

Hebrews 6:9-12
“Confident of Better Things”
July 17th 2011

Introduction

OH – I am so glad I am teaching this week...

Ø that is not a statement of me needing something more to do

- that is not me saying that I take some personal worth by how many Sundays Pastor Rob lets me do**
- Or that is not me saying – you are going to be blessed because I am here**
- That is not what I am saying at all**

Ø I am just saying I am so glad I am teaching this week and not last week

- Those verses in the first part of chapter six scare me oh boy**

Well – its not really the verses that scare me, I know what I believe, its you'all that scare me, its those people who email in all their thoughts on every study that scare me

Ø Because there is no safe way to teach those verses except...

- Well except to.. to teach them and immediately leave on vacation for two weeks... and I quote from an email from Pastor Rob – Dear Staff, I am turning off my phone and won't be checking my email for the next two weeks”**
- That man is wise!!!!**

Ø You see if you teach the first few verses and say – hey these aren't really believers the author is talking to, which all of us wish were the case – don't worry there is nothing you can do to ever walk away from God

Well then those of you who take the Bible at face value or as Pastor Rob said last week, those of you

who let the Bible shape your theology, not letting your theology shape the Bible

Ø You folks would say – wait a second, that is not right, email in, good for nothing pastor... on and on...

- And then of course if you go the other way and say – hey chapter six is talking to believers, and we need to be on guard and continue in the faith
- Well then the “once saved always saved” folks in our midst and can I say from experience pastoring in Texas, those of you who hold that view, hold that view, I mean you hold that view

Ø And so then if you teach the passage that way, then those of you start emailing, good for nothing pastor, read your Bible pastor

- And don't think Pastor Rob and I and all pastor on the planet don't get emails just like that
- So no matter how you teach the first few verse of chapter six, you are going to get it
- Unless you leave for vacation for two weeks – I love that man!!!

So all that to say – I am so glad to be teaching this week and not last week, where the writer to the Hebrews says...

“But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you,” – Hebrews 6:9

Ø yes, glory, Halleluiah

- we are confident of better things concerning you
- The author is saying, I had to give the warning, I had to teach the truth, because I wouldn't be a good pastor if I didn't warn and share with you

Ø But I am confident you guys are going to heed my warning and do the right thing

The New Living Translation makes verse 9 of Hebrews chapter 6 really easy to understand

“Dear friends, even though we are talking this way, we really don’t believe it applies to you. We are confident that you are meant for better things, things that come with salvation.” – Hebrews 6:9 – New Living Translation

Ø And what the author is going to do in the verse I have been assigned to teach, praise God not the verses pastor Rob had to teach

- But the author in the verses I have been assigned to teach is going to show this precious congregation why he is confident they are not going to fall away
- Why he is confident they are meant for better things than apostasy

Ø And if you are taking notes this morning, there are two things I want us to see in the text

- In order to show this congregation of Hebrew believers why he is confident of better things for them, the author is going to first give them...

Hebrews 6:9-12

#1 – Evidence from the Past – Hebrews 6:9-10

#2 – Encouragement for the Future–Hebrews 6:11-12

Ø lets look at these one at a time

Hebrews 6:9-12

#1 - Evidence from the Past – Hebrews 6:9-10

The author of the book of Hebrews is confident of better things for this congregation than the warning He had to give them

Ø and the reason he shares that he is so confident in verse 10 is the love they have shown to one another in the past, and current in the present

- again the New Living Translation I believe is helpful

“For God is not unjust. He will not forget how hard you have worked for him and how you have shown

your love to him by caring for other believers, as you still do” – Hebrews 6:10 – New Living Translation

- Ø the author is confident of better things for them because of their love they have for God as seen in their love for one another
 - this was a church that truly loved one another
 - this was a church that truly bore one another’s burdens

- Ø We get an indication of this if we look forward to chapter 10 of this book, the verse will be up on the screen or you can turn to chapter 10, verse 32...

“Think back on those early days when you first learned about Christ. Remember how you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering. Sometimes you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten, and sometimes you helped others who were suffering the same things. You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy.” – Hebrews 10:32-34 NLT

- Ø Hebrews 10:32-34 shows how this congregation endured affliction and more than that joined in the affliction of others bearing one another’s burdens
 - This care for the body of Christ was not just a thing of the past, but it was something they were presently involved in

Ø And honestly it is something we are all to be involved in, connected to one another, bearing one another
In Acts chapter 2, verse 42 we are given the basics of the early church, what they did and believed in as vital in their services and meetings

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” – Acts 2:42

Ø and you guys are very familiar with this verse and what it teaches

- the early church saw as vital and basic, going through the Word, breaking bread or taking communion, praying together
- and fellowship

Ø Now we are Calvary Chapelites

- We are big on the Word
- We know the importance of prayer and communion
- But if there is an area we could grow in, especially compared to the early church or even the early days of Calvary Chapel, it is this idea of fellowship

Ø Why is fellowship important? – eating burritos?

The English Word “Fellowship” comes from the Greek Word “Koinonia”

Ø And it is deep word, with rich meaning

- And we need to see it, because it can be so lacking in our church lives today

Ø Note with me three basic definitions of Koinonia

Three Basic Definitions of “Koinonia”

#1 - Connection

We have a need to feel connected

Ø we are connected through sports

- San Diego Charges Fans /Dallas Cowboy Fans
- But maybe you grew up in other places and so many you are a green bay fan (good summer for you) – I grew up in Los Angeles in the 80 – so that’s right, it makes me a raiders fan – typical raiders fan, the white pastor – only memories of my Dad who is in prison – don’t you feel bad?

Some are connected through cars

Ø I drive a Toyota – I love my truck

- Now right now you Ford fans, chevy fans are saying – what about us?????

- Your connected with cars –

Maybe you feel connected with married people

Ø Maybe it is single people

- Maybe it is divorced people who now are single – and you feel a connection

Ø Maybe its music

We need a connection, we need the identity, that is my group – we know it – we feel it

Ø But so often we can't in a church because of walls and barriers

The church divides over so many things

Ø And what we realize as we make that connection that Koinonia with one another, is there are just more important things to connect over than sports or cars or marital status

- There is Jesus, His shed Blood and His atoning work

There are things that are more important

Ø we as humans have the tendency to major on the minors

- and spend endless time arguing about how someone got saved and who acted first and what order and then it gets contentious

- I feel Jesus looks down and says – how sad

We need to get it in church – and we need to get it personally

Ø I appreciate some of you went to school a little longer and you're a doctor

- But when we come in here you're my brother

Ø I appreciate that some of you love the land, to farm it, to cultivate it, to live off it

And although I don't know the difference between a plow and a plant

Ø In Christ – you're my brother

- I am pretty young – Darwin Anderson is a bit older – in the world we don't hang out – we're from two different generations
- I am excited college football is starting
- He is excited about Love Song
- I play golf for fun- He has no fun

Ø We are different – But He is my brother - in Christ there is a connection

And this is a basic need in the spiritual life of our church

Ø to have fellowship, Koinonia, that we would connect

- that we would realize there are things more important than outward difference – we need **this**
- There is Jesus, who saved us, and who is our bride, and for whom we gather here this morning to honor
- Stop dividing over silly things
- The Hebrew church had this connection

Three Basic Definitions of “Koinonia”

#1 - Connection

#2 - Sharing

Ø Not only does Koinonia mean to connect with, to have a kinship with which is key to everyone of our lives as believers, but Koinonia also means to share with one another

- Listen to this description in Acts chapter 4

“Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked;” – Acts 4:32-34

Again it wasn't that these people didn't own anything, it was that they didn't see what they had as their own

- Ø And the result was there was no needy people among them
 - that is an amazing statement
- Ø And one that I think is not descriptive – oh selling all you have and lets live a commune, that is descriptive of what they did and does not need to happen in our day and age
 - But seeing the stuff we have as not our own, but to be used however God wants
 - That is absolutely prescriptive – and needs to be part of the church today as we fellowship, as we share with one another

Before our summer camp, I was talking to a young lady in our fellowship whose family is going through some real hard time and her and her cousin wanted so bad to go to camp, and we talked about it, and prayed about it

- Ø and as I was leaving, a senior saint in our church, pulled me aside, had no idea about the conversation I had just had, but said to me
- Ø I don't have any young kids, but I have money, and just really feel like God wants me to pay for a few kids to go to camp, do you know anyone – and got to relate to her the story – and then I got to go to the those two young girls and tell them – your camp is totally free

And do you see what happened in lives

- Ø One senior saint – praying God would use her and He did
 - And two young saints – praying God would provide and He did
- Ø And by that one act of fellowship or sharing, faith in the true and living God as not just being a force in space, but a living and powerful God became real to those men and women – isn't that cool??

And you are saying, yes, absolutely

- Ø Because you know that is how a church is to operate – there is to be sharing
 - But before we move on, praise God that senior saint was obedient, what about you and me – have we been?
- Ø God is not calling us to sell everything and live communally – but we better be willing, we better be willing to see our stuff as not our own, but a tool for God to use to bless
 - Because that is how a church should operate
 - That’s fellowship, that’s sharing

Three Basic Definitions of “Koinonia”

#1 - Connection

#2 - Sharing

#3 - Partnership

- Ø to have Koinonia, to have fellowship means to make a connection
 - it means to share with one another
 - but finally it means to have a partnership

Again you and I were not made to survive as Christians on our own

- Ø there is no such thing as a lone ranger Christian
 - we are a body, and parts of the body will not survive on their own
 - **my hand can not say – man – I don’t really like Jason’s body – He is getting bald, I don’t want any part of that, I am still doing well –**
- Ø I am going to detach myself from Jason and go for it on my own
 - the body can survive without the hand – are there limitations, absolutely
 - the body can survive without the hand, but the hand can not survive without the body

And so too Christian, listen to me

- Ø The church will survive without you
 - Will it be the same – no way – there will be limitations because you have a part to play
 - But the body can survive without you, but you can not survive without the body

You show me a Christian who says – I don't need church, I don't need other Christians, and I will show you a Christian who doesn't make it very far

- Ø Because the enemy is waiting like a wolf, for the sheep that wants to separate from the group – and when he finds one, he will pick them off

The writer to the Hebrews says in Hebrews 10:24, “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

- Ø We can not forsake fellowship because there is a partnership that is developed
 - I need to be sharing with men and having them knowing what I'm facing

And that is so hard in our culture today - it is so the normal to get in, get out, get in our cars, open the garage door, pull in, shut the garage door behind you and not come out again

- Ø And again for some of you, you might be fine with that
 - but we are missing a critical element of what it is to be a church, to fellowship, that there might be connection, a sharing, a partnership
- Ø to love and connect with one another, to bear one another's burdens – how are you doing – can I be part of the solution – Jesus smiles on that stuff!

Now again its hard in our culture, we don't trust one another - I need to tell you, 99 percent of the people who go here are good people – there may be a bad apple or two, there is in every group – but most are just fine.

Ø join with me in a little experiment – now you got to do this

- I want you to turn to the people around you and say – Hi brother, Hi sister and even shake their hands – right now, do it
- Alright – now come back to me

Ø That was a little stretching – but check your wallet, is it still there

- Anybody missing a hand bag, some jewelry – no, you're not
- Do we sin, do we have faults – absolutely – but most of the people I have met here, love Jesus

Ø And they are like you

- They have struggles and troubles
- You are not unique in that way

And we need people who are like minded to share with, people to hold us accountable

Ø but again for that to happen, there has to be fellowship

- there has to be a willingness, to break down some personal walls, and connect
- the early church saw the need, we need to see it too

This is so important because remember again, the writer to Hebrews is saying the proof of the legitimacy of your relation with God was their love, connection, with one another, bearing one another's burdens

Ø and that is the unchanging message of the Bible

“And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.” – I John 4:21”

Hebrews 6:9-12

#1 – Evidence from the Past – Hebrews 6:9-10

#2 – Encouragement for the Future–Hebrews 6:11-12

- Ø now that the author has instilled confidence, now he wants to ensure confidence by encouraging them to keep doing what they are doing
 - to keep loving people and ministering to one another
 - but again this great teacher that wrote this book for us, doesn't just exhort us to truth, but also tells us how can do it, how can we keep going?

How can we keep going?

#1 – Avoid Sloth

- Ø Sloth is the great enemy of perseverance
 - We can start well, but we need to finish well, and that takes avoiding sloth, sluggishness as it says in our text
- Ø Just assuredly as a car will roll to a stop without gas propelling the energies and wheels, just assuredly as a swing will hang still without someone pushing the child there on
 - So too each of us will wind down spiritually without an assertion of the will
- Ø Laziness can be really bad by itself – I just spent the last three days with Gail Erwin, he and I were going to do a retreat together and he said to me, right before I went on stage – “hey did you hear about the lazy man that won \$50 dollars – he asked the people if they could turn him over and put the money in his back pocket – typical Gail – regular laziness is bad enough

Spiritual laziness can be one of the greatest enemies

- Ø because Satan knows, he is not going to get most of us to renounce our faith

- he is not going to get most of us to decide to forsake the Lord

But he knows if he can get us to take it easy, to stop being fervent, well then we are almost as good as an unbeliever

- Ø Because though our eternal destiny may be secure, our earthly effectiveness for the Kingdom of God will be none existent

Jesus warned what would happen to a lazy servant in Matthew 24 that doesn't see the need to stay fervent

“But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming, and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” – Matthew 24:48-51

- Ø notice he is a servant, he is part of the master's house
 - but he has become carnal and brutal because of laziness in the faith
 - and notice what is the cause of laziness setting in with this particular servant and is often the case with you and me as well
- Ø It happens when we stop thinking on the fact Jesus is coming again soon
 - Oh it effects so much – the way we view our sin, the way we view our trials...
 - The way we treat other people
- Ø When I realize I might see Jesus today – then I am not going to harbor that bitterness, I am going to see what I have as not just my own, but that to lock arms and bear one another's burdens
 - We must avoid laziness and...

How can we keep going?

#1 – Avoid Sloth

#2 – Imitate those who have gone before

Ø We are to avoid laziness and sloth spiritually and we are to put our energies on imitating the patience and faith of those who have gone before us

- it is one of the reasons it is so important to stay in this book**
- this book is full of stories of men and women who faced what you and I face and emerged victorious**

Ø One year Bible reading – David, not getting to do what he wanted to do – ever been there – man we can shake our fists at the heavens or we can imitate those who have gone before us!

- And this book is full of stories just like that – stories that encourage us**
- they encourage us that it can be done, as we do what they did, as we serve the God they served, as we turn from the things they turned from**
- God is the same yesterday, today and forever – the same God that worked in Abraham and Joseph and Joshua and Elijah and Daniel – is the same God that wants to work in you today**