

Hebrews 6: 9-20

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[0 : 00] found in Hebrews chapter 6 starting in verse 9 and reading to the end of the chapter which gets us down to verse 20. The author here says, But beloved, but beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

For God is not unjust, so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward his name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

For when God made the promise to Abraham, since he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, saying, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you. And so having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.

For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as a confirmation is an end of every dispute. In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise, the unchangeableness of his purpose interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

This hope we have is an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast, and one which enters within the veil where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.

[1 : 37] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day, and God, we are so thankful to have the opportunity to gather together to publicly read your word. And Lord, as we have read it and heard it, we pray now we would be given minds and hearts to understand it.

Lord, may we have eyes to see and ears to hear. Lord, may our hearts be opened and laid bare before you, and may you speak to each one of us, and may you draw us closer to you, and we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. You may be seated. Amen. The author of the book of Hebrews shows us in Hebrews 5.11 through 6.8 what we can expect, or what is the end outcome.

Now, I am a literal thinker. I like to take things to their fullest measure. I like to think things out. I like to see them. Maybe we're all not that way, but I like to see things as they will end, or what the end result will be.

And what the author does in the book of Hebrews, starting in 5.11, is he begins to speak to those who like to be near the things of Jesus, but don't want to go all the way. They like the blessings of Christ.

[2 : 43] They like the blessings of being in the fellowship with other believers. They like the blessing of being near the working of God, because let's be honest. As we understand this, even in the earliest days of the gathering of the church, God was doing some supernatural, miraculous thing among his people.

People were being healed. People were being redeemed. People were being forgiven. God was working in a magnificent way, and we see that throughout the book of Acts. And these people loved to be near that, but they didn't necessarily want to fully commit to him.

They wanted to be around his blessings, but they still wanted to hold on to what they were holding on to the past. Now, for these individuals, it was, well, we're okay to accept Jesus, but we're not going to forsake our Jewish or Judaistic practice.

We're going to still maintain the festivals. We're going to still be given our sacrifices. We're still going to obey the law or keep the law, and we're going to depend on the law, but if the law fails us, maybe Jesus will pick us up where we fall short.

Now, if we want to bring that to our practice today, we can say, I'm going to be the best person I can be, and I'm going to do the best I can do, and then I'll let Jesus take it from there. Now, let me go ahead and say, right here, you can be the best person you can be, and you still need Jesus to take you all the way.

[3 : 57] Because the best person you can be will never get you closer to heaven than when you can be in the worst person you can be. Because Paul says that no man is righteous, no, not one.

And Paul said also that all of our righteousness is like filthy rags in the sight of a holy God. So we don't need to do our best and trust Jesus for the rest. That's not the call of Christianity.

That's not the call of the gospel. The call of the gospel is this. Die to yourself and trust Jesus for everything. That's the call of the gospel, right? And I hate to put it so bluntly, but Scripture puts it that way.

We are really not that good of people. We are sinners in need of judgment. We have done desperately wrong in the sight of a holy God, and we need a Savior who is completely perfect. We don't need to be better people. We need to be new people. And the only way we can be new people is to trust in Jesus Christ with all of our heart. He is our hope, our anticipation, our promise, our security, all of those things.

[4 : 56] So what the author does in 5, 11 through 6, 8, is he shows those people who want to add Jesus to their life what the end outcome is. And the end outcome is this.

He says these people have crucified again Jesus Christ to themselves, and they become apostates. Because let's just go ahead and say it before we get to the good news of today's passage.

Those who play around with Jesus eventually end up leaving him. And that's the reality. Those who want Jesus plus their works or their efforts or their life, and those who want Jesus plus themselves will eventually end up walking away from him.

And they will end up forsaking him. And as the author says, they will move beyond the point of salvation. Now that's a scary place, right?

That's the expectation of those who don't want to go all the way. Now that shouldn't surprise us because Jesus himself said, I wish that you were either hot or cold.

[6 : 00] Remember that in the book of Revelation? He says, but because you are lukewarm, I will spew you out of my mouth. I don't want you to play around with me. Jesus says, I would rather you be all the way for me or all the way against me.

And that's exactly what the author of Hebrews is pointing to. Now, let's transition into the good news because the book of Hebrews is about better things, right? It is about better things.

And what we see transitioning in verse 9 of the 6th chapter, if we had a tablet this morning, it would be a better expectation of the redeemed. So what the author shows us leading up to verse 8 is the expectation we can have from the lost who want to play around with Jesus.

And now he is going to show us the expectation we have of the redeemed, those who are completely surrendered to the person and work of Jesus Christ. Those who are no longer trusting in their own labors are no longer trusting in their own works.

Those who are no longer trusting in their own efforts, but they are putting all of their eggs, so to say, in one basket. They are completely committed to Jesus Christ and him alone. And we see the expectation we can have from their life.

[7 : 09] And by the way, my friend, these are the expectations we should have from our own lives. So this is not given to us so that we may judge those around us. As a matter of fact, I think we find the difficult passages in Scripture.

And I am thankful, by the way, that God puts hard passages in the Bible. I'm thankful that he puts passages that make us slow down, pump the brakes, and stop and think a little bit. And the reason I'm thankful he does that is not so that I have ammunition to judge others, but rather so I have reason to pause and discern my own life.

I am thankful that he puts passages which I have to slow down and look at so that I can look at myself and see where I stand. And if this is what the author of Hebrews says we can expect from the redeemed, then these are the expectations I should see.

These are the things I should expect to see in my own life. And I should see them being exhibited on my own life. Because if this is what we expect to see from the redeemed, and I say I am redeemed, then these are the things I should see in my life beyond a shadow of a doubt.

Number one, we see the expectation of their labor of love. The redeemed live with what Paul refers to as a labor of love.

[8 : 25] He says, we have taken notice of your labor of love among us. We see this here as an expectation starting in verse 9. He says, but beloved. And I'll just stop right there.

Here's how we know the author is transitioning. The word beloved is only used a number of times in the New Testament. I think six references to the word beloved are references in which God calls Jesus his beloved son.

Okay, so it is the Holy Father referring to his son. It is God the Father speaking of Jesus the Son as the beloved. Every other reference in the New Testament of the word beloved speaks directly to believers.

Okay, this is not brethren. This is beloved. Those who are beloved of the Father. Just so we understand the author is writing to believers. This is not fellow countrymen.

This is not loving my neighbor. This is not individuals around me because we should love our neighbors as ourselves. And anyone who is near us is our neighbor. Not necessarily those who are believers. Even unbelievers who are near us we should love as ourselves.

[9 : 23] But here he is directly referring to believers. Those place their trust and hope in Jesus Christ. And we know that because of the word beloved. He says, but beloved we are convinced of better things concerning you.

So here he begins to think and to speak of the things he's convinced will be exhibited in the life of the believer. Now pay attention. Okay, this isn't so we can say, well I don't see these in so and so's life so they must not be a believer.

These are things given so that we can say, are they evident in my life? He says we are convinced of these things. And he calls them things that accompany salvation.

In other words, accompany means belong to. These are things which belong to salvation. They go hand in hand with it. Things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way.

And then in verse 10 he says, For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown towards his name. Isn't it amazing? Isn't it amazing that more times than not, when the Bible starts to speak of salvation, it immediately starts speaking of work.

[10 : 28] Now we are not saved by works. But works are always an expected outcome of salvation. Always. Every time we speak of those who are redeemed and beloved, the Bible begins to transition immediately to what they are doing.

How they are exhibiting this in their life. James says that you cannot show me your faith without works because faith without works is dead. He says you can show me your faith by your works. He does not say your faith is a result of your works. He says your works are a result of your faith. And here we see the author says, God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown towards his name.

And he directly references this work. He says in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. So the work which they are doing is ministering in the past and still ministering presently to the saints.

Again, another reference to the church. They are ministering to one another. In the New Testament, we see this being repeated over and over again. All these one another passages.

[11 : 33] Now stay with me. I know I'm getting a little technical, a little difficult here, but stay with me. What we see are that those who are genuinely saved are ministering to other believers.

They are serving and they are laboring among and laboring for and they are caring for the saints. They are meeting their physical needs. They're meeting their spiritual needs.

They're encouraging. They are helping bear their load. They're carrying one another's burdens. They're there. It is really a family that God has put together and they are ministering in an exponential way to one another.

See, they are working. They are laboring in love and they are laboring among one another for one another. Well, here's the question. Okay, because the thing is, I might not always like other believers.

Can I just go ahead and give you permission not to always like everybody else that loves Jesus Christ? I mean, because we have let's just be honest and let's just pump the brakes and slow down right here. Some of us have personalities that clash with others.

[12 : 35] Okay, God has uniquely formed and fashioned each one of us in our mother's womb. We all have different personalities. We all have differing types. And there are times when personalities clash.

And there are most definitely going to be times where we don't like one another. Okay, you can amen that, Brother Johnny. It's okay. There are going to be times where we may hurt one another's feelings and we may even unintentionally offend one another.

And you say, well, I'm not ministering to the saints because of so and so. Well, let's just back up and see where this labor of love finds its motivating force. Look at what the scripture says.

He says, God will not forget. So let's forget your work and the love which you have shown toward his name.

Here it is. The redeemed don't labor among one another because they love each other so much. Because the love we have for one another is never an agape love.

[13 : 40] It is a phileo love, a brotherly love, or a euros love, a feeling love. And sometimes we might not feel like loving one another. The reason we see this labor of love is because you know, as a believer, and I know, as a believer, I'm not laboring for you, I'm laboring towards him.

It is for his name. Has nothing to do with the people around me. They are the beneficiaries of my labor. They are those who may benefit because of our work.

They are those who are benefited because of our effort. But the labor that the believer exhibits is a labor that is directed and geared towards their Savior.

It is a labor that is geared towards the name and the greatness of God. Because they know where they were. They know who he is. And they say, if he loves me so much and has redeemed me in so much and so great and so sufficient of a way, if he has done so much for me, then I will serve him. But the reality is, is as we serve him, other people are benefited. And it is a labor towards his name. It is not just about other people.

[14 : 58] Because here's the reality. Other people will upset us. Other people will make us mad. Other people will offend us. And they'll cause us just to stop. And if our motivating factor in serving one another is one another and only one another, then we will fall desperately and woefully short.

But if we understand that the service which we are rendering towards others is really not rooted ultimately in one another, but it is rooted in our love for our Savior and the love for the God who has paid such an ultimate price for us, then really it doesn't matter what anybody does to us.

Because we're serving his name, not those people. See the big difference? See the believer, those who are redeemed, labor so much because they love so much.

And that love is shown towards people, but it is really a result of love towards God. It's a love towards their Savior. If we know how great a love he has for us, and we love him with a supreme love, then that love will trickle down and affect others.

And it is a labor of love that is shown. And he says God will not forget that. Because remember what Jesus said? Put the text together. When you have fed the hungry and clothed the naked, visited the prisoners in prison, when you have given a drink of water, you have done it unto me.

[16 : 32] Or for me. He didn't just do it for them. He did it for me. It is the labor of love that is geared towards the name of the one who has paid so great a price for us.

So here's the reality. When we stop and we pump brakes and we say, well man, we're tired. And I'll just be honest, we can all get tired, right? There's this fatigue that comes from laboring.

There's this fatigue that comes from serving. But this is where we need to stop and back up. We say, I am tired of serving people. The ultimate response to that is, but I will never serve him enough.

Because as long as people are a motivating factor, we will wear out. But when we keep our eyes and our focus on what he has done for us, and we understand our service is for him, there cannot be an end to that because he has done so much.

So it is the labor of love that they possess. The second thing we see that is an expectation from the redeemed is not only their labor of love, it is their looking ahead. It is their looking ahead.

[17 : 40] They are looking forward. Verse 11 says, And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence. We're going to come to that in just a moment. That each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish.

So here's the reality. He's speaking to the believers. He says, believers, don't be sluggish. Don't slow down. Don't be overwhelmed. Keep pressing forward. He says, but imitators, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

The author of the book of Hebrews finds this so important. He's going to dedicate a whole chapter to this later on. Hebrews chapter 11 is given to those that we should imitate, right?

And it surprises me. I'll just be honest with you as a pastor. It surprises me some of the people we find in Hebrews chapter 11. I mean, there are some people in Hebrews 11 that if we read the Old Testament, we would discount them.

But then we come to Hebrews 11 and we find out that, hey, wait a minute. They're held up as people. We should imitate their faith. We shouldn't imitate all their practices, right? That's not what he's saying. Because, you know, in that list, you find Samson.

[18:42] Samson wasn't really a man of, you know, upstanding character all the times. But by faith, he pressed against those pillars, right? So we understand that we see these people who are there.

But he's going to dedicate a whole chapter to that later on. But right now, he's going to point to one individual. And what he is saying is that we ought to be imitators to those who through, and there's this word in here that we don't like. There's this word in here that kind of causes us to stumble.

Who through faith, and here it is, patience. Patience. Inherit the promises. For when God made the promise to Abraham.

So he's lifting up Abraham here. Again, Abraham, a man, you know, he had character flaws. There were some problems in Abraham. As a matter of fact, twice he lied about his wife, Sarah. He called her his sister because he was afraid, right?

But here's the thing we want to hold up as Abraham. Abraham was a man of faith. He's actually considered one of the fathers of faith. And I love how among the Jewish people, they could always point back to Abraham who was further than Moses.

[19:41] They point to Moses as the origination of the law, right? They were given the law through Moses. But if you go all the way back to the forming of the nation of Israel, they were not people of the law.

They were people of faith. And they find that in their father, Abraham. And here we see that faith precedes law. So that faith is where we ought to push back to. The law was a tutor until Christ came.

And it ought to be held up as people of faith. And he holds Abraham up. He says, since he could swear. Verse 13 says, for when God made the promise to Abraham. Since he could swear by no one greater, he swore by himself, saying, I will bless you, or I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you.

And verse 15 says, and so having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. Here it is. The redeemed are people who are constantly looking ahead and pushing forward in faith, longing and expecting what God has promised.

They are basing their life upon the very promise of God. Abraham is exhibited as a man of faith because Abraham lived his life fully committed to and dependent upon the very promise of God.

[20:59] Not only did God promise to multiply him and to cause his seed to abound, God promised him a land which he never owns. God promised him over and over again that his descendants would come through a son, which he offered up as a sacrifice, right?

He had that knife in his hand. He laid him on the altar. He says in the book of Hebrews in chapter 11 that he would expect God to raise the dead. He knew that though I slay him, God will raise him because the very promise of God comes through this individual.

Now God interceded there and God provided a ram. We see this. What Abraham was doing was living his life completely dependent upon those things looking ahead to what God had promised.

I'm going to live today as if what he has promised me tomorrow is already in existence today. I'm going to live as if what God has already promised is a present reality, though it is a future expectation.

And this is what Abraham did. He walked around that land like he owned it. Why? Because God told him he owned it. He built altars all over that place and he called upon the name of the Lord. That is, he proclaimed the Lord God's name and he began to proclaim the greatness of God.

[22:09] And he started doing this in a land that was rampant with foreign idolatry and rampant with worship of other gods. And he did it because he said, this is what God has promised me. This is his. This is mine.

This is going to be mine. He moved forward step after step after step after step looking to what God had promised, though he has not experienced it in present reality. Here's what the believer does. Guys, the believer lives his life looking forward to what God has promised as if it is already a reality. When God promises you that if you surrender your life to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, he will redeem you and forgive you and sustain you.

Listen, I do not care. And I don't say that. My wife will get on to me. She's not in here right now. She always gets on to me when I say I do not care because she says it sounds a little harsh and it sounds a little offensive and I don't want to offend.

So let's back it up and say it does not matter. It really does not matter what we feel like in the present. If God has promised us something according to his word.

[23 : 19] He said, well, I don't feel redeemed and I don't feel forgiven and I don't feel I don't feel like I'm going to. If according to his word, he has promised us. Then his promises always overrule our feelings.

And when we begin to live life according to his promises rather than according to our feelings. We begin to live life looking ahead.

Because if we believe beyond a shadow of a doubt, we will be in his presence for all of eternity. I promise it will cause us to live differently in the present.

If we believe that we will stand one day. Eye to eye, face to face with Jesus Christ and every deed we have ever done will be taken into account.

Then I promise if that promise is true, it will affect how we live today. If we are looking forward to being in the presence of the one who shed his blood and paid my price on the cross of Calvary.

[24 : 31] It will affect how I live today. If I look forward to, I will live with him forever. In that place of perfection and sinlessness. In that place of utter free of all pain.

It will affect how I live presently. See, the believer is always living with a perspective which looks ahead. He's always looking to what God has promised as if it is a certainty that will greatly, greatly change how we live in a present reality.

It is one that is looking ahead. Third and finally, we see the expectation we have of the redeemed. It is not only do they have a labor of love, not only are they constantly looking ahead, we see that they have a lasting endurance.

They have a lasting endurance. Abraham pushed forward because God promised him something. Now God wanted to reaffirm this promise, so he also entered into a covenant with Abraham.

Now he entered into that covenant and that covenant was kind of a one-sided covenant. And that God was not only the originator, but also the sustainer of that covenant. The Abrahamic covenant is totally dependent upon God.

[25 : 45] And so the author tells us that by two unchangeable things. That a covenant cannot be broken, that's the first one. And the second one is, it is impossible for God to lie. Now I hope we understand that.

It is impossible for God to lie. So when you open up your Bible and you say, I just cannot believe this is true. Just go to this passage and read where it says, it is impossible for God to lie.

So no matter what we believe, if God has said it, it is a true reality, right? It is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, Abraham's life looked different.

And his life moved forward with a lasting endurance. His faith sustained him until his last breath. And this is what the author is wanting the redeemed to do here.

He says in verse 11, that we desire that each one of you show the same diligence. Let's just be upfront. This takes effort. It is a diligent effort. It is something that is consistently built in.

[26 : 48] So as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end. So as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end. This shows me in this verse that those who are diligent to practice their labor of love will have an increasing expectation of hope.

You know what I found in my own life and in life of others? Those who tend to doubt salvation are normally those who are doing the least in response to their salvation.

Those who are saved and redeemed and take the love that the father has shown upon them and begin to act upon it.

And they begin to see and understand how much God loves them. And they are diligent to serve and they are diligent to labor and they are diligent not to others, but to him. And they are diligent to give their lives to him.

There normally is this growing hope that endures. There is this lasting hope. Because they are putting forward, they are beginning to practice what they believe.

[27 : 57] Now he moves down here in verse 19. This hope, because this is what the world longs for is hope. This is what the world expects is hope. And this is what we can expect from the redeemed.

And the word in a nutshell is hope. They are people of hope. And how do they have that hope? He says in verse 18, So to buy two unchangeable things and it is impossible for God to lie.

We who have taken refuge. Now where we take refuge? In Jesus Christ. We have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

Okay, that means there will be some effort on our part. To take hold of the hope set before us. So many believers fail to have hope because they fail to grasp that hope by understanding everything that God has promised them.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul. A hope both sure and steadfast. And one which enters within the veil. It is the anchor that has been cast not downward into the bottom of the sea.

[28 : 58] It is the anchor that has been cast upward into the courtroom of heaven. It is the anchor that ascends into the throne room of heaven. And it says it has gone into the veil. That is the holy presence of God. It is a hope that is an anchor not of the body.

But a hope that is an anchor of the soul. It is a hope that really holds us sure and steadfast. It is one that endures to the end. It is steadfast, unchangeable, and unmovable. It is one that is there and it rests.

And it is solidified where Jesus is. And the Bible tells us. Here's a promise by the way. Where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for those having become a high priest.

Jesus went as a forerunner. You know the word forerunner. There's a promise there. Jesus went on the other side of the veil as a forerunner. Forerunner implies other people are coming.

Other people are following. And the implication here is for those who are trusting in Jesus Christ. We will be where he is at. And where he is at is in the very presence of God.

[29 : 59] Having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Here's the reality. Those who have completely given their lives to Jesus Christ are trusting in him as their anchor.

They're trusting in him as their hope. And it is a lasting hope which endures no matter how strong the storm. It is a lasting hope which cannot be swayed. Because that anchor does not rest on anything in this world.

Rather that anchor rests in Jesus Christ. And he is in the very presence of God. And God cannot lie. And it is a hope that can be grasped by those who long for it.

It is a hope that rests completely in his character. Not in our worthiness. Let's pray. Lord I thank you so much for this day. And God I thank you for allowing us to be here together.

I thank you for giving us this word. And Lord we pray that these things would be exhibited in our life. We pray that we would see this passage as it is. One that would cause us to pause.

[31 : 03] To look at our lives and see where it is that we stand with you. Lord may these things be exhibited in our life for your glory and yours alone. We ask it all in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[33 : 46] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.