

Hebrews 6:13-20
“An Anchor for the Soul”
July 24th 2011

Introduction

- Ø Chapter six begins with some hard words
 - But then praise the Lord verse 9, the author tells us, but I am confident of better things for you guys
- Ø I had to warn you, I had to warn you, I had to tell you the truth
 - But you guys are not going to fall away
 - You guys are not to fall into apostasy
- Ø And the reason He gave, we looked at last week
 - Because you love one another
 - You love the Lord by loving one another
 - By bearing one another's burdens

And the author went on to say, I am confident you will keep doing this as you avoid laziness and imitate the patience and faith of those who have gone before you

- Ø we need to have an injection of will – spiritual laziness will creep in if we are not careful
 - and we need to learn from those who have gone before us

And as we now get to verse 13, the author of Hebrews is going to bring up one of the greatest examples that we can follow of one who through patience and hope, inherited the promises

- Ø And of course this example is of Abraham
 - Abraham is one of the great heroes of not only our faith, but those of the Hebrew faith as well
- Ø Why is he such a great example of faith?

Well if you remember the story - When Abraham left Ur of the Chaldeans - God made him a promise

Ø that promise is that he would be the Father of many nations

- but remember that promise was made to a childless, 75 year old man named Abram

“Abram” means exalted father

Ø but there is a problem for good old Abram, good old exalted Father - he had no kids

- and it was not just because wanted to kick back serve, play golf – no responsibilities

Ø No – it was because they were barren

And you can imagine the ridicule

Ø hey there “exalted father” – where are your kids?

- Oh man – I don’t have any
- Bummer name
- Oh but God has promised

Ø Dude you are seventy five – not a time to start a family even in Abraham’s day

And if that wasn’t bad enough, God’s promise to make him the father of many nations would be reiterated to him for years

Ø for years without Abraham seeing any evidence that God was going to keep His Word

- in fact in Genesis 17 – God tells Abraham “I am going to change your name”

Ø and if I was Abraham I would say, its about time Lord, I don’t know what the Hebrew name for “no kids yet, but I’m trusting...” – Mehaulrelhabalck or something – but lets go with that name

Ø No – God says – No, how about Abraham

Abraham means – “father of many nations”

Ø so he goes from Abram – exalted father (with no kids) to Abraham, father of many nation – still no kids!!!!

But God had made this Abraham a promise

Ø a super unlikely promise

- a promise that was reiterated for years without any evidence it was going to come true
- Ø And yet Abraham is an example because he believed the Lord
 - In fact one of the most important verses in all of the Bible because it introduces the idea of salvation through faith, is found in Genesis chapter 15 – when God once again promises Abram at this time – I am going to make you the father of many nations
 - Speaking of Abraham, Genesis 15:6 says...

“And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” – Genesis 15:6

- Ø Abraham believed when there was no visible reason to believe
 - And the author to Hebrews brings this up because the Hebrew church had been given a promise
- Ø They were told that life was found in Jesus and if they would cling to him, He was their Messiah, and He was going to be with them
 - But as they watched their world fall apart due to intense persecution, as Pastor Rob has been teaching us, many started to doubt and wonder
 - Many wanted to go back into Judaism
- Ø But the author of Hebrews says, we need to remember Abraham who...

“after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.” – Hebrews 6:15

- Ø these verses were supposed to be an anchor for the soul for that first century church
 - and they can be for us as well as we go through times where we wonder – where are you Lord?
- This can encourage our hearts as we go through the storms and seasons of doubting in our lives – these**

verses can be an anchor to our soul when we see two main things in our text today

Hebrews 6:13-20

#1 – The Grace of God

#2 – The Greatness of God

Ø what do I mean by the grace of God?

- well again consider verse 15...

“after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.” – Hebrews 6:15

Ø man that Abraham, he just patiently endured

- He just trusted the Lord with unwavering faith for years and years and years, until God came through
- Oh that Abraham, Mr. Faith, Mr. Endurance, Mr. Trust in the Lord
- Oh wait – is that how the story really went?

Well I don't know this for sure but I imagine, that Abraham as he sits now in heaven, really wishes there were no chapters 16-20 of Genesis

Ø In chapter 15 Abraham makes this great declaration of faith, he becomes the model for all of who are saved by faith

- And in chapter 21 Isaac, the promised son is born
- Glory!!!

Ø And I know that I know that Abraham would love to get out a magic marker and erase, erase chapters 16 – 20

- Because in chapter 16 Abraham, the man the author to the Hebrews just told us “patiently endured”
- He decides, well it was Sarah's idea at first, but they decide, lets help God out with His promise

And on the surface, our human nature can understand

- Ø God promised me something 20 years ago
 - He hasn't come through
 - All these names must be embarrassing for him
 - It is time to help God out – He must want me to
- Ø Because every body knows The Bible says “God helps those who help themselves”
 - Wait, the Bible doesn't say that???
 - NO – it doesn't - Your Grandma says that

(Picture of some smiling old lady would be awesome here)

- Ø Your Grandma said that and I know your Grandma's awesome, but she is wrong, that is not what the Bible says
 - “God helps those who help themselves” – II Grandma 23:10

Well Abraham “helps” God out and what Abraham gets is Ishmael

- Ø and God loves Ishmael, but Ishmael wasn't the plan, it was the flesh
 - and in chapter 17, Abraham just says, God how about you just let Ishmael, how about if we just do it my way
- Ø And God says, in no uncertain terms - “NO!”
 - No – Abraham, that is not my plan for you
 - I have made you a promise, and I will keep my Word!

But I run through that part of the story because the writer to Hebrews says, “after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.” – Hebrews 6:15

- Ø And with this I see the grace of God, oh boy, grace
 - That is not what really happened, but precious ones, that is what Grace decides to see

Abraham, yes even the great Abraham, faltered in his faith

Ø He did at times waver at the promise

- But God brought him through
- God taught him deep things
- And God records for all of eternity,

“after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.” – Hebrews 6:15

- Ø You sick of that verse yet, I’m
- Because God has made me promises
 - And thought I believe Him, I do
- Ø I waver, I buckle - I try my own plan for a while
- And though it always results in the flesh, sometimes I try again
- Ø And I don’t about you, but I would be ready for God to use somebody else, except for the grace of God
- Who chooses to see me with eyes colored with the sacrifice of His son
- Ø And may that encourage your soul today
- Have you been wavering
 - Have you been doubting
 - Take courage

God is gracious, He chooses to focus on what you have done right, not beat you up for the mistakes we so often make

- Ø but that said precious ones - what are you going to do now???
- Abraham did faulted, but He also learned to trust!!!
 - God is gracious, He forgives our weak faith
 - But what are you going to do now????
- Ø Are you going to believe the promises of God in your life?
- I know if you are like me the answer to that is “yes, Yes” – I want to believe but how???

Hebrews 6:13-20
#1 – The Grace of God

#2 – The Greatness of God

- Ø Now only do we see in this passage the grace of God
 - I know you have failed, but what are you going to do now is the question
 - And in order to be and believe all that God desires, I need to lean on not just the grace of God, but the Greatness of God

What do I mean by the greatness of God???

- Ø well I believe we see in our text four “P’s” that speak to the Greatness of God and why we can trust Him
 - we, like Abraham even though it seems like there is zero evidence what He has promised is going to come to pass
 - We can know that we know that we know that it will – well 4 P’s note takers....

The 4 “P’s” of God’s Promises

#1 - His Person – Hebrews 6:13-14

Ø God is truth – and His Word is truth

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” – John 17:17

- Ø And when we say, His Word is truth, its not just the 66, but everything He says is Truth
 - Therefore when God makes a promise, He won’t just keep it
 - He has to keep it, because He is Truth, you see He is the one...

“with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

- Ø He is the same one you are trusting in
 - We live in a world where young men and women unfortunately learn they can trust virtually no one

The nightly news is filled with men and women we should be able to trust

- Ø At one time in our culture we knew we could trust

- But evil and dishonesty no know party lines, no job description
- But then there is God

And friends, no matter how much the world doesn't make sense, God's Word makes sense

Ø so get out of the world, and get into the Word

- He is Truth, and if He said it, it will come to pass
- Whether it is simple as I will provide, I will be with you, or the fact that He is coming again
- His Word is truth!
- Absolute, finished – because He said it!

The 4 "P's" of God's Promises

#1 - His Person – Hebrews 6:13-14

#2 - His Purpose – Hebrews 6:15

Ø Think through Abraham's story again carefully

- It was God who has called Abraham out of UR
- He didn't get up one day and think – I need a change of scenery, let's move babe!
- No, it was God

Ø It was God who had seen him safely to the promise land

- This was not a whim

It was because God had a purpose

Ø And I want you to see this because it is more evidence that you and I can trust the Lord

- God has done the same for you
- He has called you out of the world
- He led you this far

Again, its not a whim

Ø you are His masterpiece

- I know you feel like a present only a mother could love, but you are His masterpiece
- He has a purpose for you
- And it is evidence you can trust His promise

The 4 “P’s” of God’s Promises

#1 - His Person – Hebrews 6:13-14

#2 - His Purpose – Hebrews 6:15

#3 - His Pledge – Hebrews 6:16-18

- Ø it was common for a person in NT times to make an oath and to serve on something greater than himself
 - and when an oath was made, the argument was over, because no one would swear an oath on something so serious, like God or the temple, unless they meant to keep it
 - of course the Pharisees had an elaborate system to get out of oaths, but normal people, hey once they promised on the temple, to God – no one messed with that

Now God did not need to make an oath, because as we have already stated, His Word is truth

- Ø But to accommodate the weak faith on men, God goes ahead and does make a pledge
 - To Abraham He swore by Himself – because God has nothing to swear on above Himself
 - It does God no good to swear on the temple, He is greater than the temple
 - But He swears on Himself

And again for you and me He has done the same

- Ø He has given us a pledge of Himself
 - What do I mean?
 - I mean - The Holy Spirit

Paul taught us in Ephesians chapter 1...

“In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” – Ephesians 1:13-14

Paul tells us God has given us Himself, His Spirit, as a what?

- Ø a guarantee or in other words as He did with Abraham – a pledge of the promise
 - the word guarantee is an interesting one
 - It speaks of an Engagement ring
 - And you think about what an engagement ring is
- Ø Something invented no doubt by ladies
 - And I don't blame you gals
 - You pour a lot into that wedding day – a dress that costs sometimes as much as a car
 - You have every dear friend you have had since Kindergarten in the wedding
 - And your husband to be – well, he rents some cheap tux and invites whatever 5 friends happens to be in his contact list at the moment
- Ø You ladies want a guarantee with so little invested, he is going to show up, this is for real
 - So let me see the diamond
 - Give me that engagement ring, that pledge that you mean business

Paul brings this up as it relates to God

- Ø He has made us some promises
 - That He will be with us, that He will never forsake us, that He is coming again
 - For many of us He has made specific promises

And how do we know God is going to keep His Word

- Ø His person – He said, He is truth, He can not deny His name or nature – He can't lie
- Ø His purpose – He has been working in your life, you can't deny it
 - That isn't a whim or a mistake
 - He is taking you somewhere
- Ø His pledge – He has given you His Spirit
 - Every time you sense that conviction
 - Every time God cleans up that little area of your life
 - It is evidence – God is real, His promises are true and as a pledge..
- Ø God has given us Himself, His Spirit, there is nothing greater to encourage us, His Word is enough, but He has given us His Spirit that we would know, we can take what He has said to us, to the bank
 - Now one more....

The 4 “P’s” of God’s Promises

#1 - His Person – Hebrews 6:13-14

#2 - His Purpose – Hebrews 6:15

#3 - His Pledge – Hebrews 6:16-18

#4 - His Priest – Hebrews 6:19-20

- Ø God gave Abraham His person, His purpose and His pledge
 - But God goes even further with you and me
 - He gives to us His priest

Ø Our High Priest Jesus Christ, serves as Hebrews 6:19-20 says as an anchor inside the veil

Remember in Old Testament times behind the veil was the presence of God

- Ø The 18 inch veil separated man from God, but one man, the high priest, one day a year could enter behind the veil and be in the presence of God

But the picture here is so awesome

- Ø you see that high priest in the Old Testament, he went behind the veil as a representative
 - that high priest was representing you to God if you lived in that time

But the author to the Hebrews says our high priest is different, he is not just representing us, he is forerunner for us

- Ø and the picture, well Ancient Mediterranean ports had a huge bedrock that served as anchors in the harbor
 - you would come in with your giant ship and you would tie up to the bedrock anchor and your ship was going no where
- Ø but sometimes because of contrary winds the ships couldn't get close to the rock, to the anchor
 - So these boats would send out a little boat, they called that little boat the forerunner, and that forerunner boat would row against the waves, and it would fasten a line to the rock, and then it would bring out a line to the people on the boat
 - And they could pull themselves in as long as they held the line,
 - No matter the waves and the wind - they would eventually be where the forerunner had gone as long as they held the line he had provided

Ah, you see it – the presence of God – that is the anchor for our soul

- Ø but how do we get attached
 - say 500 prayers
 - lead 1000 people to Jesus and maybe you can do it
- Ø NO, no, no – God has given you and me forerunner
 - Who braved the storms and the waves of this world

He has fasten a line to the rock that is higher than all of us

Ø And as we cling to Jesus

- **As we hold that line that He has provided for us**
- **We will be anchored behind the veil as He is**
- **Anchored in the presence of God**

Ø Not because we have deserved it or earned it, but because of Jesus our forerunner, our high priest

- **amen!!!**
- **are you okay today, are we awake, don't make me come down there – amen**

Before we go our way though, one last thing to consider and that is Why does God do this?

Ø why would God make a promise to a 75 year old man and then make him wait 25 years before that promise was fulfilled

- **why He tells you and me that He will never leave us and then there seems to be such distance**
- **why would He tell us that He will provide, but every moment it seems like it is all crashing in**
- **why would He tell us He is coming again soon, and yet the world seems to be winning**
- **why????**

Well, for Abraham's sake, waiting upon the Lord built something into Abraham, because, well I already said, I imagine Abraham would like to erase chapters 16-20, but after the storm of waiting and failing to wait, in Genesis 21 Isaac is born and in Genesis 22, God asks for Isaac back

Ø and Abraham in Genesis 22 doesn't vacillate or waver, he doesn't make plans in the flesh or figure out a way to help God –

- **but he gets up early and honors the Lord**

- He has grown, precious church, He has matured, He is speaking the language of eternity - faith

And God knows, we need to learn to walk by faith

∅ and so God makes promises, way before it seems practical to us to do so

- He allows you to walk through things you don't understand
- And allows you to make mistakes, and gracefully forgives

∅ And all the while He is teaching you to walk by faith

And precious ones you might be in the midst of the battle this morning

∅ but you have an anchor behind the veil

- and Jesus has gone before you, and tied a line to that rock
- And you don't have to worry about how you are going to get there, how God is going to keep His Word, how it is going to come to pass

∅ You just need to hold on to Jesus

- You just need to...

“Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass.” – Psalm 37:3-5

Next week we will learn more about our high priest, who is of the order of Melchizedek – and I am so glad, it's Pastor Rob who will cover those verses cause I have no idea who Melchizedek is (Just kidding, sort of) – lets stand