

I covered verses 9 through 12 in the previous sermon (Got Fruit?), but it is necessary to review these verses so that we have the context of what is being taught at the end of this chapter. The author was warning the Hebrew believers that denying the salvation of Jesus was something from which they could never recover (Hebrews 6:4-6). No one is born-again a second time. He follows that thought with the encouraging words of verse 9. *9 Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation.* Hebrews 6:9 He expected that they would never make that dreadful decision to leave the faith, but rather would have the fruit of those who are born-again (Hebrews 6:7).

10 For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. Hebrews 6:10 The author had already seen the fruit of salvation in their love that was shown to the saints. They stood by those who were persecuted and imprisoned, and they even joyfully accepted the confiscation of their goods (Hebrews 10:34). That isn't a normal reaction!

What will we do when we are persecuted? In thinking about this again, I realized I haven't been so joyful about us losing our rights as Christians. I have been resentful of the fact that we can no longer perform weddings or rent the building to whom we choose without the concern of being fined when we stand for our convictions. Instead, I should be joyful that we have the opportunity to stand for the sanctity of marriage (Matthew 5:12). I should be joyful that the world feels they must restrain our influence and force us to conform. It means the message of God's assessment of sin is bothering their souls. When there is no evidence in this city of discrimination, not a single case, and yet they feel they must restrain our freedoms, we should take it joyfully. Shouldn't we expect the world to be unable to understand the things of the Spirit? When we pay a price for standing with God, we are blessed (Matthew 5:10-11)!

California is presently trying to pass a bill that would force Christian educational institutions to end requirements for students to agree with a statement of faith, or any requirement to attend chapel, and the freedom to sue if a prayer is offensive.

Hallelujah! The state is feeling the influence of Christian education (Proverbs 22:6). They are afraid that hearts might be influenced by going to chapel. If the bill passes there, you can be sure they will try it in other states. Of course we should resist it by all legal means, but if it passes, rejoice. We will have to be more faithful to convey the truth of the Word to our children and grandchildren in our own homes and churches. And when that becomes illegal, rejoice and accept joyfully the plundering of your goods in the form of fines. We do not live for this world's treasures. Our treasure is so much greater (Matthew 6:19-21). God will not be unjust to overlook your sacrifice in staying faithful to Him. That is evidence that you truly are a new creation in Him, one who is

Commented [PW1]: Hebrews 6:4-6 (ESV)

⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.

Commented [PW2]: Hebrews 6:7 (ESV)

⁷ For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God.

Commented [PW3]: Hebrews 10:34 (ESV)

³⁴ For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

Commented [PW4]: Matthew 5:12 (ESV)

¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Commented [PW5]: Matthew 5:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Commented [PW6]: Proverbs 22:6 (ESV)

⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Commented [PW7]: Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)

¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

not conformed to this world but transformed by His Spirit into a child of God, living to magnify His name by loving Him and one another (Romans 12:2).

One of the greatest evidences of salvation is our love for our brothers and sisters in the faith (Galatians 6:10). The Hebrew believers were laying up their treasures in heaven and not on the earth. God will faithfully reward us when we show love for His name in serving the saints (Ephesians 6:8). This was the evidence they would stay faithful.

¹¹ And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, Hebrews 6:11 This struggle against conforming to the world versus living for the glory of God is not just a single battle, or two or three battles. It is our life. Those who persevere in earnestly living for God and loving one another have a full assurance of hope until the end. We can be sure of our salvation, because we can't maintain those priorities without the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:7). The author's desire was that everyone in that church persevere with the same earnestness to the end, a sure sign that he was correct in assuming they were born-again. And that should be our desire as well as for our fellow believers.

¹² so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hebrews 6:12 Keep up that earnest life in Christ so you won't grow sluggish. He used the same Greek word translated as "dull" in 5:11 regarding their hearing the Word. His remedy for dull ears is to continue to show love for the name of the Lord in serving the saints. That shows you love Jesus, for they are His body (Colossians 1:24). That service keeps your spiritual ears open to the Word and the Spirit. That is how we follow the great examples who have gone before us.

Through faith and patience, they inherited the promises. The author was telling these believers that it takes faith and patience to endure to the end. That is what he is encouraging them to persevere in faith and patience. He could have given them many great examples from their history. He already warned them that their forefathers didn't have faith and patience when they came to a place without water, and when they came to the border of the Promised Land (Hebrews 3:19). He will give a long list of those who through faith and patience did persevere to the end in chapter 11. But the example he chose to share to make his point is that of Abraham, the father of faith.

¹³ For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, Hebrews 6:13 God made several promises to Abraham, but the one the author is referring to is from Genesis 22. A promise is only as good as its guarantee. If I make a promissory note and it is backed by some security like my house, the promise will be met or the lender gets my house. If someone co-signs a note for a loan, their oath to pay up is only as good as their resources and good name. The bank wants someone who has the assets to cover the loan to co-sign, if I don't have the credit history and income to cover it. When God made a promise to Abraham,

Commented [PW8]: Romans 12:2 (ESV)

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Commented [PW9]: Galatians 6:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Commented [PW10]: Ephesians 6:8 (ESV)

⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

Commented [PW11]: 1 John 4:7 (ESV)

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

Commented [PW12]: Hebrews 5:11 (ESV)

¹¹ About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

Commented [PW13]: Colossians 1:24 (ESV)

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

Commented [PW14]: Hebrews 3:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

who can God promise by that has more assets and good credit than Himself? There is no one greater, so He swears by Himself. His good name is on the line. We know He has the assets. We also know His credit history is perfect. Abraham could have faith and patience to the end, knowing God was certain to fulfill His promises.

¹⁴ saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." Hebrews 6:14 That is an abbreviation of what God promised. The full promise is in Genesis 22:17-18. ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice." The readers were expected to know the full promise because it was their heritage. I think it is more than likely that they understood that the promise applied to their ancestors, but that it was a shadow of a greater promise to the people of faith, the spiritual children of Abraham. As Paul explained in his letter to the Galatians, ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29) And again in Romans 4 Paul explains, ¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, Romans 4:13-16 The blessing Abraham waited patiently in faith to receive came long after he died. The Jews did inherit the Promised Land and were a great nation. But the greater promise is in the spiritual parallel, as an even greater multitude inherits the kingdom of God, the gates of hell not being able to hold us back (Matthew 16:18). The offspring of Abraham who blessed the entire world is Jesus (Galatians 3:16). In Him, all nations have been blessed.

¹⁵ And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. Hebrews 6:15 He certainly did, in ways greater than he could have imagined. What God promises, He fulfills. We have the promise of Him being with us, helping us in our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:16), preparing a place for us (John 14:2), transforming us into the image of His Son (Romans 8:29), being seated with Him in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6), and so much more. We may think we understand all that means, but what the author is conveying to us is that it means more than we can imagine right now.

¹⁶ For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. Hebrews 6:16 Sign on the dotted line and you are expected to fulfill the promise or forfeit the collateral. And if you don't pay up, your credit is ruined, and then one trusts you for a long time. God has a perfect credit history. There are those who think He failed them, but that is because they misunderstood His promises. That is why I cringe when people teach that God promises things He never promised in His Word. It causes people to lose faith in God when they expect something from God that God never promised to give them.

Commented [PW15]: Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Commented [PW16]: Galatians 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

Commented [PW17]: Hebrews 4:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Commented [PW18]: John 14:2 (ESV)

² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

Commented [PW19]: Romans 8:29 (ESV)

²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Commented [PW20]: Ephesians 2:6 (ESV)

⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

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, Hebrews 6:17 God didn't need to swear by Himself, but to reassure the heirs of the promise that blessing and multiplication were certain, He did so. He did it to convince us, the people of faith, that His blessings are for us, and also that the gates of the enemy will not withstand our advances (Matthew 16:18). All this is for the people of faith. The author is pointing this out to tell the readers not to give up on their faith, but to patiently endure whatever God allows to come. It is certain that He will bless them through it and cause them to prevail, if they don't give up their faith (Daniel 3:17-18).

18 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. Hebrews 6:18 The two unchangeable things are the promises of God and the oath that He made. God's blessing on the people of faith is doubly certain. He can't lie (Titus 1:2)! So when God promises His blessings to the people of faith include making us into the image of His Son, finishing the work He started in us (Philippians 1:6), and that we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever (Psalm 23:6), we can count on it. We who have fled to Jesus for refuge have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. The fulfillment of the promises to us is not only certain, but greater than we can imagine. That is why we should never give up our faith. That is why we should persevere in loving and serving one another. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it assures us that we are the people of faith. We know that God will be faithful to reward us for our service (Colossians 3:24).

That is all well and good when the sun is shining, our health is good, and our finances are sufficient. But what the author is trying to tell them is that the future is blessed no matter the conditions that come. Because you can count on the promises of God and the hope we have for eternity, our future in His presence is certain. Blessing is coming if we hold on to our faith.

The Kaughman's baby did not survive. That is probably the hardest test of faith a person can endure. But what are the options. We can let go of the hope we have and become despondent and live in depression or try to drown our sorrows in temporal pleasures that are sure to disappoint us, die, and go to judgment having forsaken our faith. Or we can trust that God knows best, allowed it for His own reasons, and believe the promises that tell us that somehow, though we can't see it now, it is for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28). We cling to the hope we have that we will see her in heaven. We flee to God as our refuge and His strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. One path makes us bitter. The other makes us better, better to have compassion on others, better able to trust God through whatever comes.

The testimonies of many missionaries who have suffered great losses like this show us that God is faithful and will see us through and help us cling to the hope that is set

Commented [PW21]: Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Commented [PW22]: Daniel 3:17-18 (ESV)

¹⁷ If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

¹⁸ But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

Commented [PW23]: Titus 1:2 (ESV)

² in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

Commented [PW24]: Philippians 1:6 (ESV)

⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Commented [PW25]: Psalm 23:6 (ESV)

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Commented [PW26]: Colossians 3:24 (ESV)

²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

Commented [PW27]: Romans 8:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

before us. I encourage you to read those biographies of the likes of Adonirum Judson, Hudson Taylor, Lottie Moon, Fannie Crosby, and so many others who clung to that hope through impossible conditions and losses.

¹⁹ *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,* Hebrews 6:19 The author again turns to a nautical picture to illustrate what he is trying to convey. The hope we have in the promises of God is like a sure and steadfast anchor of our souls secured to the very throne of God, the Ark of the Covenant, in the heavenly realm. We cling to the rope that is secured to that anchor that extends down into our world. The waves of this world can be taller than we ever thought, even overwhelm our vessel at times, but as long as the rope of hope is secured to that anchor, we will pull through (Matthew 8:24-25). Let go and you will perish. It is a clear picture of hope, but also of warning that the author was speaking to the Hebrew church - and to us. Don't let go!

²⁰ *where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.* Hebrews 6:20 Our eternal high priest is there behind that torn curtain interceding for us (Matthew 27:51). He is the sure and steadfast anchor. Our hope is tied to Him, for He alone can make us right with the Father. The Greek word translated "forerunner" in the ESV is only used here in Scripture. It is similar to a word we have seen before (Hebrews 2:10). We could translate it as "trailblazer." He has blazed a trail to make a way for us to be in God's presence throughout eternity. He alone could pay the price for our ransom and guarantee our sanctification (Hebrews 2:11). There is no surer, no more steadfast anchor than Jesus. In fact, there is no other anchor. Hope in anything else is a dangling rope in the waves of life, unsecured, and offering no stability. God often removes the ropes we cling to so, such as health, wealth, relationships, comfort, government, etc. so that we will grasp the only secure rope, and learn to place all our hope in Him. We grieve when find those unsecure ropes fail us, but God means it in order to bless us.

The choice for the Hebrew believers should have been clear as can be. It is for us as well. What hope are you clinging to? Will we rejoice when persecution takes our worldly goods because our true treasure is in heaven? Are we clinging to the only anchor that is forever secured to the throne of grace, or to one floating on unsecured, shifting waves?

Questions

- 1 Why does the author believe the recipients are born-again?
- 2 Why should we be joyful when the world robs us?
- 3 Who were they encouraged to imitate?
- 4 What are we to persevere in?
- 5 What was the promise to Abraham?

- 6 Why are we heirs of the promise?
- 7 What is the double assurance it is certain?
- 8 Does blessing mean freedom from pain and sorrow?
- 9 What is the anchor illustration?
- 10 Who is the anchor, and what is the rope?

Commented [PW28]: Matthew 8:24-25 (ESV)

²⁴ And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.

²⁵ And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing."

Commented [PW29]: Matthew 27:51 (ESV)

⁵¹ And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

Commented [PW30]: Hebrews 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

In this verse it carries the same idea as the word (archegos) translated "founder."

Commented [PW31]: Hebrews 2:11 (ESV)

¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,