

“Enduring Hope” Hebrews 6:11-20

Context: The author is persuaded that he is speaking to those who are not so dull as to be deaf to his warning to avoid apostasy. They don't crucify Christ again. They are not wooed to return to the pomp and circumstance of their former Jewish lifestyle. Further, they have served and still serve with the fruit of the Spirit. The author's current discussion sets the stage for a deeper discussion that encompasses Jesus' priesthood in the order of Melchizedek, His propitiation, and our access to God's throne of Grace. The author's encouraging words point to the basic purpose of the book, 'to cast off any weight or entangling sin by fixing our eyes upon Jesus, the initiator and perfecter of our faith' (cf. Heb. 12:1-3).

Life Principle: Laying hold of God's eternal hope precludes grasping at the latest in straw (cf. Hebrews 6:18).

1. Faith of the diligent – Hebrews 6:11-12

The writer expresses a pastoral passion for each reader to the end that they may continue to live out his exhortation until the end of life. Certitude in their salvific hope issues from diligent service. Diligence displaces spiritual dullness that comes from escapism or disillusionment. An attentive spiritual life is reflected in the imitation of Christ, endures in faith, and is the only life that is assured God's eternal promise.

2. Faith of the father – Hebrews 6:13-18

Abraham is used as an example to imitate in faith and endurance that result in God's promise of eternal blessing. God called him to leave Haran, promising to bless humanity through his descendants. Abraham endured almost 25 years before he saw evidence of God's promise through the improbable birth of Isaac. Readers who take refuge in their high priest Jesus Christ are called to hold on to hope with endurance, even as Abraham did.

3. Faith of the refugee – Hebrews 6:19-20

Our hope can be counted upon to lead us to the mercy seat at God's Throne of Grace. It is a state of assurance based upon Jesus who secured a place on behalf of everyone for whom He serves as an atoning sacrifice.

For Further Study:

- The author greatly desires that his readers experience peace and certitude in their hope of salvation promised by God. He states that such assurance can only be experienced in diligent service to God. How does a believer live a life of diligent service without giving in to the faulty thinking of a works-merit based salvation (cf. Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 2:8-10)? What is the place of the illumination of the Holy Spirit in diligent service (cf. Hebrews 4:12-13; John 14:26; Ephesians 3:16-20)?
- Abraham is cleverly chosen as one to imitate in faith and endurance while awaiting God's eternal blessing. As a **Bible study method**, follow the author's Old Testament references in which he makes his case (see: Genesis 12:1-7; 17:1-8; 22:17). What promise was realized by Abraham and what promises were left unseen (cf. John 8:56; Hebrews 11:11-13)? What comes to mind to a Jewish reader when the author alludes to “refuge” and “laying hold” (cf. Numbers 35:12, 25; 1 Kings 1:50-51)? What high priest died so we might go free? What throne are we to abdicate? What hope do the answers to these questions bring to you? How is that answer based upon hoping in God (cp. Hebrews 6:17-18)?
- The believers of Hebrews 6:19-20 lie in stark contrast to the apostates of Hebrews 6:4-12. What is the difference in Jesus' treatment by the apostates and by the heirs to God's blessing (see our **doctrinal statement 'On Salvation** under **what we believe**, footnote 9 - <http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/DocStmnt.pdf>)? Does Jesus' atoning sacrifice made for you inside the Holy of Holies make any difference in how your eternal hope affects the planning your summer activities?

Transformation exercise:

Study Hebrews 6:16-18. Write down three eternal promises with their attendant Scriptures to which you would cling tightly should catastrophe hit. Meditate upon them as you fall asleep each night and share one with someone that God brings across your path this week.