

Hebrews 6:13-20 “Jesus Is Greater Than Every Other Anchor”

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Pastor Derek will be preaching for us this morning and he asked me to come and read the passage that he'll be preaching from. So if you have your Bibles with you, if you'll turn to Hebrews 6, verses 13 through 20, and those can also be found in the Bibles in the pews and page 1004.

And this section tells us about the certainty of God's promise. 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.

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.

[1 : 40] Thus, God's holy and inerrant word. Thank you, Skeets. Hello, everyone.

Good morning to you. I'm excited about continuing in this series on Hebrews today because the theme is hope.

And I bet all of you need a little bit of hope if you are alive and breathing. So I hope today that after we leave here, you have a little more hope than you do right now.

Maybe we can drum up a little bit of hope. And I hope that hope is the right hope. Hope that it's Jesus. Remember last week, we ended with the challenge to hope.

Will said, don't stop growing. Don't stop believing. Don't stop hoping. Don't stop believing. So this passage today is going to point us to hope.

[2 : 41] Before we get there, I want to start with a couple stories. Okay. Anybody in here ever been to the Florida Keys? Anybody? Okay. So it's spring break time.

Y'all know right now, which is why there's a massive gap in the middle of the sanctuary. It's going to be the mosh pit later. Dave Clark said he'll start it. So if you ever wonder if people sit in the same place every week, there you go.

It's your proof. It's really funny. But okay, about 25 years ago, it was spring break time. And I was on a boat in the Florida Keys headed out to snorkel.

And I was a youth leader. I was on this youth trip. And it was spring break energy. There was sunscreen everywhere, goggles, towels, all the excitement.

You can imagine it smelled like coconuts. You know that smell when there's a bunch of sunscreen around. So we're halfway out to the reef and the boat breaks down. And at first everybody's, oh, this is funny, right?

[3 : 45] We're all together in the ocean. And we're in vacation mode and the sun's out and the water's beautiful. Kind of looks like that. That's not an actual picture. And that water that looked so beautiful from the shore after about one hour turned into two, turned into three.

It didn't really feel that beautiful anymore. It felt kind of endless. And there was no shade and there was no progress. And then it started.

Students' faces, one by one, literally started turning green. I still remember it. Seasickness took over the whole boat.

One student leans over the side, then another, then the leaders, and then all the leaders. And before long, that boat sounded like this high school horror movie. And it was awful.

And that's the day that I learned the cure for seasickness. You know what it is? You jump in the water. So as any great responsible leader would do, I just jumped in the water.

[4 : 49] And I'll never forget looking back at that boat. It was like a scene out of Titanic. But it was heat and sickness and fish everywhere.

You can imagine. And I'm just, I tried to separate as far from the fish as I could. But they were scaring me. And I remember looking back at that boat drifting and thinking, we really, really need an anchor.

Recently, another story, I was at a seminar. And I struck up a new friendship with one of the guys who was in a small group with me, in a breakout group.

And we were laughing together about something that we both struggle with. Our faces. I have learned that my I love you and I care about everything you're saying face.

And my I'm mad at you and hate everything about you right now face are identical. It is a gift that I have. Some of you laughing may have the same gift.

[6 : 01] Or maybe have experienced my gift. And so the seminar speaker is sharing that he also has the same gift. And I thought to myself, finally, my people.

I can be me. And I felt encouraged. And I felt seen. And I felt understood. And then immediately after I have that conversation, immediately, it's like walking out these doors.

I walk out of the auditorium. And this man comes up to me and he says, hey, do you know that when you smile and when you listen, you look like two completely different people?

And in that moment, do you know what I wanted to do? I wanted to punch him in the face. All of the pastoral godly instincts in me.

I wanted to just go on his throat. And you know what I needed in that moment? I needed an anchor. I needed an anchor. And if I'm honest, the moments that I need an anchor the most in my life aren't on the boats.

[7 : 09] And they're not in awkward conversations with people who say things that catch you off guard. They're the quiet moments. Those late night thought moments that you just can't shut off.

That diagnosis that you didn't expect. That prayer that hasn't been answered the way that you want it to. The loneliness maybe you can't fix.

And you're afraid that you might not ever fit in. You ever feel those sorts of moments where you're just kind of grasping for something? Like your soul is reaching out for something?

And in those moments, you know what you need? An anchor. You need an anchor. Another story. I was at the gym recently.

And at the gym, there's a friend there. I have her name's Tammy. And her father-in-law, they call him Opa. Okay. And Opa goes up to Tammy and he says, send my love to the kids.

[8 : 12] And I thought I'd mess with Tammy for a minute. Because she goes, oh, I will. And he walks away. And then she says, I said to her, are you really going to send your love, Opa's love to your kids?

She goes, oh, I mean, yeah. I go, well, you better. I'm going to check up. Because he asked you to send his love. You better be sending the love. How are you going to send it? And we got in this conversation. I just messed with it. If you knew Tammy, you would find that funny.

But she told me I could share this story. But what hit me in that moment later was that phrase, send my love. I was thinking about that moment. Don't you want to be sent for?

I think all of us do. Don't you want to be claimed? Someone to remember you and send their love to you? To know that somebody's thinking of you?

See, when we're in those quiet moments, it's not just affection that we need in the middle of the night. It's not only security.

[9 : 13] But we're really longing, I think, and grasping for someone to send their love. A refuge. And that's something that cannot move.

And that's what I mean by anchor. That I need an anchor in those moments. And here's the truth if we think about it. We all have an anchor right now. In fact, we may have multiple, multiple anchors right now.

Because when things don't go the way that we planned them, when diagnosis comes or when the promotion doesn't go through or when the relationship starts to shift, that's when you find out what you've really been leaning your weight on.

Okay? For your security. Not what you say your anchor is, but what you actually rely on to steady you. Okay? Some of us lean our weight on our careers.

As long as work is steady, then I'm steady. Some of us lean on relationships. As long as I'm wanted, then I feel secure and okay.

[10:20] Some lean on performance. Grades. Athletics. Achievement. Some lean on health. Some lean on control.

Some lean on being needed. Some lean on money. Some lean on reputation. It goes on and on. And here's the thing that makes this really, really tricky. None of those things are really bad. Right? It's not bad to want to have a good relationship or want to be needed. All those things. It's just that none of those things actually last. They're always moving. They're always rocking back and forth. And if you focus on it too much, it can make you seasick. Psalm 103.15 says something very important before we jump into Hebrews. It says, As for man, his days are like grass.

He flourishes like a flower of the field, for the wind passes over it and it's gone. And its place knows it no more. Think about that.

[11:23] Bodies break. Markets shift. Strength fades. Reputations disappear. Everything here moves.

And its place knows it no more. That's sobering. So the real question then is that if everything moves, is there anything that does not move?

And that's exactly the question that Hebrews 6 answers. Okay? And it deals with hope. So let's read just the first three verses there.

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. So the first thing, when you need hope, just know this, that Hebrews tells us. God made a promise.

[12:28] He made a loving promise a long time ago. And when your soul feels unstable, the scripture here is not pointing you inward. Okay? The scripture is not even necessarily pointing you outward.

It's pointing you backward. Okay? To a time when God promised to send his love. When God made a promise to Abraham.

Now, I don't want to go into all the details. Will's talked about this in some of the other sermons. But I know you're not here for all of them. But a long time ago, God made a promise to Abraham. Okay? And it goes something like this.

It's all over Genesis. And these promises were guaranteed, which we'll get into. But he says, I will make a great nation out of you. I will bless you and make your name great. Then he promises that he's going to send him, give him an offspring.

Right? And from this offspring, all of these promises are going to be fulfilled. And he renews that and he reminds him of it. He puts a sign with this promise.

[13:29] And then God swears to bless this promise by his own name. Okay? And you see that one in Genesis 22. And remember the promised son who was born?

What was his name? Remember? He was called to sacrifice him. Just yell it out. Starts with an I. Isaac! Oh, you knew it, Ronnie Sue. Right? And so he promises to bless him through Isaac.

And then he calls him to sacrifice his son. But Abraham had this resurrection faith. It wasn't. It was really a test. Right? And God on that mountain that day provided the sacrifice.

That was real important. But God made a promise. This is the first thing. Long time ago. That's what Hebrews is telling us in this passage. That I'm going to send my love. But more than that, God guaranteed the promise.

Okay? So let's keep reading in 16 through 18. He says this. For people swear by something greater than themselves. And in all their disputes, an oath is final for confirmation. 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.

[14:44] So that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have a strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

There's that word again. Hope. So, God made a promise to send his love, but God guaranteed the promise. That's what Hebrews is telling us. So let's, if we jump back to Genesis again, what I was talking about with all the promises.

Abraham believed the Lord, we were told in Genesis 15, and it was counted or credited to him as righteousness. Now, after that moment, God promised to give him what we know as the promised land.

That includes today like Canaan, much of modern Israel, parts of Lebanon, Syria, and more. Okay? So that promise was fulfilled. But at the moment, when it was promised to him, Abraham was like, how do I know I'm actually going to possess this?

How shall I know that I'll possess it? So God says, I'll guarantee it. And how does God guarantee it? That's what's very important for our hope and what Hebrews is talking about today.

[15:54] Well, in Genesis 15, God instructs them, go cut a heifer, a goat, and a ram in half. Lay the halves opposite each other.

Place birds alongside them. Okay? What's going on here? This is an ancient Near East covenant ritual. Today we have mortgages, and we have lawyers, and we have papers that we sign.

Back then, they cut up animals, and they walked through the animals, and they would meet each other in the middle, and they would shake hands and say, may this be to me if I don't keep this promise with you.

Imagine if we did that in the mortgage business today. But it's kind of, I'm trying to get us something similar we can understand. It's a binding agreement. Okay? And that's how they did it.

It seems weird, I know, to Americans, but that's how they did it. So the Bible's just laying that out for us. So, in true form, God says, let's make a covenant. Well, what happened was very interesting in this covenant.

[16:55] Abraham doesn't walk through. Instead, he falls asleep. It gets dark. It says that Abraham falls asleep and that God speaks to him in this really powerful vision.

A smoking fire pot and a flaming torch instead of Abraham, that's what passes through. Okay? So he sees what's laid out there, but God goes through. And it says in Genesis 15 that on that day, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham.

He literally cut a covenant. You would cut an agreement. Okay? So those images represented God himself, remember, who swore the oath to keep it upon himself, because there was no one greater. So God right there is guaranteeing the promise by saying, I will be cut into pieces if this covenant fails. Its success rests on me.

And that's what Hebrews right here is referring to. God's promise to Abraham is certain. Okay? And it says in verse 18, it's certain by two unchangeable things.

[17:58] The two unchangeable things are this. One, that it's God's promise. And two, that he guaranteed it. By himself. With his own oath. So it's a done deal.

Now, if you struggle with the scriptures, here's a moment to take a little, just look at this. I've showed you this before. The Bible is an amazing book. Okay? It was written over a period of roughly 2,000 years by 40 different authors from three continents.

And they wrote in three different languages. And one of its most remarkable qualities is the complete unity of the overall message. Despite having so many different authors writing over many centuries who hadn't met each other, natural explanations fail to account for why the Bible is so consistent.

It's one huge story. This is a diagram. That's all of the Bible, the books on the bottom. And every time the Bible references itself, a thread is formed. That's Genesis to Revelation across the bottom. It is a massive story that is still going that we are in. And you are a part of it. Okay? But the Bible is no ordinary book. And what you see is the story, right?

[19:10] The promise that was made in Genesis, it has a future reality too. Okay? So, why does that all matter? Because the promise that was made for the offspring led to Isaac.

From Isaac came Jacob. From Jacob came Judah. From Judah came King David. And from King David came Jesus.

Okay? It wasn't just any ordinary promise. And Hebrews 11, if you read ahead, says Abraham was really looking forward to a greater promised land.

Not just the land that he got, right? That I mentioned that today is like Lebanon, Syria and more. But a future land. The city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God.

That's what Hebrews 11 says he was really looking forward to. So, why is this important? The land was a preview. Okay? The son, Isaac, was a preview.

[20 : 14] The sacrifice of Isaac, that was a preview. All pointing forward to who? To Jesus. It's all connected. And you know what?

It's connected to you right now too. Okay? Do you believe it? You see, God not only made a loving promise a long time ago. And he not only guaranteed the promise.

This is where it gets cool. God became the anchor. God became the anchor. The hope that you need. The hope that I need. Let's read ahead.

God became my anchor.

God became your anchor. God became our anchor. Centuries later, on another dark day, God would walk through judgment.

[21 : 27] Okay? Except this time it wasn't animals that were torn apart. Who was it? It was Jesus. Right? When God made that promise, he was guaranteeing that actually the only way the promise would be fulfilled if he was torn apart.

That's what was necessary. Isn't that amazing? Experts believe that when Jesus, before he was crucified, when he was flogged, he was whipped by Roman soldiers.

And their sole job was to tear him apart, literally all of his flesh. No part of his body left untouched. Inflicting as much torment as possible. This is what they used.

There's this and there's another picture. These are kind of modern day representations. Whips, bone ends, glass, metal. That was just the stripes that he got before he went to the cross.

Probably about 200 lacerations on the front, 200 on the back. And he probably would have lost most of his body, his blood, before he even went to the cross. But after that, he goes to the cross.

[22 : 33] You know, he's torn. You probably see his ribs. And he's carrying the wood that's going to hang on the cross. Those are the wounds that heal us.

You ever just walked on a blister? You ever, okay? That's nothing. Just try to get in your mind what Jesus actually endured. Just even walking to the cross.

And then when he got to the cross, he had to be ripped apart for our forgiveness of sins. Right? For the promise to be fulfilled.

But when he gets to that cross and that state and that horrible state, he has mercy on a thief. He has mercy on those that are sitting there as he's there hanging and exposed, those who are murdering him.

It's because on the cross, God was cut. Okay? And he was keeping his covenant. And after he had said his last words, y'all remember what happened?

[23 : 35] We'll celebrate it on Good Friday. The sun darkened. It's another dark moment. And the curtain to the temple was torn after there was this great earthquake. And when the curtain tore, something incredible happened.

That's when the anchor dropped. No ordinary anchor. This anchor dropped into eternity behind the curtain, as Hebrews says here. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.

A hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain. A hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain. A hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain. There's that word again, though. Hope. Okay?

Think about this. Anxiety, you know, we deal with anxiety. Anxiety is forecasting this negative thing in the future that hasn't even happened yet.

Believing it to be negative, ruminating over it in the present, and causing ourselves so much worry. Well, think about hope. Hope is something that is sure in the future that you call into this present reality and ruminate on.

[24 : 41] You see the difference between the two? And we're told that we have this as a hope, as an anchor for our soul. So it's not a hope or an anchor that went into this temple made with hands.

It went into the throne room of God behind the curtain. So the anchor is not in your hands. It's not something you control. It's something that's secured outside of you in heaven.

And you're invited to tie your soul to it. And here's why it matters. Because your soul will only be as steady as the promise it's tied to. Your soul will only be as steady as the promise it's tied to.

If your hope's tied to anything that can move, your peace will move along with it. If your identity is tied to performance, winning, losing, getting, guess what?

You're going to be steady when you win and you're going to be shaken when you lose. If it's tied to being wanted, you're going to feel secure when you're included and you're going to come unraveled when you're excluded.

[25 : 43] If it's tied to control, you're going to feel calm when things go your way and you're going to feel anxious when they don't. It's only going to be as steady as the promise it's tied to. And Hebrews is saying that the only promise that cannot break is God's promise.

So I just want you to consider that. Maybe you're here and you're not sure what you believe. Welcome. Okay? This is a welcome place to deal with that. But you know what it feels like probably when you were counting on something and then you don't get it.

I bet you can go there. And Hebrews is claiming that there's a hope outside of you that doesn't depend on you. And you're invited to run to that hope.

Not after you fix yourself. Not after you clean yourself up. But right now. Right where you are. So recently I was at a conference I mentioned where the guy said a mean thing to me about my face. And we did this exercise that took about an hour and a half. Okay? This looks like a gingerbread man. I've come to learn to fear this gingerbread man.

[26 : 54] Let me tell you why. So over the course probably an hour and a half with some other guys in one of the small group breakouts. This is an exercise designed to help us shine the light of Christ on the lies of condemnation that we tell ourselves every single day.

So first, the idea is you would trace the outline of your body. But this was a seminar teaching us how to do it. So we used the gingerbread man as an example. But if you did this somewhere else, you would really trace your body.

And there's men in this room who have known each other, you know, maybe three hours in passing by being at a seminar together. And what they encourage you to do is ingrained, write down the lies that you've been told that you tend to believe about yourself.

You could probably go underneath it. All of us have something underneath there. Like, oh, you're not good enough. Or maybe somebody made a comment to you and told you you were ugly when you were little and it still creeps in there. Things that make you think, I'm not enough.

I'm too much. I'll always be alone. What are the words you heard that were lies that you believed in your life from someone? You sit there and you think about it and you pray about it.

[28 : 03] And you write them. That's what, you can imagine it's painful. Because all these things come to mind if you actually ask the Spirit to open your mind to that. And then, after you write that down in green, in blue, you write the truth that God says over that lie.

It's a really powerful exercise. It was for me. And you write what God says. You write what Scripture says to that lie. You write it where it occurred.

If it's something you believe about yourself, you write it here. If it was someone that hurt you, you would write it like where they hit you. And then, at the very end, you draw a cross over all of that in red to remember that Christ has paid for all of that.

And Christ is the one who has guaranteed that promise that God loves you. Okay? So, what came up in all that for me, I'll tell you one little thing.

Was this silly little memory that planted a seed in me a long time ago. That I feel like grew into this tree that's been feeding lies. And from that, when you see that, you see another one and another one and another one.

[29 : 11] But that day, it was this. Because I literally could just go right back to seeing the basketball court. I was probably six or seven. It was right at the time where they didn't let you shoot close to the goal anymore for a free throw.

It was the first year where you had to go to the regular free throw line. And I get fouled. And I could smell the floor.

It just, I was right there. And so, I go to the line, the free throw line, and I know I can't get it to the goal. So, I do a granny shot. And it goes over the goal.

And I look over. And every single person in the stand is pointing and laughing. And I would say that was the most embarrassing moment in my life up to that point.

Like, for the longest time. Everybody was laughing. Well, here's what God does. He's wonderful.

Hey, Derek, let me come to that memory.

[30 : 16] So, you sit there with these other dudes they've never met. They're weeping about their own stuff. And I invited Jesus into that moment. And let me tell you what he did. When I think back

to that moment now, let me tell you what I see.

And it happened like that. I looked over at that crowd. And everybody was laughing. I see it right now. And Jesus is sitting up there on the stands.

And he's not very happy with the laughing. And then he looks at me. And he walks down to right where I am. And he picks me up. And he takes me to the goal.

And he lets me slam dunk it. That was the beginning of a lie that said I wasn't good enough. And in that moment, when I called Christ into that moment, you know what he does?

He redeems me completely. And that's what I see now. He was there then. He's with me now. He's going to be with me in the future. And I have to call that hope into right now.

[31 : 19] And he meets us right where we are. And he loves us so very, very much. And if he loves me that much, I know he loves you that much. And you see, in that moment, it wasn't self-improvement.

It was re-anchoring. Okay? It was this lie. It tied me to so many things. There's so many other lies. But there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

And there's no room for self-condemnation from the lies that the evil one wants us to stay held in.

And it affects everything we do. It affects how we see people. It affects how we love people.

It affects how we listen to the Lord. So I want to ask you this. Does the cross tie you to a promise that doesn't move? And a Savior who frees you?

See, when we're tied to the wrong anchors, we just drift. Right? But do you have someone that goes beneath the surface with you? Who helps you name the lies? And who reminds you who the true anchor is?

[32 : 19] Think about this as we close. What does an anchor do? It secures you by attaching you to something that you cannot reach on your own. Okay?

But you don't just throw an anchor. You got to have a chain connected to the anchor. And the chain is made up of links. And each link matters.

And every link connects you to the anchor. And when you put your faith in Christ, you are connected to Jesus. You are tied to him. And in fact, it says you are united to him. Union with the spirit.

And he's the reigning high priest who has gone ahead of you, as Hebrews says, as a forerunner. But if you're tied to Jesus, y'all, it means you're also tied to everybody else tied to Jesus.

That's the chain. The church isn't the anchor. It's the chain. Jesus is the anchor. And the church is the chain. And some of us are trying to survive without a chain. Okay?

[33 : 17] And Hebrews says that we can flee to God for refuge. That means you can't do that alone. That's a desperate language.

That's a boat drifting language. That's a middle of the night, wake up scared language. Flee. And here's the deeper truth. It's always been about God loving you and sending his love.

And when God sends his love, he sends Jesus. And he guarantees it with his own blood. And when you flee to him, the anchor, you'll realize it's already holding you.

And some of you have been trying to escape the rocking in your life of that boat by changing jobs, by changing routines. Maybe you're changing cities.

Maybe you're changing relationships and you're hiding. Well, you're not good enough. I'm just going to go to this one. But what your soul actually needs, y'all, is not escape. It needs an anchor.

[34 : 20] Not in your performance or your stability or your strength. Not in your ability to hold on to the anchor even. So I want to challenge you to this as we end. Take a walk in your own way.

Whatever walk is for you. But get away from people. And ask God to show you what you're really tied to. Just one thing. Don't ask him to show you everything.

If you ask him everything, you'll never do it again and you'll come home crying. Just one thing. He'll give you what you can handle. And then ask him, is this getting in the way of me having community with you?

Is this getting in the way of me having community with others? And if you have to ask a long time, ask a long time. And then I want you to invite him into whatever that thing is.

And ask him to untie you from that. And retie you to him in your own mind. And then do that over and over and over again. And you will find peace.

[35 : 23] And if you need help doing it or someone to hold your hand, hey, call me, call anyone in this church that you feel comfortable with. But I want to challenge you to do that. You may be tied to

a lie.

And that's a breaking anchor. And I want you to ask him to re-anchor you to him and to the cross and to the promise that does not move. To Jesus, the Savior, the one who promised and swore the promise in his own blood, who sealed it in resurrection.

To the Jesus who's behind the curtain, holding you steady until the day he makes all things new.

And then you finally see what's been holding you all alone, all along when you're alone.

You see, you've got to call that future hope into your present reality. But all it takes is this, saying, help me. And I just want to encourage you to do that.

Very personally, wherever you are, go ask God to show you. And tell somebody or ask for help if you need it. God made you a promise, y'all. He guaranteed it. And he became the anchor that you need.

[36 : 32] And he is the only one that will not move. I love you. Clock on the wall says that's all. Let's pray. Father, thank you for these wonderful people.

Thank you that your spirit is real and alive and active. And you can come into any moment and redeem us or remind us of who you are. If you can do that for me, I know you can do that for everyone here.

And you can do that for people all over this world. So help us rest in you and your spirit and look to your cross and thankfulness and hope. And may it make a difference right now. And may we take that hope and share it with each other and be it for each other as the links in the chain tied to you, Lord Jesus, the anchor for our soul, the hope set before us.

Praise God. Praise you, Jesus. It's in your holy name I thank you and pray. Amen.