

# Resurrection From the Dead

by Anton Bosch

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*The sermon emphasizes the significance of Christ's resurrection as the foundation of Christian faith and the promise of our own resurrection and eternal life.*

**Duration:** 42:12

**Scripture:** Hebrews 6:10-13, Hebrews 6:18-20

**Topics:** "Resurrection"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of feeling tired and sluggish as the year comes to an end. He encourages the audience to not become weary but to imitate those who have faith and endurance in order to inherit the promises of God. The speaker then discusses the concept of the resurrection from the dead, explaining that while there are similarities between earthly bodies and resurrection bodies, they are fundamentally different. He emphasizes the need to prepare ourselves for meeting Jesus by living separate and righteous lives. The sermon concludes with a reminder that God does not forget the work and labor of His people.

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## Transcript

Alright, so we've come to the 9th in the series, 2nd last one, and we deal this evening with the resurrection from the dead. Maybe we should just have a quick look at the path that we've come, so we can just see how the one leads into the other. We started first with repentance from dead works, stopping to trying to save ourselves, turning away from those things.

The 2nd principle was faith towards God, so turning away from those things, turning to God. Then the doctrine of baptism was dealt with the whole process of being born again, and after that, so being baptized into Christ, baptized into water, which then is an outward expression of that which has happened inward, baptism in the Holy Spirit, which empowers us for service, and then baptism in suffering, telling us that the walk is not going to necessarily be easy from there on, that there may be difficulties, but that's the way that the Lord Jesus also went, and so we need to go the same way. And then laying on of hands, and so those first ones then deal with how it happens, and then from there on it deals with what we do now that we are saved, and so the first one is laying on of hands, the various uses of the laying on of hands, but particularly in exaltation to give to others, that which we have had so greatly, or that the Lord has blessed us with so much.

And then tonight we deal with resurrection from the dead, which now deals with the future, so you can see that it deals with the whole path from where we've come, through to our Christian walk in this life, and then the future. But the future also is not just for the future, but it has an impact upon us here today, and we'll see how that does as we deal with our scriptures in 1 John and in Hebrews. But let's begin in 1 Corinthians 15, because when we speak about the resurrection of the dead, there is one chapter which deals in great detail with the teaching on the resurrection from the dead, and that is 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

Now this was written in response to a question which they posed to Paul, they wrote various questions to Paul concerning marriage, and concerning divorce, and concerning the resurrection, and concerning a sinning brother, and Paul then gives direction in these various things, and he gives a very detailed teaching on the whole principle, or the whole concept of the resurrection from the dead. And so let's go to 1 Corinthians chapter 15, and we'll read from verse 13, and we'll just comment as we go along, we need to read the whole chapter, but we'll only read some portions, otherwise we won't get through in time. So 1 Corinthians 15, and verse 13.

But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain. Yes, and we have found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up, if in fact the dead do not rise.

So clearly there were people who were saying that there is no resurrection after the dead, the same way as there are many people today who believe that when you die, that's it, you die. And that's the end of it. But Paul says no, there is a resurrection of the dead.

And so he says first of all, if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. In other words, what he is saying is the whole principle of the resurrection from the dead is absolutely bound up with the fact that Christ is risen from the dead. So if He was raised from the dead, then we will also be raised from the dead.

If He was not raised from the dead, then we will not be raised from the dead. And so that's the argument that he takes there. And then he says if Christ did not rise from the dead, then our preaching is vain and your faith is also vain.

In other words, he says that everything we are teaching, everything we believe is of no value if there is no resurrection of the dead. In other words, and in fact he quotes, he says this a bit further on, and he says if that is not true, if there is no resurrection, well then we may as well be like the world. We may as well eat and drink and be merry because tomorrow we are going to die.

But he says no, there is a resurrection. Now this is a great hope that we have. And so our life is not just for the time that we live on this earth, but it goes beyond that.

And so there is a resurrection. And then he speaks about the fact that they are false witnesses of God. Now remember that the apostles went around preaching not just that Jesus died, but that he rose from the dead.

And this is what makes the gospel, the Christian gospel unique. This is what makes it different from every other religion. Every other religion has their gurus and their teachers and their prophets and their great men.

And they will point to those people and they will say there is Mohammed or there is this man or there is Confucius. But all of those men died. But none of them, first of all, died a sacrificial death in someone else's place.

All of those men died for their own sins. And so they could not die in the place of someone else's the way Jesus died for us. And all of them have died and remained dead.

They did not rise from the dead. But Jesus was risen from the dead on the third day. And that is what makes the Christian gospel unique and which in fact is the very power of God.

And we spoke the other day about Ephesians 4 where Paul says that he prays that we begin to understand the tremendous power which God is working within us. Which is the same power that raised Christ from the dead. So not only is the power of the resurrection something which gives us hope for the future.

But it is in fact a powerful force, not just a force, but God at work within us. Changing us and making us new and preparing us for the future life. Then verse 16 says, For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile. You are still in your sins. Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

And if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. Now first of all he says here in these few verses is that if Christ is not risen, our faith is futile and we are still in our sins.

In other words what he is saying is that in order for our sins to be forgiven, not only was it necessary that Christ die, but also that he be risen again. That is proof and evidence of the fact that the Father accepted the sacrifice. This is dealt with in the book of Hebrews where the high priest would go into the holiest of all once a year and he would sprinkle the altar with the blood.

And the whole nation of Israel would stand outside waiting for his reappearance. And when he reappeared out of the holy of holies, they would know that God had accepted the sacrifice and that the atonement had been made. And so in the same way Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day, indicating God's approval of the sacrifice.

If Jesus by some remote chance, and obviously this was not so, but if by some remote chance Jesus had sinned in his life. Somewhere along the line he had performed one sin, then he would have to die for his own sin and he could not die in our place. And then he would not have been resurrected.

So how do we know that Jesus was sinless? Not only because the scripture testifies to that fact, but the fact that the Father testifies to the fact by raising him from the dead on the third day. And so the resurrection gives us not only assurance of the future of heaven and of living forever, but gives us assurance of our sins being forgiven. And then he says that if Christ, verse 20, now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

When the scripture uses this phrase fallen asleep, it means having died. And now he says Christ is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. That word first fruits for farming people, they understood that very well.

Because when you went to the harvest and you looked at the beginning of the harvest, the first fruit that you got off the trees or the first wheat that you got off the field, that would give you an indication as to what the quality of the harvest is going to be like. You would know it's going to be a good harvest, it's going to be a plentiful or it's going to be a small harvest. The fruit is going to be sweet or the fruit is going to be sour.

And so the first fruit shows you what the others are going to be like. Now we don't understand first fruits so much today because we live in an industrial country or in an industrialized environment. And so we understand a different word which is the word prototype.

And so when you make or design a motor car or an engine or a machine of some sort, you will always make the first one. And that one is the prototype. And when you've seen the prototype, then you know what the others are going to look like.

It is the first in a series. And so Jesus is the prototype, He is the first in the series. And so we can look at the Lord Jesus and know what all others are going to look like.

And so He's the first one to be raised from the dead, proving that it can be done. That's part of the function of a prototype is to prove that you can actually build this machine or build this motor car. The fact that you've got a prototype means that you can do it.

And so He is the first fruits proving that it can be done. And also it's saying that we will be raised in a similar way. So we need to look at the Lord Jesus and when we look at Him, we have a clear idea as to what the resurrection is all about.

Now there are many questions as to how are we going to be resurrected? What are we going to look like? Well the clearest way of explaining any of those questions is to go back and look at the Lord Jesus. What did He look like after He was raised from the dead? And we can see that there were certain things that were different about Him. He could still eat because He said He was not a spirit.

Because the disciples looked at Him and they said He's a ghost or a spirit. And He said I'm not a ghost or a spirit. Give me fish and give me honey.

And He ate that. And so He proved that He still had a body. But that body was not like our bodies.

It doesn't grow old. It doesn't have pain. It doesn't suffer.

It is not limited by time and space. And so He was able to pass through. Remember they were meeting in the upper room.

And He was able to pass through the solid walls. And just appear in their midst. And so it is very different.

And we are able to look then at the Lord Jesus. And we are able to say well how did His body look? What was different about His body? And then what kind of bodies will we have in the resurrection? And so if we move on to verse 42. Now what He deals with here from verse 35.

He asks the question. But someone will say how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? And then He goes into explanation. He says that there are different kinds of bodies.

Different kinds of flesh. And so He says that there are fish. And yes they have life.

But there are also birds. And they also have life. But the two are different.

You can't really look at a fish and imagine what a bird looks like. Although it looks like the scientists think they can do that. Or look at a reptile and see what a man looks like.

They are essentially different. They all have life in common. They all have certain things in common.

But they are also very very different. And so He says this is what we need to look at when we look at the resurrection body. The resurrection body has certain similarities to the earthly body.

But it is essentially different. It is not the same. And so He then says in verse 40.

Let's just read verse 41. There is one glory of the sun. Another glory of the moon.

And another glory of the stars. For one star differs from another star in glory. So He says even in the skies.

The sun and the moon and the stars. They are all different. They have certain similarities.

But they are different. Verse 42 says. So also is the resurrection of the dead.

The body is sown in corruption. It is raised in incorruption. Now He previously dealt with this issue of saying that when something has to fall into the ground and die.

Put seed into the ground. That dies and then it comes up again. And it produces something else.

Now it looks different to the seed. The plant is not. You don't get lots of seeds appearing on the surface of the ground.

You get a plant. And it has leaves. And it has a stem.

And it has flowers. And eventually it will produce seed. And so what He is saying also is that.

You can't look at the seed. And imagine what the plant is going to look like. You can look at a mustard seed.

Jesus said. And you see the big tree. And you say.

Well how did that come from that? The two don't seem to have any real connection. And yet the tree did come from the seed. And that is what He is saying here.

And so He says that we. The body is sown in corruption. In other words.

This body is corruptible. And it is decaying and is growing old. And so when it gets put into the grave or into the ground.

It is like seed in that sense. Something is going to come out of that. At the day of the resurrection.

But what comes out of the day of the resurrection. Does not look exactly the same as that which was put on. And now He highlights one of the differences.

He says it is sown in corruption. It is raised in incorruption. In other words.

We are dead. We are dying and decaying. But the body that we will have in the resurrection.

Will not die and decay. It will not be corruptible. It will not corrode.

It will not grow old. It will not get sick. It will have eternal life.

And then verse 43 says. It is sown in dishonor. It is raised in glory.

And so now speaking about the fact that these bodies are. In a very real sense. As a result of sin.

They are spoiled. They are marred. They do not look the way that they should look.

Our bodies have limitations. But He says in fact. They are sown in dishonor.

But they will be raised in glory. And so we don't know exactly. But what we do know is that we will be absolutely perfect.

When we are raised. And so if we had one eye. Or we were a cripple.

Or in any way maimed in this life. In the resurrection. We will be glorious.

We will be perfect. In our bodies. Obviously in our souls and spirits as well.

But He is specifically here dealing with a body. And then. He says it is sown a natural body.

Verse 44. It is raised a spiritual body. So it is not raised a spirit.

So we are not going to be spirits floating around in heaven. We will have bodies. But they will be spiritual bodies.

And they will be different from our earthly bodies. And then verse 45. So it is written.

The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life giving spirit. Now again He is saying.

Here is the difference. The first Adam was Adam. Who sinned in the garden of Eden.

The last Adam is Jesus. Now He is saying. There is a difference between the two.

The first Adam was a living being or a living soul. The last Adam Jesus is a life giving spirit. Adam only had life.

He could not give life. And so that is all we have. We have life.

We are alive. We are not dead. We are dying.

But we are not dead yet. But we do not have the ability to give life. Even when we procreate and we have children.

We in fact give them life. But together with life we also give them death. Because in the genes, in the DNA that we pass on to those children is the recipe for death.

And that guarantees that they will die after a certain period of time. But Jesus is different. Jesus is not just a living soul.

He is a life giving spirit. And that is the difference between the first Adam and the second Adam. Between Adam and Jesus.

Jesus is able to actually give life. Which no other man could ever do. No man could give life.

Every man gave a certain amount of life but with a death. Jesus gives eternal life. And that is going to be made real in the resurrection.

Then let us jump down to verse 50. Now this I say brethren that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

Now this is just by the way. But one of the reasons why we also need to be resurrected with a new body. Is because we cannot enter into heaven in these bodies.

These bodies are tainted by sin. These bodies are corruptible and therefore they will not be able to endure the glory of standing in God's presence. The scripture says no man will see the Lord and live.

God's glory will just burn us up. Will just consume us in a flash and in a moment. And that is one of the other reasons why we need another body.

So that we can stand before the Lord. A body that will endure the glory of standing in His presence. And also one that is not tainted and spoilt by sin.

So that because nothing sinful can stand in God's presence. It does not matter how strong it is. It will not endure in the presence of God.

And that is why he says we need new bodies. Now finally let's read in verse 54. So then this corruptible has put on incorruption.

And this mortal has put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in victory.

In other words the victory over death is not real today. And so we are seeing people dying all the time. And we say well it does not look like there is much in the resurrection.

But in fact it is not in this life. It will be at that day. And then he says then the saying that is written will come to pass.

Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is your sting? O Hades where is your victory? And then in verse 58. Therefore my beloved brethren.

Now when you see that word therefore it means that this is now the conclusion. This is what must now flow from this. From knowing about the resurrection.

From having this assurance about the resurrection. There are certain things that must come out of that. And he says this.

Therefore my beloved brethren. Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

So he is giving us an encouragement. And he is saying that because of the resurrection. We can endure difficult times as Christians.

We can see through that baptism of suffering. We also need to remain faithful. Because it is not just for this life.

Many Christians become discouraged. Because they see unbelievers prospering and doing well. And as Christians they are not doing well.

And so they are suffering. Unbelievers are healthy. Sometimes Christians are not healthy.

And they are saying well what is this all about? And they become discouraged. But Paul says no. He says it is not about this life.

He says it is about the future life. And when we begin to understand that. Then we can be steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the Lord.

Knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. In other words knowing that this is not all there is to it. This life is not all there is to our Christianity.

It goes beyond the grave. And so when we begin to see that. And we begin to get the right perspective.

Then we have the wherewithal to be able to be steadfast. To be able to labor for the Lord without getting tired. Because working for the Lord does not always bring immediate results.

There is not immediate pay. Or a bonus. The Lord does not at the end of every month say well you have done well.

Here is some kind of reward. And so sometimes we get tired. We get weary of well doing the scripture says.

We get weary of doing the right thing. And so we say no well I have been serving God for 5 years, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, 40 years. Is it really worth it? Yes it is worth it.

Because there is a resurrection. And we know he says that our labor is not in vain. We are not working for nothing.

We are not serving God for nothing. Because there is a resurrection. And there is going to be a reward on that great day of the resurrection.

And we will deal with that next time. When we deal with the judgment seat of Christ. And with eternal judgment.

Now let's go to Revelation chapter 20. Because an important thing also to understand is that there are 2 resurrections. There are 2 resurrections.

One resurrection for believers. And another resurrection for unbelievers. Some people and many people are teaching and many people like to believe.

That if you are good you will go to heaven. If you are bad well you will just die. And people say well you know God he is such a loving God.

He won't put anybody in hell forever. But the Bible very clearly teaches a hell. And teaches eternal judgment.

And so in Revelation chapter 20. And we will just maybe just deal with verse by verse. From verse 46.

And I saw thrones and they that sat on them and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God. Who had not worshipped the beast or his image.

And had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. This is the millennial reign of Christ.

And then he says but the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Now that gets a little bit confusing.

But he is simply saying there are 2 resurrections. One before the thousand years and one after the thousand years. The one before the thousand years are those who are faithful.

Those who are believers. Whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Those who have been born again.

They are part of the first resurrection. And he says blessed are those who are part of the first resurrection. But then he says the rest of the dead.

They didn't live for that thousand years. They remained dead. They remained in the grave for that thousand years.

And then he says in verse 6. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ.

And they shall reign with him a thousand years. And then it says when the thousand years has expired. Satan will be released.

That is verse 7. And then verse 11 says. Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it. From his face the earth and the heaven fled away.

And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead. Small and great standing before God.

And books were opened. And another book was opened which is the book of life. And the dead were judged according to the works by the things that were written in the books.

And the sea gave up the dead that were in it. And death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged each one according to his works.

And so we will deal with that in detail next time. But you will see here that he says that those who were unbelievers are raised after the millennium. And so there are two resurrections.

And he says what we need to do is we need to be part of the first resurrection. Alright. Let's go to back a bit and we will go to Acts chapter 23.

And what I want to show you now is that very closely related to the whole message of the resurrection is the hope that we have. The hope that we have. And so there are many, many scriptures but I am only going to go through three because they contain some important information for us.

These two concepts of the resurrection and the hope, these two are linked. Many people's hope lies in this life. Their hope is in a better country here.

Their hope is in the economy picking up and becoming better. Their hope is maybe to emigrate. Their hope is in retirement that then life will be better.

Their hope is in material things or in earthly things. And that hope is going to fail because it is going to disappoint them. I just listened to the radio the other day a man who had made a certain investment 20 years ago.

And he was promised that he would have a million Rand now based on the investment and on the returns that that investment would make. And now he has only got 200,000 Rand and now he can't retire and he is in Syria. Now his whole hope was on this million Rand that he was saving towards and suddenly it is not there.

But the hope that we have is one which is eternal and the scripture says which does not fade away. Any hope in this life fades away. And whatever hope you have it is never as good as you thought it would be.

And so we are all hoping to go on holiday soon and yes it is going to be wonderful. But at the end of the day it is going to come to an end and yes it will be good for a short while. But it is not going to come up to expectations.

It is not going to take away our tiredness forever. It is not going to transform our lives. It will just be a brief respite.

And so whatever we hope for in this life is temporary and it fades away. But the hope of the resurrection is eternal. Now Acts chapter 23 and verse 6. But when Paul perceived that one part was Sadducees and the other Pharisees.

Now just by the way the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection, the Pharisees did. So this is men before Jesus. The Jews were separated into these two groups.

And then he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. Now look at this. Concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am being judged.

The hope and the resurrection. In chapter 24, next chapter and verse 15. Chapter 24 and verse 15.

Paul is making a defense of the faith before Felix. And he says, I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. See again how he separates the two, the just and the unjust.

But he says, I have hope in God that there is a resurrection. These two are linked. And then in 1 Peter chapter 1, right to the back between Hebrews and Revelation.

1 Peter chapter 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. Notice according to the abundant mercy has begotten us again. In other words, we have been born again to a living hope.

Not a dead hope. Not a decaying hope. Not a fading hope.

But a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And so Jesus is the guarantee of that hope. Jesus is the assurance of the hope of the resurrection.

And this is our hope. This is what we must put our trust in. This is what we must look forward to.

We keep ourselves motivated by looking forward to the holidays or looking forward to the end of the month when we are going to get a bit of money. Or looking forward to the bonus. But in fact as Christians, he says, what I must keep myself motivated by is the hope of the resurrection.

Of that day when I am going to never know how it feels to be tired any longer. I will never be tired. I will never feel pain.

I will never have any of the limitations of this body. Because I am going to see him as he is. And I am going to be changed in the moment and in the twinkling of an eye.

The scripture says. Now, what must this work in us? What must the consequence of this be? And while we are at the back here, let's go to 1 John 3. A couple of books further. 1 John 3. And verse 2. 1 John 3 verse 2. Beloved, now are we the children of God.

And it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. But we know that when he is revealed, we shall be like him. For we shall see him as he is.

Now, remember Paul said in Corinthians that we can't know exactly what we are going to look like. We know that a fish and a bird are different. And we know that the resurrected body is going to be different to the earthly body.

But exactly what it is going to look like. And exactly whether we will recognize one another. What age we are going to be.

Will old people be old and young people be young? We don't know these things. The scripture doesn't tell us. And so he says we don't know all these things.

And so John is confirming. He says we don't know all these answers. But what we do know is when he is revealed.

When we see Jesus, we will be like him. For we will see him as he is. And so he says whatever it is.

Whatever age I am going to be at. Whatever my body is going to be like. Whatever that is.

He says that is really irrelevant. Because my main aim in life. Remember for Paul and for John and for all of the apostles.

Was that they would be like Jesus. This is what we have been saved for. Paul says in Romans chapter 8. He has predestined us to be conformed to the image of his son.

To become like Jesus. Not just spiritually and in our character. But also in our bodies.

In every way to be like Jesus. And so he says maybe we don't know exactly what we are going to look like. But what we do know for sure.

Is we are going to be like Jesus. Now that is a glorious hope. Now he says in verse 3. And everyone who has this hope in him.

Purifies himself. Just as he. That is Jesus.

Is pure. And so again you see the word hope. And so because we have the hope of the resurrection.

Because we have the hope of being like Jesus. What must that work out in me? It must result in me purifying myself. Keeping myself unspotted from the world.

Keeping myself separate unto God. Holy unto God. Living a life which pleases him.

And so this hope must bring about a change in life. It is no good saying I believe in the resurrection. And I live as though I am living for this life.

Many many Christians are living their lives in absolute abandon. In physical pleasures. In drunkenness and all sorts of things in this life.

Thinking that living their lives as though this is what it is all about. John says no. He says I have a hope.

I have the hope of the resurrection. I am going to be like Jesus. And so let me keep myself from the things of this world.

Let me dedicate myself to living for Christ. Because this is the hope. And this must bring about a purifying and cleansing of myself.

A preparation of myself for that day. And remember that it also speaks about this as being the marriage of the bride and the bridegroom. He is the bridegroom.

We are the bride as the church. And we are separated from him. But that day we are going to be united with him.

And we are going to know him. And be married to him in every way. Now the same way as a bride prepares for that day.

And she makes sure that everything. She grows her nails. And she does her hair.

And she gets the dress. And she makes sure that she is absolutely clean. She bathes.

And does all the things. Makes sure that she is absolutely presentable. He is alluding to that.

And he says because we are going to see Jesus. We need to start getting ready for that. If you are going to meet a great person in this world.

If you are going to meet the president or somebody like that. You will make sure you put your best clothes on. You will make sure that you do your nails.

That you clean your shoes. That you have your hair cut. That everything is exactly right.

Because you don't want to stand before a man like that and be ashamed. And so he is saying because we are going to see Jesus. We need to begin to make ourselves ready.

We need to prepare for that. By living lives that are separate. Cleaning up our acts so to speak.

So that when we stand before him we would not be ashamed. Now let's finally go to Hebrews chapter 6. And this is the chapter that we have been dealing with over the last few weeks. And I am going to go to the last part of the chapter.

From verse 10. Now remember the beginning of the chapter deals with the first principles. And the foundation that we are dealing with now.

And then verse 10 says. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love which you have shown towards his name. In that you have ministered to the saints and do minister.

So he is saying whatever we do for God. God is not going to forget that. Then verse 11.

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end. And so again you will see how he links the hope and diligence. Diligence has to do with work.

You don't use diligence in any other context. You don't use diligence in relaxation. Nobody relaxes diligently.

Or goes on holiday diligently. You work diligently. It has to do with work.

And so he says we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end. And so I need to be diligent and I need to have my hope assured right to the end. Then verse 12.

That you do not become sluggish or slothful in the old King James. But imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. So he is saying there are promises.

And he says don't get tired. We come to the end of the year. I am feeling very tired at the moment because it has been a long time since we had a break.

And so the closer you get to the holiday, the further you get from the last holiday. The more sluggish you get and the harder it is to get up in the morning. Now he says because that hope is there.

He says don't become sluggish. Don't get tired. But he says imitate those who through faith and patience or endurance inherit the promises.

And so he says there are promises. Let's be faithful. Let's endure.

Now verse 13 says when God made a promise to Abraham because he could swear by no one greater he swore by himself. Saying surely blessing I will bless you and multiplying I will multiply you. So after he had patiently endured he obtained the promise.

For men indeed swear by the greater. And an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God determined to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath.

That by two immutable things in that it is impossible for God to lie we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before us. Now what he is doing is he is reminding us about Abraham. God gave Abraham certain promises.

Those promises were far in the future. Abraham didn't see the fulfillment of those promises. And yet he says Abraham didn't get tired because he believed that God would fulfill his word.

And so Abraham looked forward all the time for the fulfillment of the promises that God had made to him. Now he says God has made promises to us. And the same way as Abraham patiently endured we need to patiently endure because God is going to fulfill his promises.

And then he assures us that God will not fail us. He will not keep his word. He will keep his word.

He will fulfill the promises that he has made. And so he then speaks about those of us who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. So not only is the hope something of the resurrection something which we must have in the back of our minds.

But it is something we must lay hold of. We must grab hold of that. That must become so real and substantial to us.

It is like if you are going to go on holiday and you have an air ticket to go to Switzerland let's say. And so yes you can have in the back of your mind I am going to Switzerland at the end of the year. I wish I could.

But when you have got the ticket you have got something to hold on to. And so when your mind begins to say no it is not really going to happen. You are able to take off the ticket.

You can say I have got this hope. I am going to Australia next year. So I have got that assurance.

I have got something to hold on to. Now he is saying that the hope is not just some vague thing in my mind. It needs to be so real that I can lay hold of it.

And that it gives me absolute assurance. Then he says in verse 19. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul.

As an anchor of the soul. What is the purpose of an anchor? It is to hold the ship when the storms come. So that the ship does not drift and move and end up on the rocks.

And so he says what is it that is going to anchor our lives. He is going to give stability to our lives. The hope of the resurrection.

Now he then goes on and he says. This hope is both sure and steadfast. And which enters the presence behind the veil.

Now behind the veil simply means in heaven. Now if you have a boat and you put out an anchor. And the sand or the bottom of the sea wherever you are.

Let us say that is 100 meters long. And you have an anchor and it is only 50 meters long. Where are you anchoring? You are anchoring in the water.

And it is not going to hold you. It means absolutely nothing. That anchor needs to go through to the rock or to the sand.

Where it can dig in and where it can actually hold the boat. Now this is the problem. Many people's hope is in this life.

It is like having an anchor which is too short. It is just in the water. It cannot hold.

It is not going to bring any stability to you. Because you are going to be tossed and you are going to be driven by the wind. And that is what the scripture says about some people.

But in fact he says our hope is not in this life. It enters into heaven. And so it is anchored into a secure place.

This earth is going to change. It is going to pass away. Heaven and earth will pass away.

Jesus said. But my word endures forever. And so this earth is passing away.

So whatever you put your confidence in in this life, it is going to pass away. But heaven will endure forever. It is never going to pass away.

And so we better have our anchor in the right place. There is no good having an anchor in the water. The anchor has got to be down in the sand or on the rock.

And so he says this hope we have. It is as an anchor to the soul. Both sure and steadfast.

And which enters the presence behind the veil. And so it is anchored into heaven. And so we have this line which goes into heaven.

And which is anchored there. And this is what brings stability to our lives. And you know when Christians understand the hope of the resurrection.

This brings stability. When I feel down. When I feel I want to fade.

Or I want to run away. Or I feel I want to just give up. That anchor, that hope of the resurrection keeps me going.

And that is my testimony. And that has been real for me all the time that I have served the Lord. And then he says again verse 29.

Look at this. Where the forerunner has entered for us. Even Jesus.

Now remember Paul writes to the Corinthians. And he says Jesus is the first fruits. But now the writer to the Hebrews speaks about Jesus as the forerunner.

Same picture. The first fruits or the forerunner. So the forerunner is the one who runs ahead.

And who shows the way. And so Jesus is the forerunner. In the army they have pathfinders.

The job of the pathfinder is to go ahead. And to find the way. And Jesus is that pathfinder.

The one who has gone ahead. And who has found the way. And so Jesus has entered for us.

Having become a high priest forever. According to the order of Melchizedek. And so heaven is not something which we don't know whether it is there.

Because Jesus has entered into heaven. And so we have an assurance of these things. And so over and over what the writer to the Hebrews is saying to us here.

Is that we have a sure hope. We don't have something which is flimsy. Something which maybe is going to be better.

The poor people in Zimbabwe right now. They are hoping for things to change. But you know one doesn't know what's going to happen.

And at the end of the day all of their hopes could well be dashed. But you know our hope is in a sure. And in a steadfast God who has made a commitment and a promise.

That he will raise us from the dead. And that he will give us eternal life. Amen.

Let's pray. Father we thank you that you have not just saved us to live lives in this life. Deprived of the things of the world.

And trying to live holy lives. But Lord that you have a greater plan which transcends the 70, 80, whatever number of years we have in this life. A plan which indeed goes right into eternity.

Which lasts forever. And so Lord help us not just to be blinded by the things of this life. And by the attractions of this world.

But also by the difficulties and the problems of serving you in this life. But Lord that we may see heaven. That we may see eternity.

That we may understand the resurrection. That these things may become so real to us. That they may hold of them.

And that they may become that anchor which brings stability into our lives. Lord help us to grab hold of these promises of you. Help us to believe you like Abraham believed you.

And knowing that you are not a man who will lie. But that you are indeed God. And what you say you will do.

And so Lord we thank you for the assurance that we can have. Lord that we know that you can do this. That you will raise us.

Because you have proven your ability to do so. By raising Jesus from the dead. And so we thank you Father for this hope that we can have.

Make it real to us. Write it upon our hearts we ask. In Jesus name.

Amen.

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