Nottingham, which I love, the old trip to Jerusalem. Has anybody ever seen that one? In the bottom of the castle?
Yeah. I always wonder how does that get that name? Must be something in the end of the Crusade. But then there's probably one of my favourite names, the Hope and Anchor. And that's a name that has got really old roots in Britain.
It comes from the early 1800s. In non-conformist areas of England, particularly where sailors and travellers frequented the area, it was often near canals or ports.
In fact, one of the first pubs to be called the Hope and Anchor was in Ponticrat, not far from here. But what we can see very clearly in Hope and Anchor is the imagery we just read in Hebrews 6, verse 19, these were non-conformist Christians who knew their Bible, loved their Bible.
[7:58] And we have this sure and steadfast anchor of the soul that we clearly see in this imagery of Hebrews 6, verse 9, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain.

And for sailors, hope and Anchor were essential parts of the psychology that they needed to be able to do the very dangerous and hazardous job that they had to do. They had to set sail and be

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

open the seats for the hope that they'd get back.
And with an anchor, that would keep them steady in the storm. Otherwise, why would anybody in their right mind go out in the boat in the middle of the ocean? Because they didn't have a hope and they didn't have an anchor. And Paul encouraged the Corinthians to have an optimistic hope anchored in Jesus.
But I want to think this morning about how we can grow not just optimism, but a biblical optimism. because what if you're just a natural pessimist? Or life, disappointment, age, illness, betrayal.
It's just beating the optimism out of you. The first thing that I'd like to suggest to you this morning is that you don't lose hope. Have you ever met anybody that's lost hope?
[9:09] Do you know what happens when people lose hope? Absolutely right. They give up. You go to any hospital, you see somebody who's ill, they give up. That's it.

They've lost hope and it's a very, very quick journey to their end. I've met a Jewish lady called Muzal and I've been friends with her for about 20 years.
She was from Mumbai and India, Jewish lady from Mumbai and India. She immigrated to Israel when she was 12 years old, by herself. And I met her in Yorkshire, a Jewish man from me, she's got my own ken here.
And I visited her regularly and in that time she'd come to treat me like one of her own family. She wants to turn to a respite worker and she had Parkinson's this time and she was sitting with her and she said to me, you know, he's like my son.
And I've shared Passover meals and Jewish festival outreaches. We put them on in Leeds. We have a something called Leeds Messianic Fellowship, a place where Jewish people can come and experience Jesus without feeling the need to be ethnic and cleansed.
[10:13] The only thing that we need to be cleansed of to get a relationship with God to achieve it is our sin, not our ethnicity, not our gender, not our personality, not our one thing, sin.

And so she would come along to these events and I'd walk with her through her frustrations and fears. I'd seen her Parkinson's slowly stealing who she was as a person.
But my son was a convinced atheist. But she'd always be willing to let me into her home and to talk to her about Jesus. I would help that I was speaking to her in Hebrew because I didn't have to use the English words that have such negative connotations.
I was speaking to her in her language, her heart language. And each time I visited her, I got deeply moved and challenged by the Lord that while she still had the mental capacities to do so, I needed to communicate the gospel to her.
I knew that the window was closing and I cared too much about her to let it close in silence. And the gospel is commanded for us to tell. There has to be a telling of the gospel, not just a showing of the gospel.
[11:25] Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. There has to be declaration. We can't just live with hope for the best. We have to communicate. And so I knew the window was closing and I asked her what kept her going, what hope she had for the future.

And by this time she was very honest with me and she literally had no hope to believe it. I asked her what she thought she had to lose by putting her faith in Jesus as her Messiah right there and then while she could still make that choice while her mind allowed her to do.
Because if she's right and nothing is lost and she's just cosmic dust forever, what's she done? What's changed? However, if I'm right, she gains everything.
She gains eternal life with no pain and no illness. And I'll speak because she started to weep uncontrollably. Tears rolling down her cheeks. It's all a little bit traumatic and a bit overwhelming. Pre-August amounts a little bit too much. But she was engulfed by the sense of her own tragedy and helplessness that illness was stealing so much of what she used to be.
[12:35] And she knew it. She knew it. It was all slipping away. She had no hope. All she had was pain. Now this was a lady who once claimed to me that she was ready to die because she had nothing to do because she didn't think there would end up had no longer but her had taken so much that she thought her death no longer frightened.

But when I asked her and I challenged her whether she was truly prepared to die she was. So I told her that when she reached the gates of heaven God would expect her to have the truth to get in. Again you filled it if you had no have the key you're not getting in. Did she have the key to get in? She didn't know what's the key to get into heaven. And I explained that Jesus Messiah is the only

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

key that can open eternity to get into God's presence forever.
And I reminded her of the high priest you know that the day of the time that just passed the Jewish people just had a very important day where they fasted and prayed asking for God to give their sins. I just asked one of my Jewish friends who I had to play years ago it's been a challenge to cycling him because this whole family is against one of the leaves.
[13:48] I sent him a message and I said did you fast on the day of the time because you know I've got stomach issues and I need my medication. And I said well the good news is you don't have to because Jesus fulfilled it or I said to give it and he sent me a message back and he said that's brilliant I absolutely love that.

And this has given him hope for myself. I challenged her about her own scriptures her own cultural expectations of the Jewish people once a year the high priest then to the Holy of Holies you know the Holy of Holies that sacred place in the temple in Jerusalem and he could only enter if he had a sacrifice because only a blood shed in a sacrifice was the key for the priest to enter into the Holy of Holies to bring his supplication to God for the sins of the nation.
And so too with Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world it's only his sacrifice that gives us the key he alone is the key that gets us to heaven. And so I said to him I said you're not ready to be fast because you don't have the key to heaven you don't have Jesus.
She had no hope she had no key all she had was the pain of the disease. But hope is not what we need by itself because hope is only as good as we put your hope in right?
There's a farmer who was getting old and swinging an axe to chop down trees with a little bit too much for him at the age that he was and so he decided to give in and let's say there's a Yorkshire man who wanted to buy a chainsaw but he had to buy a chainsaw so he went to the chainsaw shop to buy a chainsaw and the same salesman said this is brilliant you've got to transform your life you've got to be able to chop down 15 trees in a single day a week later he comes back to the chainsaw shop and said it must be faulty because he couldn't even chop down one tree a day and the salesman was a bit perplexed and the man said well you know I'm just going to go back to using max and so the foreman rubbed the saw and he pulled the cord and it's probably a buzz and the farmer jumped he said what's that noise you know life without hope in Jesus is like trying to chop down a tree with a chainsaw without turning it on it's really hard work turn your faith in Jesus on and get the buzz of hope lifting you up from despair you still have to chop down trees and you still have to struggle in life but we lift our eyes from looking at our toes to looking at the great expectation to that great day when Jesus will return and our faith and our hope will be culminated by that shout of triumph in majesty as the king returns for this light momentary inflation is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond forward and power and so the first thing that we need to build biblical optimism is not to lose hope the second thing that we have to have to build biblical optimism is not to lose our perspective and so Paul then here introduces this pretty mind-blowing idea that this mortal existence is swallowed by real life when we die which is an incredible idea because for most of us death is pretty terrifying yet Paul is showing us something even more radical that death is the entry point into real life as this mortal life is swallowed by life it's a wild idea isn't it this life is swallowed by actual life eternal life and so he talks about this life being temporary our tent but our eternal dwelling that's our real destination this life is terminal and none of us have escaped the finality of it unless we are alive when Jesus returns and then we are caught up with him in the clouds after pain passes
[17:37] I don't know if you've ever thought about this after pain passes it only exists in our memory doesn't it and when that memory fades well that just explains why we give birth to more than one children because if it was men that gave birth the world would be full of one child families wouldn't it because blokes aren't very good at doing pain are we but verse 17 gives us this amazing perspective Paul describes all of our pain in this life as a light momentary affliction that is preparing us all for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparisons now Paul isn't saying that our suffering is unreal he's showing us that whatever we experience in this mortal life however painful however devastating however long it seems is not the final reality there is an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison you think of the worst thing that you've been through the worst pain you've gone through they're not now are they and what we're going to go through is not forever there is life being swallowed so to develop a biblical optimism then we need to not lose hope we need to not lose perspective and thirdly we should not lose sight of our true goal we're all we're all going to have to give an answer that Paul says for everything we do whether it's good or whether it's bad and so we

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

have to live our lives with purpose because we don't have to give an answer for it we have to live our lives with direction and whether we're home or away we have to please God by how we actively live and conduct ourselves it can't be accidental it has to be deliberate it has to be with intention it has to be with discipleship and love because most people do the Christian bit publicly and they do it quietly but it's easy to forget that holding your slippers on is as important as when you're at church when you're at work when you're at school when you're with your friends or when you're shopping

I remember seeing a very funny sticker on a car once it said Jesus is coming look busy do you remember there's a real truth I like that but verse 10 tells us for we must all appear before the judgment see for Christ so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body whether good or evil now Paul wrote to the Corinthian church and it seems to me that this comment is very much for Christians we will all be judged if you're a Christian will be judged for what we do in this life it says that we must all appear before the judgment see of Christ now interestingly the Greek word that's used here for the judgment see is different from the Greek word that's used in Revelation 20 which is a different word that's used for the throne judgment of the world the whole world is going to face God's judgment is rough and is judgment and damnation in hell but this judgment that Paul is talking about is the judgment the believers face and they will face their judgment before the

Greek word if you want to remember it is beamer which is literally a platform it's the same word actually that Jesus had to stand on when he was being judged before Pilate before his crucifixion so there's two judgments there's judgment of the whole world at the end of time in Revelation and there is a judgment that believers will face quality control check you might want to say you know how well did you do and so we appear on God's platform a bit like the blind auditions of the voices the voices got a new series although I think the first few series were way better than they are now but that being said you have to stand there and sing and the judges are turned they don't hear you all you have is your voice everything's stripped away you can't hide behind the lights the smoke the sheets the clothes you wear you know it's just you and we can't hide behind anything either and the Greek word appear before the judges gives us a sense of not having our masks on having the make all washed away

God sees us everything is revealed and our performance in this life will be judged for good and for bad I don't know about you but that's your real motivation going to let everything more than being secret public that's going to be we're going to have to answer to everything for God and that's going to be an uncomfortable time I know for me it will be and if you're anything like me it will be for you as well an uncomfortable time we have to keep short accounts with God all the things that you do for the Lord that no one sees either at home or for others in church think of all the menial tasks that you might not feel that's very very spiritual God sees the wall and he will acknowledge them on that day so it isn't just the negative it's the good as well all the things that we do that we think that people have got their own thankful God acknowledges it all and you will be judged you will be judged worthy and you will have that well done you good and faithful so can't you yearn for that to be what you hear when you enter into

God's presence well done and good and faithful so isn't that not the ambition of every heart of Jesus so don't lose hope don't lose perspective and don't lose sight of Jesus because he gives us a hope that holds us I want to finish my thoughts with you this morning by just telling you the testimony of one of our own Jewish missionaries in World War II a man called Benjamin Miller a Jewish believer in Jesus who served our mission he cracked our toll I've been doing some research in our archives and he was one of over 20 of our missionaries who were murdered during the Holocaust you know being a Christian and serving God doesn't make me immune from some of the most wicked things that can happen in this world we have over 20 Christian martyrs in our mission who were murdered in the Holocaust for the Jewish followers and he wrote to our headquarters and this is what he wrote the finest root point as dying and love we live is a good characteristic of our experiences in the last times but the word of

[24:21] God is not banned and we are being strengthened by it materially we have lost everything but we are commanded to take an example of the suffering and patience of the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord please remember of the prophets he was never heard of again everything he could see was being taken away but his hope his hope was anchored somewhere else his hope was anchored beyond what he could see beyond what anybody else could see and that's what kept him firm one of the worst moments of modern history and that my friends that's the hope that we

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

have achieved the hope that is strong the hope that is steadfast the anchors of souls that's a break

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host