

Christian Hope: Warning From God's Word

by Rolfe Barnard

Rolfe Barnard's sermon warns Christians about the dangers of false assurance and emphasizes the necessity of true hope in Christ.

Duration: 39:53

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:1

Topics: "Warning"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of finding a true and abiding hope in the word of God. He emphasizes that our complacency and false assurance can hinder us from experiencing this hope. The preacher refers to the parable of the sower in Luke 8 to illustrate the different responses people have to the word of God. He warns against presuming on the goodness of God and allowing our old selves to take precedence over Christ.

Transcript

...message on the real nature of Christian hope. We have devoted two of these morning broadcasts to a discussion of the fact that the Bible is set to kill our fleshly carnal assurance and set us to lay hold upon the hope which is based on Christ, which is set before us. And we have come now in the discussion of God's word to the 8th chapter of the gospel according to Luke.

If you'll remember last Lord's Day, we got a little mixed up in our time, the minutes tick away so fast, and we just were able to conclude the broadcast with reading the account of the parable of the sower as recorded in the 8th chapter of the gospel of Luke. And we're read down through verse 9, and we're talking these days about some solemn warnings from the Lord Jesus Christ and from his apostles addressed to God's people, lest thinking they stand, they fall, lest they presume on the goodness of God, and unless the old self gets too much in the forefront and Christ is dethroned. We made a detailed study last Lord's Day of the 6th chapter of the gospel of Luke, and we found out that according to the Lord that a tree is known only by its fruit, and that you can't tell whether a tree is a good or a bad tree until harvest time comes.

And the Lord Jesus, using that truth, cries out to the disciples, Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say unto you? And now this morning with the parable of the sower before us in chapter 8 of the gospel of Luke, I'm not going to take the time to read that parable again. I read it to you last Lord's Day, but I hope many of you right now have your open Bibles there, and we're going to begin reading at verse 9 of this 8th chapter of Luke. And his disciples, the word of God says, ask him, saying, What might

this parable be? He's told them the parable now, and he says in verse 10, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

Now the parable is this, and the Lord Jesus proceeds to explain what he meant by the parable of the sower and the seed. Verse 11 says, Now the parable is this, the seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are they that hear.

Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and deceive. They on the rock, verse 13 says, are they which when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. Aren't these strange words? For a while they believe, and yet in time of temptation they fall away.

Then verse 14, And that which fell among thorns are they, which when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But, did you get that? They hear, and then they're choked with the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and thus they bring no fruit. They bring some fruit, but they don't bring any fruit to perfection.

But that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. We've been saying that our standing before God is determined by our being justified by God. But that to profess that one has been justified is no guarantee of perseverance, and that the fruit of justification is perseverance in grace.

Here we are told that the sower goes forth to sow, and he sows the good seed, and the seed is the word of God, and falls on four different kinds of ground. And only the last ground brings forth fruit with patience. Some other people brought forth fruit for a little while.

Some others, they brought some fruit, but not to perfection. But the seed that was sowed on good ground, there they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. The only fruit of your justification, of your standing before God, of your salvation, is bringing forth good fruit.

My friends, this generation needs to pay attention to what our Lord says. I tell you, men are taking the grace of God and using it as a license for ungodly living. Now I want to turn back to the 6th chapter of Hebrews.

If you have your Bible, please turn with me, and I want us to consider again this tremendous warning. In the 6th chapter of the book of Hebrews, verse 4 down through verse 8, we have this most solemn warning, and this warning is addressed to God's people. These people in this passage of scripture, there are only two possible interpretations that we can have it.

They are either people who were saved and then they got lost, or they are people who had some tremendous experiences, experiences that transcend the experiences of most Church people to date, and yet their final end was to be burned. They were never what we call saved to start with. Now you may take your choice as to which one of these interpretations you believe to be true.

One or the other is bound to be so. But apart from that, we need to get fixed in our minds that this is the Holy Spirit's warning to God's people. God's people need to be warned.

God's people need to be warned. Whether they need to be warned or not, God thinks to do, and he warns us throughout the entire word of God. The Lord warned people, he said, it won't do you a bit of good on earth to call me Lord, Lord.

If you do not do the things which I say unto you, he warns that a good tree does not bring forth bad fruit, and a bad tree does not bring forth good fruit, and he warns that only that heart that brings forth fruit with patience gives evidence and proof that that person is what we call saved or justified in the sight of God. And I want to read again this tremendous warning, and it just makes my hair stand up on my head as I see this cocky generation of Church members plunging on their way to hell, taking the grace of God's excuse to live like the devil. And I want you to listen to me and examine your own heart.

Look at the tremendous experiences these people have had, and yet they fall away and crucify Jesus Christ to themselves afresh, and put him to an open chain, and they are rejected and the final end of them is to be burned. Verse 4 says, For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, that would be a tremendous experience, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, that would be a tremendous experience, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, how wonderful that would be, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. My soul, my soul, those experiences transcend the experiences of most of us as Church people today.

And yet it says here that people who have been once enlightened, and people who have tasted of the heavenly gift, and people who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and people who have tasted the good word of God, and people who have experienced the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, you can't renew them under a penitent in falling away from those wonderful experiences, they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open chain. And then it says, The earth which drinketh in the rain, that cometh auster upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and bars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.

My soul, I'm telling you that you better throw away your little cocky assurance that's not based on Christ, and flee from the wrath to come. For here are people who've experienced more than many who listen to me now have, and yet their final end is to be burned. Will you turn to the book of 1 Corinthians at chapter 10, and let's read another of the tremendous warnings of the word of God addressed to God's people.

You say, well, Brother Barnes, I don't need to be warned. Well, God seems to differ. God warns his people over and over again.

And I want you to hear me now, and I hope you can turn in the Bible and follow me as I begin reading. Well, the first verse of the 10th chapter of the book of 1 Corinthians, and my scriptures as this just literally make my spiritual hair turn upside down. Know this carefully, what the Holy Ghost has to say.

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that A-double-L-all our fathers were under the cloud, and how A-double-L-all passed through the sea, and were A-double-L-all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did A-double-L-all eat the same spiritual meat, and did A-double-L-all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. Well, surely they are all right. My, just look what experiences they had.

Every one of them were under the cloud, every one of them passed through the Red Sea, every one of them were baptized under the leadership of Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and every one of them did

eat the same spiritual meat, and every one of them did drink the same spiritual drink, and that drink is said to be the rock that followed them, and that rock that followed them, the Holy Ghost here says, was Christ. Let's see what happened to these people. But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness, what a terrible catastrophe.

Now it says, These things were our examples to the intent, We should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day, three and twenty thousand of them.

Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall. I tell you this is solemn scripture, isn't it? Have you already taken out on me? I'm telling you, you'd better not hide behind some profession, or some decision, or some relationship, or some church membership. You'd better get a little of that which our fathers knew about.

They strove, they hungered, they thirsted, they examined themselves to see whether or not they had a saving interest in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you get the significance of this warning? And remember, it's made to God's people. It's made to God's people, and says about all of them.

Look at these tremendous experiences. I say again, as I did about the experiences of those people described in Hebrews chapter 6. They transcend the experiences of most church members today, and yet the people who had those great experiences, their end is to be burned. And these people who went through the waters of the Red Sea, who were baptized unto Moses, who followed the tabernacle under the cloud, and who did eat the same spirit to me, and they drank the same spirit to drink, and that rock was Christ.

But God was not pleased with them, and he overthrew them in the wilderness. And these experiences happened, and they were recorded and written down for the purpose of warning God's people today not to do some things, and to warn every last one of us in these words. Wherefore, let him that thinketh, he standeth, take heed, lest he fall.

I tell you, these scriptures sure do knock into a cocked hat those men and women who are always prating about their secure, but they have no concern for Christ. These scriptures, if we have any sense, will knock the self-complacency and the self-satisfaction that we have of ourselves. We pray very little, we know nothing about holiness, we do not search to pant after God, and yet we say we are Christians.

I tell you, if you face these tremendous scriptures in 1 Corinthians 10, and these experiences these people had, and then what happened to them, I tell you, you'll sit up when the Spirit of God says, look out, let him that thinketh, he standeth, take heed, lest he fall. And now I wish, if you will, in the closing moment of this broadcast, and I think next Lord's Day, we'll have to take it to bring you the positive side of what we've been talking about for these three Lord's Days. We've been telling you about false assurance and carnal assurance and God's warning against it.

And next Lord's Day, God willing, we're going to close this line of thinking with the real nature of Christian hope, the real nature of Christian hope. Now listen carefully as I read from the 18th chapter of the book of Luke. Here is the account in this chapter of the Lord's dealings with a man we call the rich young ruler.

He comes to the Lord Jesus and said to the good master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And the Lord Jesus said unto him, why you call you me good? There is none good save one that is God. He's not denying that he's good, he's trying to make the rich young ruler admit that he's God. And then he tells him about the commandments, and in verse 21, the rich young ruler said, I've kept them.

And then the Lord said, well, I know, but there's one thing you lack. He said, you go sell everything you've got and give it to the poor, and then you shall have treasure in heaven, and then you come and follow me. And the young man heard this, he is very sorrowful, for he had a will of a lot of money.

And when Jesus saw that the young man was sorrowful, he said, how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And now verse 26, and they that heard it said, who then can be saved? Now the people who heard the Lord speak this way weren't rich people, and they could have found a nice little way out of this.

They could have said, well, we're not rich, that won't bother us, we're poor. But this thing went too deep for that, and they didn't pay any attention to the money question, when the Lord said, it's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. They that heard it said, who then can be saved? It said that Mr. Spurgeon recounts that he never was able to get anywhere trying to study the death of the Lord Jesus, until he came to face this question, not how can God save him, but how can God save me and still be just.

Who then can be saved? And the Lord said, these things which are impossible with men are possible with God. Who then can be saved? Isn't that some question? And I leave you with that question this morning, because I ask you to wait from one Lord's day to another to follow in the thought, and I've been burdened because we've been digging pretty hard, we've been digging pretty hard against the fleshly assurance and fleshly confidence and fleshly complacency of maybe ourselves and the people all about us. The word of God is full of warnings to God's people, lest they think and they stand tall.

And God's people would do well to listen when God warns us. He doesn't warn us unless there's danger. And we've been trying just to read to you and comment on some of these warnings from the word of God.

We close last Lord's Day's broadcast with that account of the coming of the rich young rulers of the Lord Jesus Christ and the ensuing conversation and how the Lord told him to sell all he had and go and give it to the poor and come and follow him. And thus he'd have treasure in heaven. And he went away sorrowful because he was rich, and the Lord watched him go with sorrow, but he let him go.

And the disciples came after the Lord, Jesus had done that, and they were nonplussed. And he said, it's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a wretched man to enter the kingdom of God. And then that tremendous soul questioned the disciples when they'd heard that.

They said, who then can be saved? My, I'd love to see come over Winston-Salem and the world this solemnity. My, how we just treat the Lord most in a way we want to, and he's sort of a good doormat, and we've lost the sense of his majesty. I wish under God that they'd come over us a sense of the

tremendousness of what I'm talking about.

Who can be saved? And the Lord said, well, that which is impossible with man is possible with God. And now, my friends, in this last of these broadcasts on this subject, having made three broadcasts bringing the warnings of God's word with reference to our complacency, having over and over again tried to say that the scriptures seek to kill what we call our assurance, that they may drive us to lay hold upon the H-O-P-E hope that was set before us. I want to come in this last broadcast to talk briefly about this question, where a true and abiding hope resides.

We found out it doesn't reside in our feeling or our profession. Where does it abide, or our complacency, or our so-called assurance? Where can one find a true hope? Where can one find an abiding hope, one that'll do to ride the river with, brother, one that'll stand us in good stead in good times and in bad when the winds blow and when the storms come? Where is a true and abiding hope to be found? And I want to make four statements, and I want you to hear me with all your heart now. And the first statement I make before we begin reading in the 6th chapter of Hebrews, chapter 9, I want to make four statements, three statements I believe, four statements before we read that blessed passage of scripture.

I'm talking about where shall I run to find the true and an abiding hope? And the first statement I make with reference to that question is this. There is no way to Christ, there is no way to Christ that lies within human power. I want to repeat that.

There is no way to Christ that lies within human power. The way to Christ is the way of faith. But the way of faith is excluded the human power.

And faith has to be given. And God gives faith by men hearing and hearing the word of God. God works a miracle of taking the wax out of men's ears as they hear his word.

God works a miracle of saving faith. It's not in you to get to Christ apart from the way of faith. And you do not have saving faith.

And God must give it to you. And yet it's your act. And I shut you up afresh this morning if you want to come to a true hope.

If you want to come to an abiding hope, bless God, that hope is in Christ. It's based on him and what he's done. And you can't have it, and you can't lay hold of it, in your own human strength.

There must be a gift from God. Seek it. The second thing I wish to say is that man's basic sin, the root sin of all sins, the one big sin, out of it comes every other sin, man's basic sin is his blindness to the beauty and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Men are blind to the beauty of the divine nature of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. But I say to you sometime with a heart that bleeds that the glory of God in the hands of Christ is secure for all the purposes of God. Oh, if I just get to Christ.

If I can sing, my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I tell you the eternal purposes of God are secure in the hands of Christ. I tell you the display of the glory of God is secure in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I beg any who hear me now that are blinded by the God of this earth, so that you see no beauty in Christ, and you do not see the glory of God in Christ, I beg you to become a seeker at the saving grace, and that God may stop, unstop your ears, and take the scales off your eyes, and bend that old crooked perverted will, and melt that old hard heart, and bring you to become a seeker of, and then one day a partaker of him into whose hands almighty God has turned over his glory, and all of his eternal purposes whirl without end. In answering the question, where is a true and abiding hope to be found, I say in the third place that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the incarnation of that glory. In other words, God has come down here incarnate in the flesh of the man Christ Jesus, and the glory of God has been contained and encompassed in the body and the spirit of the man Christ Jesus.

Christ is the incarnation of that glory, and none can be saved apart from a revelation of the glory of God in Christ. I hasten to say again and again over this radio station that the difference between a saved man and a lost man, the saved man has beheld the glory of God in Christ, and the lost man hasn't. We are told here of the tragedies that occurred in the days of our Lord's flesh.

We are told in the first chapter of the gospel of John that he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Now here, and the word, that's the Lord Jesus Christ, was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Do you see the compassion? Here the Lord came, and lots of people turned them down. They never did see his glory, but some people received him.

The word was made flesh. I said Christ is the incarnation of the glory of God. You want to see the glory of God, you'll have to see it in this man, Christ Jesus, hanging on a glory cross.

Have you ever beheld his glory? His shekinah, wonderful glory, the glory of God, contained in the man Christ Jesus. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us multitudes, didn't see anything except just the man. But some of us, John said, beheld his glory, and it was the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

You see, you can't be saved apart from the revelation from Almighty God of his glory in Jesus Christ. Ah, but when you see God's glory in Jesus Christ, what we see there, bless God, cannot be shaken, all hell can't shake that. That man who with eyes of faith has seen the glory of God in Jesus Christ, he can't be shaken.

I don't mean he's not still imperfect. I don't mean that he's sprouting angels' wings, but I mean that he sees the sea and the invisible. He's seen God.

He'll never be the same, and there's no other sight to compare with it. He can join John and the disciples, he is in the world, and the world turned him down, but bless God we saw him, and we beheld the glory of God in Christ. It was the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, and that view, that sight cannot be shaken.

And I come in the last place to say that only a man's willingness to forsake any claim he thinks he has on God, only our willingness to forsake all or any of our claims on God, is evidence of having seen that glory.

We preach not ourselves, says Paul, because God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Therefore we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

And now as I close this message, I've got about five minutes, I think, and I want you to read with me one more time this blessed, blessed passage, beginning with the ninth verse of the sixth chapter of the book of Hebrews. After we spent these days trying the best we could to be used of the Holy Ghost to knock the prop out of any complacent so-called church member who hadn't fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that set before us, I want to tell you here is where the true and abiding hope is. It's in him who went within the veil.

It's in the work that Christ performed within the veil. Verse 9 of Hebrews 6 says, after that terrible warning, But beloved, we have persuaded better things of you, and not people who will be burned and crucified, the Son of God, afresh and put into an open chain. We have persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though with us speak.

For God's not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself.

Here is what he swore, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to men an end of all strife.

Wherein God willed more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation. Who might have a strong consolation? One that can't be shaken, bless God. Not this little fleshly confidence and so-called assurance.

But a strong consolation. Well, who's going to have that strong consolation? Well, verse 18 finishes by answering, These are the people who are going to have a strong consolation. God swore on himself, and added his oath to his promise, that by two things in which he couldn't lie, his oath and his promise, that some people might have a strong consolation.

What kind of people? The people who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us. That is, Where is that hope, and what is it? Which hope we have, do we? As an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. And where is it? Well, I'll tell you.

It's that which enters within to that within the veil. Who took it in there? The forerunner is R-U-S-S, entered. Boy, I want to be one of those us's.

People, one of those us's to whom God made an oath and a promise. One of those us's. God fixed it so he couldn't lie, that we might have a strong consolation.

People who fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope, here it is, set before us. This hope we have, as an anchor, my, when the old storm blowin', we have this hope as an anchor of the soul. It's sure, bless God,

it's steadfast.

Where is it? I'll tell you one thing, brother, it's where the devil can't touch it. It's in the veil. That which enters into that within the veil is the holy of holies.

In the presence of God. Who took it there? The forerunner. One who went on ahead.

And he went on ahead in our behalf. He's for us entered. Who is it? It's Jesus.

Who's he? He's been made an high priest. He's up there now as our high priest. How long he lasts? Forever.

And he's above high priests taken from among men. He's been made a high priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. I'll tell you, the scriptures say, lay aside your assurance and lay hold on a hope.

A hope that's based on the work that Jesus Christ performed within the veil. And I bid you flee for refuge, to lay hold of that hope that is set before us. May God help us.

And now in a moment, Brother Brown will tell you how you may help us, pray for us, advertise this broadcast, and help us pay the bills. And I'd like to hear from you about these messages, if they've helped you. God bless you, everyone.

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