

Anchored in Heaven

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[0 : 00] We're going to begin our service singing to God's praise from Psalm 71 in the Scottish Psalter. That's on page 311. The tune is Weatherby, Psalm 71, page 311.

We sing verses 14 to 19. But I with expectation will hope continually, and yet with praises more and more I will they magnify.

Thy justice and salvation my mouth abroad shall show, even all the day, for I thereof the numbers do not know. And I will constantly go on in strength of God the Lord, and thine own righteousness, even thine alone I will record.

For even from my youth, O God, by thee I have been taught, and hitherto I have declared the wonders thou hast wrought. And now, Lord, leave me not when I old and grey-headed grow, till to this age thy strength and power to all to come I show.

And I, most perfect righteousness, O Lord, is very high, who has so great things done, O God, who is like unto thee. Sixth answer, Psalm 71, 14 to 19.

[1 : 16] But I with expectation But I with expectation will hope continually and yet will praise it more and more I will be magnified My justice and salvation My heart the broad shall show If all the day on I dare all that others do not know

And I will constantly go on His strength of God the Lord And I know righteousness Even I alone I will report For even from my youthful thought By Thee I have been taught And ever too I have declared

The wonder shall have strong And I know Lord be me not When I hope and great in all Till the day on I will see Thy strength and power To all to come I show I'm Thy most perfect righteousness O Lord is there behind Who has so great things done

O Lord who is like God to feed Let us bow in prayer O Lord our God as we bow before you this evening We give thanks that we were able to sing Your word which reminds us that We go on in your strength And your strength alone The apostle was able to say That he was able to do all things Through Christ who strengthens me And we pray Lord that day by day We may discover more and more Of that enabling strength Because there are times that we feel Not only physically weak But we feel spiritually weak as well And we wonder sometimes How we're going to face up And to deal with all the different challenges That come our way So we pray for the faith

That will look heavenward And the faith that will fix Our eyes upon Jesus Who is the author And the finisher of our faith We pray Lord that as we worship you tonight That we may be able to see you by faith We have to confess Lord That sometimes We feel that our faith is very weak And we realize that there are Differing degrees of faith Sometimes you said To your people That they had great faith Other times Weak faith But we pray that you will give us faith That sees you in every situation To see you as the Lord of Providence And as well as the Lord of Grace And enable us Lord To lift up our eyes And as we heard this morning To give you thanks Because there is so much To give you thanks for And we pray that praise Might be an integral part Of our lives We know it's the language of heaven

[6 : 38] And may it certainly be Our language here on earth So that we will find Our whole being lifted up To praise you And to magnify And to exalt your great name Because you are worthy Of all honour And praise And glory And we pray that We may not be like The nine lepers Who didn't come back But that we will be constant Like the one who did come back In order to praise And to give thanks To our Lord We pray that you will bless us In our worship tonight We need you We pray for a sense Of your presence We know that you're here Your word has told us That where two or three Gather in your name You're there in the midst But we pray that we might have A felt sense of your presence And we give thanks Lord For the gathering together Of your people Because we are a community Of believers And we seek that we might Be given the grace Every day to seek To strengthen one another In the faith

Because there's so much In this life To knock us down We pray that we will Never knock each other down But that we will seek Always to encourage And to build up One another in the faith Help us all to remember That we are part of a body A very special And precious body In your sight A body that you lay down Your life for And may we always Acknowledge you As the head of the body And so we pray That we will know Collective blessing And individual blessing And we ask that you Will do us good We pray your blessing Upon this congregation Pray your blessing Upon James and Donna And we give thanks Lord For how well things Have gone with Donna We pray that They will know A wee bit of rest And refreshing At this time And that you will be With them in all the Days that lie ahead We pray Lord That you will bless Their family as well Likewise we pray

For Calamurdo And Joanne We give thanks For their being here Pray to bless them And the ministry here And bless their family too And we pray your blessing Upon all who serve you At all different levels In this congregation So much goes on Some publicly Some very privately But there's nothing Private before you Because every single thing Is noted by you And in the great day Will receive its reward And so we pray To encourage your people In all the different activities And in all the different things That take place Day by day And week by week And we pray That the seed That has been sown And particularly In young lives That it will bear fruit And that we will see Young people coming to faith Where they've come To put their trust In the living God Oh Lord We give thanks For the way that you work In a generational work And across generations Where we see people

Of all different age groups Coming to embrace And to trust the Lord Jesus And what we pray For ourselves We pray for all others Who meet as we do And all your people Throughout our land We pray to give wisdom To our leaders And all an authority over us And even when they don't Look to you For that wisdom We pray that you'll Give it to them Because if we're left To human wisdom It'll just bring catastrophe And as we see so often That laws are passed That don't make sense And we pray Lord That you will indeed Give that wisdom That divine wisdom From above So that we'll be led In the right way Encourage all your people Who are in positions Of authority Strengthen their hands Strengthen their witness And we pray Lord That you will overturn The counsels of those Who are seeking to undermine And destroy your cause And we know that there are many Who are seeking to obliterate The Christian faith

From our land We pray that their efforts Will be halted And that your name And your glory Will be the glory That fills our land We ask Lord That you will be With those who mourn Those whose hearts Are heavy and sore And we pray for the family Of the late Jesse Ann Morrison Whose funeral was recently And we pray for all Who mourn the loss Of loved ones It is something that People never really Come to terms with We maybe adjust Maybe learn to live with But there's always A settled emptiness And settled sorrow And so we pray For every broken heart And every person Who feels crushed Pray Lord For those who are Struggling in life Because we live In a very difficult world There are so many challenges Whether they be physical Or mental Or economic Or social Or whatever way We ask Lord That you will help

[11 : 42] We pray Lord That we might have An eye upon you As we pray About all these things Remember Muriel And ask your blessing Upon her Be with her in Cambodia We give thanks Lord For her great service there And the blessing That she has been To so many We pray for all The missionaries tonight And we ask Lord That you will encourage them Particularly those Who might be struggling Maybe with homesickness Or struggling with illness Or struggling with anxieties Or darkness Or oppression Those who are finding it hard Lord we pray That you will be with them In the midst of their struggles We pray for our world That we are part of And we pray Lord That you might bring peace So often as we look out There seems to be Some new carnage New horror And we are aware That there is so much Bloodshed So much pain In this world We long for peace But we see that

This is part of the fruit of sin Lord it's one of the things That we long for in glory Where all the enmity And all the hatred And all the anger And all the bitterness Will be gone forever And it will be eternal peace Eternal joy Eternal rejoicing We do long for that day Lord So we ask that you will be with us As we wait upon you tonight Pray for those who are ill Those Lord who are Undergoing Or waiting for treatment And likewise for surgery We ask to be with them Remember our elderly And those who are no longer able To get out to church Who are so much An integral part of the congregation Be with them Where they are And ask Lord That they will know Your presence And your blessing And so we ask now That you will watch over us And that we might indeed Be conscious that you are with us The whole time that we are here Take away from us Then out every sin In Jesus name we ask it

Amen We're going to sing again In Psalm 31 From Sing Psalms And the tune is Herringate Psalm 31 It's on page 36 1 to 7 5 stanzas Psalm 31 Verses 1 to 7 In you have taken refuge Lord You are my shelter In distress Oh let me never be ashamed But save me In your righteousness Lord turn your ear To hear my cry Come quickly To deliver me And be my rock And firm defense My stronghold And security You are my fortress And my rock For your name's sake Be my sure guide Preserve me From the trap That's set You are the refuge Where I hide Redeem me Lord Oh God of truth My spirit I commit to you I hate all those

Who trust false gods I trust the Lord For he is true I will rejoice And take delight In all the love That you have shown For my affliction You have seen To you My soul's Distress Is known 31 1 to 7 And you have taken Refuge Lord In you I take Refuge Lord You are my shelter In distress O let me never be ashamed But save me in your righteousness Lord turn your ear to hear my cry

Come quickly to deliver me And be my wrong and firm defense My stronghold and security You are my fortress You are my fortress And my hope For you Be my sure guide Be serve me from the trap You are my fortress You are my fortress You are my fortress Then I hide

[16 : 55] And I hide I love you Reveal me Lord O God of truth My spirit I commit to you I hate I hate all those Who trust I trust the Lord For he is true I will rejoice And take delight And take delight In all the love Of the love That you have shown For my affliction

You have seen To you My soul's distress is known Amen Let's turn to read God's word Now in the epistle to the Hebrews And chapter 6 Hebrews chapter 6 We read the chapter Hebrews chapter 6 Hebrews chapter 6 Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ And go on to maturity Not laying again a foundation of repentance From dead works and of faith towards God And of instruction about washings The laying on of hands The resurrection of the dead

And eternal judgment And this we will do If God permits For it is impossible To restore again to repentance Those who have once been enlightened Who have tasted the heavenly gift And have shared in the Holy Spirit And have tasted the goodness of the word of God And the powers of the age to come If they then fall away Since they are crucifying once again The Son of God To their own harm And holding him up to contempt For lamb that has drunk the rain That often falls in it And produces a crop useful to those For whose sake it is cultivated Receives a blessing from God But if it bears thorns and thistles It is worthless And near to being cursed And its end is to be burned Though we speak in this way Yet in your case, beloved

We feel sure of better things Things that belong to salvation For God is not so unjust As to overlook your work And the love that you showed For his sake In serving the saints As you still do And we decide 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 But imitators of those Who through faith and patience Inherit the promises 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 Amen And may God bless to us This reading of his own holy word We are going to sing again From the Scottish Psalter In Psalm 130

[22 : 05] We sing the whole psalm The tune is Martyrdom Psalm 130 We sing the whole psalm Tune Martyrdom Page 421 Lord from the depths To thee I cried My voice Lord Do thou hear Unto my supplications voice Give an attentive ear Lord who shall stand If thou O Lord Shouldst mark iniquity But yet with thee forgiveness is That feared thou mayest be I wait for God My soul doth wait My hope is in his word More than they that for morning watch My soul waits for the Lord I say more than they that do watch The morning light to see Let Israel's hope in the Lord For with him mercy is be And plenteous redemption Is ever found with him And from all his iniquities He Israel shall redeem

Psalm 130 Lord from the depths To thee I cried For from the depths To thee I cried For from the depths To thee I cried For from the dead to thee I cry, my voice for to the clear, And do my soul with patience voice, if I'm not dead there be.

Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, sure sparkly with thee?

But yet with thee forgiveness is, but fear thou mayest be.

I wait for God, my soul doth wait, My hope is in His word.

[24 : 44] More than they have, for mooring watch, My soul is for the Lord.

My Savior, I may have to watch The morning light to see.

Let Israel open the door, For with Him mercy is He.

And when Jesus' redemption Is ever come to Him, And from all His dengue is He is husha free.

Let's turn again to the chapter we read in Hebrews chapter 6. And if we read again from verse 17, Hebrews 6 from verse 17, 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.

[26 : 44] So 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.

And particularly verse 19. I'm sure we're all aware from history that way back in the early church when the times of the fires of persecution were really burning.

And people couldn't publicly share that they were Christians on pain of death. So there had to be an awful lot of secrecy. And we know that it's like that in some places in the world even today where there's an underground church.

People don't have the freedom and they don't have the privileges that we have that often we take for granted. But back then when the fires of persecution were burning, it cost an awful lot to be a Christian.

[28 : 08] And so we know that there was a symbol, the symbol of the fish, which still is to the go today. But that's when it originated, the symbol of the fish.

And of course, it is an acrostic for Christians because in Greek, the lettering stands for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.

So that's what a person had, this symbol, where they were stating that Jesus Christ, Son of God, is my Savior. Because they couldn't do it publicly.

And there's a lot of, I suppose in archaeology and so on, there's a lot of these discoveries of it. But there was also, which wasn't so common, but there was still a lot of them discovered, there was a symbol of the anchor.

And of course, that was symbolizing the steadfastness and the perseverance of the Christian faith.

[29 : 13] And really, these two symbols speak about what Christianity is. That Jesus Christ, Son of God, is our Savior.

And that by Him and through Him, we remain steadfast and sure in the faith. And it's a question, before we go any further, we'd have to ask ourselves, if we lived in such a day, could you pin these two anchors, particularly the first one, to yourself?

These two symbols, could you pin it to yourself? Is Jesus Christ, Son of God, your Savior? It's a very, very important question.

And one that needs an answer. Because one day, Jesus is going to confront you and me about this very thing. Where we have been, where we have stood, what we have done with Him.

And so we're given this opportunity even tonight. If you haven't got yourself right with Jesus, then it's time that you did. So that you would be able to pin these two symbols onto you.

[30 : 29] Where you could say that Jesus Christ, Son of God, is my Savior. And I am remaining through Him steadfast in the faith.

Now this passage from verse 13 on really is quite remarkable. And in a sense, we're just looking at it briefly tonight here. And our main focus is in verse 19, these words, we have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain.

Now as we know, hope is a wonderful word. And we often use the expression, maybe when somebody's really, really ill. And maybe there's a, we're kind of wondering how things are going to do.

And we use the expression, where there's life, there's hope. And that's so true. Where there's life, there's always hope. We hope that he or she will turn the corner and get better.

But while it's true in the natural world, it is also very, very true in the spiritual world. Where there is life, there is hope.

[31 : 37] Where there is spiritual life, there is spiritual hope. And the hope, the Christian hope is not dependent upon ourselves. If it was, it wouldn't take us very far.

Christian hope is not dependent on our circumstances of what's happening or what hasn't happened. If it was, it wouldn't take us very far. Christian hope is based upon the very nature and the very character of God.

And it is what we have in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. And Christian hope is one of the great, great blessings that we have been given when we come to faith in Jesus Christ.

The question is, do we work up this hope ourselves? Is this something that we can conjure up ourselves, this hope? Of course it's not. When a person becomes a Christian, various things happen.

The moment that we're regenerated, the moment we're born again, the moment that we come into faith with the Lord Jesus Christ, various things happen. That changes everything.

[32 : 46] We're justified. In a moment, if you remember our shorter catechism, it tells us that justification is an act. It is like a once and for all.

It happens right away. God pronounces us just because of what Jesus Christ has done. Not something that we've done, but what Jesus has done.

And following on from that, we are also immediately brought into the family of God. We call it adoption, who are adopted into the family of God. And along with that, happening at the same time, we have peace with God.

We have our peace. Because you see, beforehand, before we came to faith, we were on the run from God. We didn't want God. Or at least we didn't want God except on our terms.

But we can only get God on his terms. And so there is this natural instinct within us to run away from God.

[33 : 50] Why? Because we're afraid. That's why Adam ran. Remember when Adam ran in the Garden of Eden? God said, where are you? And why do you run away? He said, I was afraid.

I was afraid. You see, that's how we are by nature. We're afraid. We run. We're on the run from God. But once we become Christians, we stop running.

We're not running away. We're running to God. We're at peace with God. We now call him Abba Father. We are into this wonderful relationship.

And so there's this sense of peace comes into our heart. Through the Holy Spirit. The love of God is shed abroad within our heart. But also, hope is born in our heart.

And it's not the hope so of the world. It is a firm persuasion. Again, that everything God has promised in his word is going to come true.

[34 : 54] And that's one of the most wonderful things. That is why becoming a Christian changes life radically. We're still the same people. Still the same personality. We still operate in many of the same ways.

Although as time goes on, we should be being conformed and changed more and more to the image of Christ. But it's a radical change. And that's the most wonderful thing that can happen to us.

And if you're still without Christ, I urge you to seek him and to look to him. So God has given us this great blessing of hope.

Now, this hope is here described as an anchor of the soul. And it's not just described as an anchor, but a sure and steadfast anchor.

And why is it so sure? Well, this passage tells us why it is so sure. And really, I find this one of the most incredible passages in Scripture. Because the hope that God has implanted into our heart is all tied in with the promise that God gave to Abraham many, many, many years ago.

[36 : 09] Now, some people think the Old Testament today is irrelevant. They say, oh, what's the point in the Old Testament? The Old Testament is as relevant as the New Testament.

You can't separate them. Although the New Testament is in a new age, the two are combined. And we cannot understand the one without the other.

And Genesis is as relevant to today as the book of Revelation is relevant. It's all relevant. And so when we go back into Genesis, we find that God gave Abraham a promise.

And that's what we read there in verse 13. 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 so when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of promise. And who are the heirs of promise? Well, that's you and me.

[37 : 18] We are the heirs of promise. Because although there was a godly line before Abraham, Abel was a godly man.

Seth was Adam and Eve's son Seth. There was a godly line run down that through them, the likes of Enoch and on into Noah.

But remember how God called Abraham. And he was going to make him a great nation. And through him, all the nations of the world were going to be blessed. And in a sense, we can say Abraham is the father of the Jewish race.

But not only of the Jewish race, but of all believers. He is the father of a physical race. But he's also the father in this world of a spiritual race.

We are the spiritual seed of Abraham. And so the promises that God gave to Abraham are promises for us as well.

[38 : 21] We are the heirs of salvation. But what is remarkable here is, and it all ties in with this sure and steadfast, God wants us to be so absolutely persuaded of what he is telling us of the fullness and the wonder of this promise, is that he has made this promise with an oath.

Now, I find that quite extraordinary. Now, you and I make promises. We make promises all the time. And usually the promises we make are with every good intention.

But you and I know only too well that we break promises. Not deliberately. But so often because we forget. How often have you said, oh, you know, I promise to go.

I promise to go and see so and so. I promise to do this. I promise to do that. And we've forgotten. And other times we make promises to do something. But circumstances change and no longer are we able to do it.

But that's never so with God. Because God knows everything. He knows everything from end to the beginning. And it is impossible for God to change his mind.

[39 : 39] It is impossible for God to make a promise and not fulfill it. God is unchanging. It tells us God cannot lie. And that means that every single word in this book is true.

It is impossible for God not to fulfill his word. So God has made this promise to us. But this promise is so important to God that he attaches an oath to the promise.

Now, that's extraordinary. He's putting an oath. Now, I don't know the language of courts today. But I know that how it used to be that a person had to swear on the Bible.

A person had to say that they were telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. And the reason why a Bible was produced is because they had to take an authority that was greater than us.

And there is no authority greater in the whole world than the Bible. So when we, like in a courtroom, would swear to tell the truth, putting our hand on the Bible or holding the Bible up, that is making an oath by someone who is greater than ourselves.

[41 : 03] But what God is saying here is because there is nobody greater than himself, then God is swearing by himself.

He says, by his own name. By my name, he says, I will bless you. And you see how important this promise is to God.

So we have this most wonderful promise with a guaranteed fulfillment. And we ask the question, where do we find all the promises fulfilled?

Well, all the promises, we're told, are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. And if we're in Christ Jesus, then we're inheritors of all the promises.

And here is God's guarantee over it all. And that's why God has gone to such lengths to demonstrate to us the importance of this particular promise, where we have this guarantee, this sure and certain hope, this anchor for our life.

[42 : 12] Now, what does an anchor do? Well, obviously, an anchor gives security. It gives a steadfast hold. Now, God doesn't promise us that we won't have storms, we won't have troubles, we won't have trials, we won't have difficulties in life.

We will. And God tells us that. In this world, you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. We will have these things. But what we will have guaranteed is an anchor, sure and steadfast in the midst of all these things.

Now, an anchor, as we know, it's an amazing thing. And when a ship lets down its anchor, the length of the chain, and there has to be a long chain with it, the length of the chain and the weight of the anchor is that which holds the ship in place.

There are different types of anchors. Some of the wee boats might have a fluke anchor, and then there's a plough anchor. And that kind of anchor can hold on to the seabed even, whether it's grassy or sandy.

And, of course, the weight of the chain and the way that it's set out will keep the boat in place. It's an amazing thing. Occasionally, you hear of a boat that's slipped its moorings or that's broken its anchor.

[43 : 35] It doesn't happen often. Well, here's an anchor that will never break. This is a mooring that will never slip. This is the most secure anchorage ever in this world.

Because you remember tonight, my Christian friend, you are held by the everlasting hand of the almighty creator of this universe. You know, sometimes you look out at sea and you can see a couple of boats.

It's one stationary, maybe out in the bay, and one is moving. The one that's moving, we know is moving because it has no anchor. It hasn't cast an anchor. The one that isn't moving, we know that, obviously, an anchor has been cast down.

Now, we know that it's not just storms that cause boats to drift. We know that changing tides will cause a boat to drift.

And, you know, we live in a world where there are changing tides all the time. We live in a world that is just a sea of change. There are cultural changes.

[44 : 45] There are changes in every front, economic and financial and social and the culture of the day. You know, we live in a day that often you don't know what's what.

And sometimes we used to talk about a generational change. But it's not a generational change anymore. It's just a sea of change all the time.

And so often you don't know. It's so easy to be confused. But, you know, if you have an anchor for your soul, in the midst of all that goes on with the changing society and the changing culture, you have an anchor that remains sure and steadfast.

And that holds you firm against the changing tides, against the storms, against all the things that are happening. And this is vital. It's so important to have.

We're told Paul, writing to the church in Ephesians, warns them not to be blown about by every wind of doctrine. Paul was aware that there were many teachers coming in with fancy new ideas about this and that and the next thing.

[45 : 52] And he said, if you're not anchored properly, you'll get blown this way and that way. And you'll be saying, oh, I'm going this way. And then next day you'll go another way. That's not how it should be.

We've got to be rooted. We've got to be ground down in Jesus Christ. And that's what the anchor does. It holds us firm and fast in the truth. So that when we are anchored in Christ, we know what the truth is.

And the truth is unchanging. Irrespective of what society says. Irrespective of what the views of the culture are at the time. God's word doesn't change.

And so we need to be embedded and firm in the word of God, in the truth. And you know what's so important for us?

To be anchored in Christ. Because if we're not, we'll drift. And can I say, and I say this lovingly, if you're not in Christ, do you know this, you're drifting.

[46 : 56] And you might say, no, I'm not. I've got a real pattern to my life. My life is guided by Christian principles. Well, that is great. I applaud that.

And I thank the Lord for that. And I know that many people who have never come to faith regulate their life by Christian principles. And that's a wonderful thing. I would say it's a first step.

But it's not enough. We need to have the anchor. Because if not, we will drift. Because we don't have underneath us that which is going to give the stability when the storms come.

Because maybe just now there aren't great storms in your life. But one day there's going to break. And we need this anchor. Otherwise we will crash onto the rocks of perdition.

There's no two ways about it. So it's imperative that we have this anchor for our soul. And we're told it's assured and steadfast. That's a wonderful thing.

[48 : 00] You see, this union that we have with the Lord Jesus Christ is an unbreakable union. It cannot be broken. And that's so encouraging for us because, you know, sometimes we think and we think one day, you know this, I'm going to make shipwreck.

One day, I am going to hit the rocks. One day, and you sometimes think that you, you look at your faith and you think that it's so slender.

It's just like a one little thread of faith. Sometimes we feel our faith stronger, but sometimes we feel it so weak, so fragile. And then we look at ourselves and we're so aware of our sin and our failure and our mistakes and our repeated failures and our repeated sin.

And we say one day, the Lord's going to say, oh, I've had enough of him. I've had enough of her. I give up. No. That is never, ever going to happen.

Even if our faith is as weak or as small as Jesus said as a grain of mustard seed. And even with our sin, the Lord will never, ever give up on us.

[49 : 12] Paul asked, is there anything that can separate us from the love of Christ? And he went through everything. Everything in this world. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? And he asked the question of loads of things and even went into the spiritual realms, the places and powers of darkness and even to death itself.

And he said, no, nothing, not even death can separate the Christian from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Why? Because we're kept. That's what the anchor does. It keeps. It's one of the greatest words in scripture. Kept. You're a believer tonight.

You are being kept. How? By the power of God. That's what it says in Peter. Kept by the power of God. Every day, every night, the power of God is keeping you.

and will keep you and will eventually, you'll be taken home to glory with the Lord Jesus. So despite all the storms and all the batterings and all the bruising and all the temptations, the anchor will hold.

[50 : 26] As the old song said, we shall not be moved and the Christian can sing that because it is true. You go through the Bible and you see the lives of all the great men and women of the past.

They had the storms in their life. They had the losses, the crosses, the difficulties. And yet they kept going. Kept going to the end. They were kept. They were kept.

You know, it's very interesting when Jesus told Peter that he was going to deny him. And he said, Satan has desired to have you, to sift you as wheat.

But I have prayed for you that your faith won't fail. Now it's very interesting. Jesus didn't pray that Peter wouldn't deny him. I find that interesting.

Jesus' prayer is not regarding the sin, but it's regarding faith. Because faith is the key to it all. And so we're aware that this, we've been kept.

[51 : 30] Kept by the power of God. And the Bible tells us that all these Old Testament and New Testament, the characters and the incidents and experiences of their life are there for our example.

They're there for us to learn from. And see how God worked in their lives and what he did. It's like a picture book for ourselves to discover.

the way that the Lord has worked. But the last thing that we see here about the anchor is normally an anchor is let down. Down onto the seabed.

Let down from the ship. But the anchor that we have moves in a totally different direction. We see that it's an anchor that goes up. It's an anchor that goes into heaven, goes behind the curtain or the veil.

And of course, when we see that in verse 20 there, 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.

[52 : 41] And that takes us straight back to the Old Testament, to the tabernacle and the temple. And you remember then the structure there, there was one very, very special place. There was a holy place, but there was then the most holy place.

There was a curtain that separated. And nobody, nobody, ever was allowed into the most holy place or the holy of holies. Where the Ark of the Covenant was, God's presence was centered there.

Nobody, on pain of death, if you entered in there, you would die. The only person who was ever allowed in there was the high priest. And that was only once a year on the great day of atonement when he went in with the blood of the sacrifice, representing the people where the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat.

They are. That was the only day that he was ever allowed in. And that's a picture that's given of what Jesus has done. But there's a difference between Jesus as our great high priest and the Old Testament high priest.

Because the Old Testament high priest wasn't a forerunner. The Old Testament priest only went in once a year. And nobody else could go in.

[53 : 57] But Jesus has gone behind the veil as our forerunner. Which means we're running after him. We're coming behind.

Jesus has gone into heaven. And remember how he said to the disciples, I go to prepare a place for you. And we said that before he went to the cross.

And that's what he did on the cross. He prepared a place for us through his death. But in glory tonight he is preparing us for that place.

One day he'll send for us to take us home with himself. You see before Jesus went to the cross he prayed. coming back to this what we said about kept because Jesus has gone into glory.

He's there just now. And we're told that he makes continual intercession for us. He continues to pray for us. He prayed for us before he went to the cross.

[55 : 02] And the first thing he prayed a lot of things but one of the things was that's the very thing I pray not that you take them out to the world but that you keep them.

That's part of the high priestly prayer out being kept. There's to stay in the world but they're being kept. But further on in the high priestly prayer he's looking ahead to something he's so looking forward to.

Father I will that them whom you've given me all the people that you've given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory.

That will be the fulfillment of the high priestly prayer when the whole church is brought at last into the presence of the king. But at the moment there's a work to be done because you see normally an anchor keeps a boat in place although the boat might revolve around the anchor it keeps it in place.

We're not kept we're kept firm and sure but not to stay on the spot. We're working we're moving because when Jesus says I pray not to take them out of the world but to keep them keep them from evil or keep them from the evil one.

[56 : 20] You see there's work to be done. Jesus tells us I have sheep that are not of this fold them I must bring in. The great shepherd of the sheep is gathering in his flock and who does he use?

He uses the sheep. He uses you and me. That's the amazing thing. We're kept in this world. We're kept but we're also being kept to be used by the Lord in the great work of in gathering the sheep into the fold.

Tonight Jesus is interceding on your behalf and he's not praying Lord. He's not praying to the Father and saying excuse them they can't help that because of what they are.

No. He agrees totally with the verdict of the Father but he's pleading his perfect righteousness. He's pleading his finished work. He's pleading the blood sacrifice that he has shed for us.

The Father looks on the finished work of Christ and then he sees us. He's looking at us through that. So Jesus is there making that intercession for us as our forerunner and you and I tonight as believers will be following him on.

[57 : 44] well the great question that we have to ask is is that your hope tonight? If you're a Christian that's your hope.

You're full of hope not because of what you've done but because of what Christ has done and because of the word that he's given and the promise that he's given. But if you're not a Christian you don't have this hope.

And you know I don't think I've ever lived in a more uncertain world than we live in just now. It is just it is so uncertain at every conceivable front.

The world is just you feel there's a top there's an unsettledness vibrating all through it and it cries out for surety and steadfastness and I believe that's why so many people are so many people are searching so many people are worried and anxious and concerned here's the answer the anchor the anchor for your soul it will change your life it will change your destiny change everything you ask Jesus tonight to become the anchor of your soul tonight let's pray Lord our God we pray to bless us and we give thanks for your tender mercies and for your love towards us we pray that we might all know that anchorage in you we pray that nobody will go out of here and say I have no idea what it is to have Jesus as my saviour we pray if there are any who don't know you yet that you will implant a growing desire within their heart to fulfil so that they will come to know you to come to know that hope and that peace that is found in

Jesus Christ bless us tonight then we pray part us with your blessing do us good and take away our every sin in Jesus name amen we're going to conclude singing in Psalm 107 these words of the storm and then making the way into the shelter Psalm 107 verses 26 to 30 the tune is Loch Broom it's on page 384 Psalm 107 verse 26 they mount to heaven then to the depths they do go down again their soul doth faint and melt away with trouble and with pain they reel and stagger like one drunk at their wits end they be then they to God in trouble cry who them from streets doth free the storm is changed into a calm at his command and will so that the waves which raged before now quiet are and still then are they glad because at rest and quiet now they be so to the haven he then brings which they desired to see 26 to 30 the

[60 : 52] Tunis love broom they mount to heaven then to the depths they do go down again their souls of faith and melt away with trouble and with pain we will and stag are like one throng at them with send they be then they to go down in trouble cry who them from saints are free the storm is changed into account they they come they come and will so that the ways which reached before now quiet are still when are they glad because are blessed and quiet thou may be so to thy heaven he em brings which any start to see after the benediction i'll go to the door on my left now may the grace mercy and peace of god the father son and holy spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forever more amen