

Real Hope for Desperate Times (Video)

by Anton Bosch

This sermon emphasizes the importance of anchoring our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, especially during times of uncertainty and fear. It highlights the resurrection of Jesus as the foundation of our hope, pointing to the future resurrection of believers and the second coming of Christ. The message urges listeners to flee to Jesus, lay hold of the hope set before them, and find strong consolation in the steadfast anchor of their souls, firmly secured in the Saviour's love behind the veil in heaven.

Scripture: Matthew 28:1, 1 Peter 1:21, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 6:18

Topics: "Hope in Christ", "Resurrection Assurance"

Description

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Transcript

In the loving name of the Lord Jesus Christ from Sun Valley Community Church, greetings to the members of the church who obviously are shut in during this time of the COVID virus, but also greetings to all of our visitors from various parts of the world who are joining us this morning in our sunrise or resurrection, really, resurrection Sunday morning. So let's begin the meeting in prayer. Father, we thank you that we're able to come together, even though we're not able to be physically together, we're able to meet electronically in this way, and that in spite of the virus that has ravaged our country and the world, we're still able to meet in virtual space, we're able to see one another, we're able to preach your word, and I pray, Lord, that this morning you would bless us as we put ourselves under the sound of your word.

I pray that you would help me to minister the word, even though I'm only speaking to a camera. Help me, Lord, to correctly interpret the scriptures and to encourage the saints. Pray, Lord, that you'd help us with the technology as we are dependent on the technology now more than ever to be able to get the message through.

And so I pray that you would be present, not just here this morning, but that you would be present in every home where the video is being watched. We ask these things in Jesus' lovely name. And so as we traditionally remember today as the Resurrection Sunday, the day when Jesus was raised from the dead,

and even though we have some disputes as to exactly which day he was crucified, whether it's on the Wednesday, Thursday, or the Friday, there's absolutely no question that he rose on the Sunday.

And so we're going to read from the scriptures from Matthew chapter 28, verses 1 through 10. Matthew chapter 28, reading 1 through 10. Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week, that's the Sunday, began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and other Mary came to see the tomb.

And behold, there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning and his clothing as white as snow.

And the gods shook for fear of him and became like dead men. But the angel answered and said to the woman, do not be afraid for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here for he is risen.

As he said, come and see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead. And indeed, he is going before you into Galilee.

There you will see him. Behold, I have told you. And so they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and rang to bring his disciples word.

And then from verse 16 of the same chapter, Matthew chapter 28, then the 11 disciples went away to Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

When we come to speak about resurrection Sunday and the resurrection, often we get stuck on the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. And I don't want to minimize that. But that was just the beginning of a whole series of events.

The resurrection represents many other things. And I want to focus on two very specific things this morning. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus obviously focuses or heralds the resurrection of the believer who will be raised in Christ on the day of the resurrection.

But it also heralds he's coming again. And you say, well, I don't know how you can make those connections. And I trust this morning that as we go through the scriptures, you will be able to make those connections.

But I want to speak to you specifically about hope today. We live in a time when we desperately need hope. The problem is what is it that we are hoping for? Many people are hoping that the stay-at-home orders will be lifted very soon.

Many are hoping that the stock market will rebound and come back to its former levels. Many are desperately hoping for the day that life will return to normal, not just here in the United States, but in every other country in the world. As we have been shut into our homes and we're facing all of these difficulties and problems.

And so people are just hoping for a better day. But the fact is that those hopes are not really very solid on solid ground. You can't really build your hope on those things.

I don't know when the stay-at-home orders will be lifted. Some people say it's going to be the end of April. Some say it will be longer.

Some say it will be even longer. We know that in South Africa they were supposed to be lifted in the middle of April. They've now extended it by another two weeks.

Whatever it is, one of the facts that we need to face is that the world is never going to be the same as it has been before. There is just no way that we're going to come out of this time, whenever that is, and just pick up life as normal. Life will never be the same.

Our economies will never be the same. Our relationships will never be the same. International relationships and international affairs will never be the same.

We don't know what this new world is going to look like. And if your hope is on a better world in this life, you're wasting your time. Because the bad news is that there is no hope.

There is no hope in this life. There is no hope in this world. And I believe that one of the points that we have need to get in this time is just how fickle our hope is, how useless our hope is, in the things that we have our confidence in.

People have had their confidence in the stock market and in their shares and in their retirement investments. And they've just seen those disappear literally overnight. People had their confidence in their physical health and yet those who were healthy have died and are no longer with us.

People had their confidence in their social contacts and suddenly those contacts have disappeared. And so everything that we have had our confidence in, that people have relied on, and that people have had their hope on, has overnight been taken away. And it's no wonder that people are despairing.

It's no wonder that psychologists are having a field day in trying to help people who find themselves depressed, find themselves suicidal, find all sorts of problems, because the very foundations of our lives have been shattered and have been taken away from under us. The fact is that God is speaking to us, as we said last week, and I believe that while this may not be something that God has brought about, he may have, I don't know, I don't want to speculate on the cause of this virus, but what I do know is that God works all things for the good to them that love him and other called according to his purpose. And so I believe that God is using this to draw believers closer to himself.

He is using this time for us to understand that we cannot have confidence in this world. We cannot have confidence in governments. Yes, governments are powerful, and the government of the United States has thrown an unbelievable amount of money, three trillion dollars.

I can't even get my head around that. I don't even know how much money that is to try and fix the problem, but it doesn't fix the problem. Yes, we maybe have been able to alleviate some of the consequences.

We've been able to maybe flatten the curve and all of the kind of stuff, but it has not made the problem go away, and it doesn't matter how many trillions of dollars the government throws at this thing, it's not going to make the real problem go away overnight. Governments are helpless, and the doctors are helpless. We

watch the videos, and we see the news, and we see doctors just literally weeping in despair because they can do nothing for the people that they're trying to help.

I saw a clip on the news last night of a doctor who's working in a ward where his own father is on a respirator, and his father seems to be in very, very desperate state, and he's totally helpless, beating himself up because maybe he could have done this or that or the other thing, and I believe that one of the things that we've come to understand is that our hopes of a bright future, our hopes of a new world has been shattered, and so people are desperately looking for some kind of hope, and there is no hope in anything other than in the Lord Jesus Christ. So I want to spend a little bit of time looking at what the Scripture says about hope, and in fact you'll see if you go through, and I'm not going to go through all of those verses today, but there are 15 or more verses in the New Testament that connect the word hope and resurrection. Hope and resurrection.

These two things go together. Hope and resurrection. I'm going to look at a few Scriptures this morning, six Scriptures to be exact, in fact not even six, one, two, three, four different chapters, and have a look and see what it means to us.

I think before we embark on this also, let me just explain that when he's speaking about the resurrection, as I alluded to in the introduction, is that the resurrection does not just refer to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but it also refers to the resurrection of the believer. Jesus is the first fruit, the Scripture says, of those who have been raised from the dead. So here's the prototype, here's the first one, and the purpose of the Lord Jesus's resurrection, amongst many other things, is to prove that God indeed can raise us from the dead.

Because he lives, because he was raised, we know and we have assurance that he will raise us also. And so that is really where our hope lies. And so let's go to the first epistle of Paul to Peter and chapter one.

First Peter chapter one and verse 21. And I'm going to take three verses from first Peter chapter one, but not in the right order necessarily. So first Peter chapter one, verse 21.

Who through him believe in God, speaking about believers who believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory. So he resurrected him, he glorified him, so that your faith and hope are in God. So he raised him from the dead and glorified him, so that your hope may be in God.

Just think about that. Yes he raised him for our justification, yes there are many other doctrinal and theological aspects to the resurrection, but Peter is saying that he raised him so that we can have hope and that our hope can be in God. Now when the New Testament uses this word hope, it doesn't use it in the same way in which we use the word hope.

We use the word hope in the sense of something that maybe could happen or maybe it won't happen. So we certainly hope that the stay-at-home orders will be lifted at the end of the month maybe. We hope that the stock market will go back to its former levels.

We hope that the unemployment problem will go away, but we have no assurance. These are just vague things that we wish for, and maybe when we use the word hope in our secular language we should really be using the word wish. We wish that these things will happen, but are they going to happen? Well we don't know, there is no assurance.

But when the Bible uses the word hope, it uses the word in the sense of something that is sure and that is steadfast. I'm going to come back to that right at the end of the message. So what we know beyond any shadow of a doubt is that Jesus is raised from the dead, and because he was raised we will live also.

It's not something we wish for. It's not something that maybe will happen, but it is something that is absolutely certain and is absolutely true. So we know that God raised him from the dead, and we know that he will raise us also.

And so he raised him from the dead, glorified him so that your hope, your assurance may be in God. I don't know if there is anyone listening to this recording that still have their hope in the United States government, or in the British government, or in the South African government, or whatever government, or have your hope in the stock exchange, or have your hope in the medical field. And yes, we're all hoping that somehow they will discover and develop a vaccine that will protect us from this thing in the future.

But none of those things are certain. Just when the medical world thought that they had common diseases like polio and the measles and those kinds of things under control, suddenly there's this new thing, there's this new problem that they have no answers, and they have no solutions for. And so if your hope is still in anything in this world, I think that that's going to change in the next few weeks as we go further and further down the road of this thing.

Yes, there are glimmers of hope in the sense that maybe we're getting near the end of this problem, or not near the end, but certainly that we're getting to the peak, and that maybe soon things will start tapering down. But there's still a long way to go. We're still going to have to live in our homes without being able to go out for a long time.

Many people are going to not get their jobs back ever again. The problems will continue and will persist. And so if your hope is in this world, it's in the wrong place.

But Peter says that he raised him from the dead so that our hope may be in God. You see, he is the only one who doesn't change. He is the only one who is absolutely dependable and reliable.

He is the only one that we can have absolute confidence in that he will do what he has said he will do. And he said that he will raise us from the dead. He said that he will come again for us.

How do we know that he will do that? Because he's raised Jesus from the dead. The next verse is in 1 Peter 1 and verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. There's a lot of words in that in that verse, but just let's look at the last three lines on the screen.

He has begotten us again to a living hope. He has begotten us again. In other words, when we were born again.

He's speaking here about being born again. I hear people saying, well, you know, it's only John that speaks and writes about being born again. And so this is not really an important thing in scripture.

Well, here's Peter speaking about being born again. He has begotten us again to a living hope. If your hope is in your job and you've lost your job, your hope is now dead.

If your hope was in the government fixing this thing overnight and us getting back to the life as normal within a week, then your hope is now dead. In fact, whatever your hope is in this world, it is a dead hope because it is, it has no chance of fruition. It has no, there is no way that what we dream for, what we hope for will ever come to pass.

But he has begotten us again to a living hope, a hope that is alive. And it's not just that it is alive in that we still have hope. Remember, it speaks about Sarah and it says that she was past the age of childbirth.

In other words, all hope was gone and yet God was able to bring life into that body and was able to give her a son. And so he has given us a hope that is not dead, but a hope that is alive. But not only is it a hope that is alive, but it is a hope that is living, that is life.

So the hope is not just alive, but it is life. It is life in the sense that he has promised that he will raise us from the dead, that he will come again. And I'm going to speak about those two concepts in a few moments from the book of Thessalonians.

But he has begotten us again. Why did he save us? He saved us so that we might have a living hope. And this is the sad thing and the frustrating thing that I experience is that Christians claim to be born again and yet they don't have hope.

There are Christians right now that are despairing. There are Christians right now that are in the depths of depression. There are Christians right now that are ready to commit suicide, because their hope is not in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But if we've been born again, he has saved us, not just to save us from our sins, not just to save us from hell, but he has saved us to give us hope for the future, to give us hope in a time when everything around us is hopeless. And that's the difference between the Christian and the unbeliever. Paul writes in Ephesians that he says that before we came to Christ, we were without God and without hope in this world.

We had no hope. But now that we've come to Christ, we have hope. He has begotten us again to a living hope.

And he's done that through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And so how do we know that this hope is sure? How do we know that the promise of the resurrection is real? Because Jesus was raised from the dead. I used the word prototype a little earlier on and the scripture uses the word first fruits.

And obviously first fruits are the first fruit that you pick at the beginning of the harvest. And when you go out and you pick those first fruit, it gives you an idea as to what the rest of the harvest is going to be like. Is the fruit going to be sweet? Are they going to be big and juicy? Is it going to be sour? Are the fruit going to be unappealing and unattractive? The first fruit tell you what the rest of it's going to look like.

And so I like the modern word prototype. In our technological world we understand that word a little bit better. Prototype simply means the first of its kind.

And so when you develop a new motor car or a new computer or a new gadget, you develop a prototype. You make the first one. And in that you prove that your concept works.

You prove that you can deliver on that which was just a drawing on a piece of paper to begin with. And so Jesus is the first fruit. He is the prototype of those raised from the dead.

So we can look at Jesus and we can be assured that God can make this work, that God can indeed do the impossible, and that is raise the dead. And we know to some extent what those who are raised will be like because we have a little bit of an idea of what Jesus was like after the resurrection. And so he has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection.

The resurrection, you see here's the problem with Resurrection Sunday, is that I'm pretty sure that 95% of the messages or sermons that are preached on Resurrection Sunday morning all deal with the fact that Jesus rose from the dead 2,000 years ago. And yes that's true and that's wonderful, but in fact it's more than that. He is raised from the dead in order to give us hope for the future.

It's not just what happened 2,000 years ago when the stone was rolled away and he was raised glorious and powerful from the dead, but it is pointing to the future in terms of what God is going to do in our own hearts and in our lives and in our bodies. Now let's go to verse 13 of 1 Peter chapter 1. 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 13. Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober.

Now I think that this and I don't want to get sidetracked but let me just spend a couple of minutes on this part of the verse because this is so applicable for us today and those who are members of Sun Valley Community Church, I believe that God has been taking us through 1 Peter and we've been in 1 Peter chapter 1, 2 and 3 for the last over a year and I would encourage you to revisit those messages. They're available on the internet, on my website, but God has been bringing us through these messages for a purpose, to prepare us for a time such as this. If you have been listening to what the scripture says, I believe that you would be better prepared today.

If you have not been listening, you're going to have a small problem, so I encourage you to go back and listen to them. So gird up the loins of your mind. We need to get our minds under control.

I'm hearing Christians at the slightest little cough or the slightest little bit of inconvenience in their body saying, well maybe I've got it, maybe, and some of them going into a total panic. Gird up the loins of your mind. Get your mind under control.

Don't allow your mind to run away with you. Yes, we all feel things and we all think that we feel things, but let's build our confidence upon the Lord Jesus Christ and on the word of God. Gird up the loins of your mind.

Be sober. Think clearly. The word be sober simply means think clearly and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Now you can see a new angle brought to this subject. Rest your hope on the revelation of Jesus Christ. What does he mean by the revelation of Jesus Christ? Well I suppose we can understand the word revelation in the sense that he reveals himself to us in scripture, but that's not what he is speaking about here.

Clearly what he is speaking about is when Jesus comes again, and in fact the book Revelation uses exactly the same word. It's when Jesus comes again, and I'm just trying to keep it as simply as I can. And so when Jesus comes again, that is when our hope will be fulfilled.

So let's look at those lines again and rest your hope fully. Don't put your hope on men. Don't put your hope on medicine.

Don't put your hope on finances. Don't put your hope on governments. Don't put your hope in your job, but rest your hope fully.

Put all of your hope upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. That's where our hope must be, and it's not just on the coming of the Lord Jesus, but it is on the grace that is to be brought to us when Jesus comes. Now what is he talking about? What is this grace that will come to us? When Jesus comes.

Well obviously it's Jesus coming. That's part of it. Jesus is coming.

He's brought to us. But I believe it's more than that. It's the fulfillment of our, or the completion of our salvation.

Remember we've spoken many times about the fact that we are saved. We were saved. We are being saved.

We will be saved. What we're still looking for is for the salvation of our bodies. We're looking for our bodies to be transformed and to be changed into his glorious image.

We're waiting for that day when sin will no longer have power on us, when temptation will disappear, when all of these things will change, and when we will be fully like the Lord Jesus. That is the grace that we're looking for. That is what our hope is on.

And I pray that we may be able to begin to understand as we go through this time, that our hope, if it's in anything other than in the resurrection, and when I mean the resurrection, in our own resurrection, when Jesus will change us, and we will be like him, and there will be no sorrow and crying. Every tear will be wiped away. There will be no more pain.

There will be no more death. There will be no more virus. All of these things will be dealt with.

That is the grace that is going to be brought to us when Jesus comes and when he is revealed. So let's go to Thessalonians, 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, and I'm going to look at verses 13 through 18. And in this passage, we get the technology, we get the mechanics of how this whole thing works.

And I'm not going to spend too much time on this this morning, but let's have a quick look at 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 13. But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, those who have died, lest you sorrow as those who have no hope. There's that word again.

Lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. The reality is that maybe some of us will lose loved ones during this time. We don't sorrow like the world does.

Of course we sorrow. We miss those who've passed on. We miss their fellowship and their company.

We wish they could experience and see some of the things that we experience and see. And yet at the same time, I'm glad that those saints that I've known in past times, including my mother and my grandparents and others, in a sense I'm glad they're not seeing what we're seeing today. And yet at the

same time, we would love for them to see our children and our grandchildren and all of those kinds of things.

Yes, we feel their absence, but we don't sorrow like the world does, as though there is no hope. The problem is that when Christians sorrow as the world does, as though there is no hope, there's a clear problem. And I'm concerned sometimes when I attend funerals and when I see and observe Christians' lives, how that they sorrow as the world does.

God help us that we may understand. And this is really my prayer this morning, through this message, is that we may come to a place where we would understand that we have a real hope, and that it would translate from more than just a theology or a doctrine or an idea to a reality that forms the foundation of our lives. And it's not something I can do.

I can preach as much as I like. I can try and expose it to Scriptures. But until the Holy Spirit takes this truth and makes it real to you, and until you wrestle with God and say, God, I want this to be real, I don't want it to be just an idea or a theory.

I want it to be a reality. No amount of preaching is going to do this. No amount of studying the resurrection is going to do this.

It's only God by His Spirit who can deep down in our hearts write this truth and this reality that we have hope. And so he says then, concerning those who have died, we don't sorrow as those who have no hope. Why? Because we have hope.

And then verse 14, because if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who sleep in Jesus. So can you see how he's connecting now the past and the future? We believe that Jesus rose from the dead. This was one of the cardinal truths that they taught in the New Testament, right through the book of Acts.

And in fact, many people were happy to hear about Jesus' death, but when they spoke about the resurrection, they found that offensive. But he rose from the dead, that is a historical fact. We can prove, not just from Scriptures, but also from history, that Jesus was raised from the dead.

So we believe that Jesus died and rose again. I don't believe that there is one Christian in this church or any other church who does not believe that Jesus died and rose again. But the problem is that's where it stops.

But it's not where it stops. He says, just as we believe that, then we must also believe that God will bring with him those who died or sleep in Jesus. So he's going to bring them again.

Now let's go to verse 15. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. So you can see that he's now speaking about the Lord bringing those, and he's not speaking, this is where this verse gets a little difficult, because verse 14 is speaking about their spirits or their souls.

So when he's going to bring them, so really what's happening here is Jesus is descending in the clouds. He is bringing with him the souls and the spirits of those who have died in Christ, those who died as believers. Then he says that we who are alive at that moment, at the coming of the Lord, when Jesus comes again, and I'm not getting into all the details of the rapture and the second coming and all of that,

but when he comes at the resurrection and the rapture, basically the same thing, he brings the dead spirits or the spirits and the souls of the dead saints with him.

Those of us who are alive at that time, and folk I do believe that we may well be alive when Jesus comes. I believe that we're at the very end. I believe that he is coming very, very soon, and that we may well be the last generation who may see his coming.

So if we're alive at that time, we are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, we will by no means precede those who are asleep. Now he's not talking about their spirits and souls, he's talking about their bodies. So he's going to raise, he's going to take us up to be with him, he's going to raise those who, or the bodies of those who have died.

Verse 16, for the Lord himself would descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. So keep your mind around this now. So Jesus is coming, he brings the souls and the spirits of those who are, have died in Christ.

Their bodies are raised, now he's talking about their bodies, so the dead in Christ will rise first. Their bodies are raised, and they are reunited with their souls and spirits, and now they're fully alive. This happens in a twinkling of an eye, this happens in a moment, this is not a process that takes time.

And so he brings the souls and the spirits, because remember Jesus said to be, or Paul said to be absent from the bodies to be present with the Lord. So Paul is with Jesus right now, but his body is buried somewhere, and the particles have disintegrated, but somehow God is going to raise Paul's body, and the body of all other believers on that day, and the bodies and the souls will be reunited. And then verse 17, then we who are alive and remain, so those who are alive at the coming of the Lord will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.

And so those who are dead are going to be, their bodies are going to be raised, those who are alive are going to be caught with them, and together we're going to meet the Lord in the air, and we will always be with the Lord. This is our hope. Now here's the problem.

Many Christians, and many of those who, of you who watching this recording, are saying, well, I don't see the big deal. Well, that's exactly the problem. If your greatest desire is not to see Jesus, and not to be in his presence, you have a serious problem.

You may not even be born again, and if you are born again, there's a serious problem in your relationship with the Lord Jesus. Because to the true believer, there is no greater goal, there is no greater ambition, there is no greater hope than that we are to be with the Lord, that we will see him face to face, that we'll be in his presence, we will hear him speak, we will spend eternity with him. And then verse 18, therefore comfort one another with these words.

And that's why I'm ministering this passage to you this morning, is because this is our comfort. Yes, people are dying in vast numbers all over the world. There is no guarantee that the sickness, that the virus will not get to you or to me.

There's no guarantee that life will ever be normal again. But we have comfort, because we have hope. We have comfort, because we have hope.

And I believe that it's high time that as Christians we changed the place that we have put our hope in, from this world into eternity. Let's go to Titus chapter 2 and verse 13. Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

That is our hope. It's not just a hope, but it is the blessed hope, the coming of the Lord Jesus, the coming of the Lord Jesus. And it doesn't matter whether we have died and we are raised on that day, or whether we're alive at that day.

And that's why I went to that passage in Thessalonians. It doesn't matter. But if we are believers at that point, when Jesus comes, we will be with him.

And this is our blessed hope. This is what we're looking forward to. I've been a Christian for 50 years now.

And from the day I became a Christian, I had one desire, and that is to see Jesus return. My whole life has been built around this idea that Jesus is coming soon. This is our hope.

This is what we're living for. And if this is not what you're hope-living for, then as I said a few moments earlier, there is a serious, serious problem. Now let me go to the last scripture this morning.

And really, everything that I've shared up to now really is laying a foundation for this passage in Hebrews chapter 6. And the reason why I went to these other scriptures is because many people, or very few, in fact, I read a number of commentaries on Hebrews chapter 6, and none of them got the point. But I trust that you will get the point because of the other scriptures that we have looked at. So Hebrews chapter 6 and verse 18, and I'm going to look at verses 18, 19, and 20.

Hebrews 6 verse 18 says that by two immutable things—and I'm just jumping into the middle of the sentence here to save time—by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. The two immutable things that he is referring to there, the word immutable means unchanging, absolutely sure, certain things. And that is, first of all, that God cannot lie.

So that is unchanging, that is absolutely sure and steadfast, you can bank on it, you can build your life upon that. God cannot lie. But in the context also, the second thing is that God gives an oath.

That's in the beginning parts of Hebrews chapter 6. So two things, he gives us an oath and he can't lie. He didn't need to give us an oath because his word is sufficient. God's not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should say not do it.

But to give us absolute assurance, he also seals that with an oath. And obviously Hebrews says because he could not swear by anyone greater, he swears by himself. And so by these two immutable things in which it's impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, strong consolation.

That's what the world needs today. The world is looking for just any glimmer of a hope. People are following the statistics in with minute detail.

Hours and hours of television is devoted to politicians analyzing the statistics. Yeah, they've gone down by 0.1% today. Maybe this is a glimmer of hope.

This is not consolation. I will only find consolation as far as that is concerned in the day that we see a dramatic change right through across the world. And suddenly people are no longer dying, people are no

longer going to the hospital, and things are then we can have some kind of confidence.

But they're playing with the numbers right now. And in fact, you can listen to the same set of statistics by two different politicians, and you'll come to two different conclusions. The one will say things are getting worse, and the other one will say things are getting better.

That's no consolation. We can have strong consolation, strong consolation. And it is for those who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

It's time to flee. It's time to flee from your hope in this world. It's time to flee from anything that you've had confidence and trust in in this life.

It's time to flee to Jesus. It's time to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. Now I want you to look at the language.

The word lay hold simply means to grab hold of, that we need to grasp, that we need to grab hold of. And folks, this is the reality, and this is really what's on my heart this morning, is that it's time for us to grab hold of this hope. It's time to dust it off from the shelf.

It's time to take it away from the areas of maybe something sci-fi in the future, whatever. It's time for us to grab hold of it, so that it might become an anchor to our souls, that we might have strong consolation. Folks, we need strong consolation.

Christians need strong consolation. The world needs strong consolation. The word consolation, comfort.

Who have fled, fleeing from the world, fleeing from the stuff that we had confidence in before, and find refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. Yes, the pestilence is out there, and it's pursuing, but let's flee and find refuge in the Lord Jesus Christ. Who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul. I've spoken on this passage before, and I pray that you may even have remembered, but if you haven't, that's why we're speaking about it again, so that we might be reminded again. This hope, the hope of the resurrection, we have as an anchor to the soul.

An anchor is that which holds firm and brings stability in the time of the storm. As I was preparing, I was reading in the book of Acts chapter 27, I think it is, about Paul and his shipwreck. In fact, it wasn't his only shipwreck, but the last shipwreck.

He speaks about the fact that they threw out four anchors, trying to hold the ship in the time of the storm. We need that anchor so that when the storm comes, we won't drift, and we won't find ourselves shipwrecked on the rocks of life. I spoke last week about the men who built their house.

The one builds his house on the sand, and the storm comes. We need a foundation when the storm comes. We need an anchor when the storm comes, and we're in the storm right now.

There has never been a storm that has taken the world, and has taken the church, and taken Christians, like we find ourselves in right at this very moment. So we have an anchor, and that anchor is our hope. Now the problem is that if your anchor is in something that is not going to hold, the anchor will break loose and have no value whatsoever.

You can have the biggest, meanest anchor that you like. You can have the strongest cable or chain. You can have the best designed anchor that you like, but if you put that anchor into something that is going to break loose, then it's going to have no value whatsoever.

You may as well not have an anchor. And that's the problem, is that people are finding they've put their anchors down into this world, and in the instability of this world, and it doesn't hold. But our anchor is sure, and it is steadfast.

It is certain. It is not, maybe will it hold. And I can imagine those sailors in Paul's shipwreck just hearing the breakers, hearing the rocks not so far away, and knowing what would happen if the ship got swept onto those rocks, and the damage to life, and the shipwreck that would happen.

And so there was this question, will the anchors hold? Will the anchors keep us from drifting into dangerous ground? Our anchor is sure. It is dependable. It is steadfast.

It is not moving. The word steadfast, immovable. It doesn't change.

And which enters the presence behind the veil. Here's the whole key to this passage, and to everything that we have shared so far. Where is the anchor? The anchor is in the presence behind the veil.

What is the writer to the Hebrews talking about? Obviously, in the context of Hebrews, he's talking about the tabernacle. And remember that the tabernacle had different compartments, and behind the veil, behind the third veil, was the holiest of all. And that is where the presence of God was.

And so he is saying that this anchor enters into the presence of God. But where is God now? Well, he's not in an earthly tabernacle. He's not in a church or in a temple.

He is in heaven. That's where he is. We know he's everywhere.

He's omnipresent, but he manifests his presence in heaven. And he says, this anchor we have, and this anchor is anchored in heaven, behind the veil. Now, I'm not going to get into this because I've run out of time.

The veil here is speaking about death. Behind the veil, as the veil of the temple was torn, Jesus died, and his body was rent. And so the anchor is in heaven itself.

Is that where your anchor is this morning? And then verse 20 says, where the forerunner has entered. You see, here's the other word. We've spoken about a prototype.

We've spoken about the first fruits. But here he uses the word forerunner. A forerunner, in this sense, the word in Greek is used in the sense of a scout who in the military would go ahead of the army, and look at what's going on over there, and see, can we cross the river here? Or can we cross the mountains over here? And where is the enemy? Is it safe for us? He's one who goes before, and Jesus has gone before.

He is the one who is showing us the way. And so we're not going away that we don't know. Most people in this world, when they face death, as many are in New York City and in other places, don't know what's ahead.

But we know what's ahead because our forerunner has gone ahead of us, and he's told us what there is. And so the forerunner, the first fruits, the prototype has entered for us, even Jesus, having become a high

priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek. Our anchor is in heaven itself, where Jesus is.

Now that's the question this morning. Where is your anchor? If you find your life drifting right now, if you find your thoughts are drifting, if you find that fear is gripping your heart, I'm concerned about where your anchor is. You need to get your anchor in the right place.

You need to get it into heaven itself, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me close with the hymn that I really love. The original hymn has five verses.

We only have three verses in our hymnal, and it's hymn number 440 in our hymn. Will your anchor hold in the storms of life? When the clouds unfold their wings of strife, when the strong tides lift and the cables strain, will your anchor drift or firm remain? The chorus says, we have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll, fastened to the rock which cannot move, grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love. It is safely moored till the storm withstand, for it is well secured by the Saviour's hand, and the cables passed from his heart to mine can defy that blast through strength divine.

It will surely hold in the straits of fear when the breakers have told that the reef is near, though the tempest rave and the wild winds blow, not an angry wave shall our bark overflow. It will firmly hold in the floods of death when the water's cold chill our latest breath, on the rising tide it can never fail, while our hopes abide within the veil. We have an anchor when our eyes behold through the gathering night, the city of gold our harbour bright, we shall anchor fast by the heavenly shore, for the storms will pass forevermore.

We have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll, fastened to the rock which cannot move, grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love. Father we thank you for the Lord Jesus who has gone before us, who has gone through the experience of death and come out the other side glorious and victorious, raised from the dead, transformed with an eternal body. And so Father we thank you that we know that you can raise us and will raise us because you raised Jesus from the dead.

But Lord I pray that you would help us today that this may translate from just a theory to a reality that grips our hearts and it becomes an anchor to our souls. Lord I pray for each one who is listening or watching this video that find themselves gripped with fear and uncertainty and anxiety and maybe even terror. I pray Lord that they may find your truth real in their lives today, that they may understand the reality of these verses, that they are not just theology written in a book, but they are the practical realities that were proven 2,000 years ago when Jesus was raised from the dead.

And because he was raised we know that you will raise us also and we know that you will come again to receive us to yourself. And so Lord I pray that you would help us to grasp this truth and Lord not just to grasp it but to become a reality that sustains us in these times and not just in these times but until Jesus comes or until we die. Lord I pray that you would help us that you would make this real, touch our hearts Lord.

I pray for those who are listening who are struggling in their faith right now. I pray Lord that they may just spend their time in prayer and in your word and just examining the scriptures that these things might become real to them, that it may become an anchor that is sure and steadfast, not a kite that you're flying in the sky and that blows by the wind this way or that way, but an anchor that is sure that holds in the storms of life. Lord I pray that this may be real.

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