

Hebrews 6:7-20 - July 25, 2021

Hope – The Anchor of the Soul

J.D. Farag

Good morning and welcome to our Second Service on Sunday mornings, we have two services, the first is our Bible Prophecy Update that we do weekly, and our Second Service is our verse-by-verse study through God's Word. And we're currently in this amazing Book of Hebrews, and today, Lord willing, we'll finish Chapter 6. We'll pick it up in verse 7 where we left off last week. I'll ask those of you that are here if you're able, you can stand and follow along as I read, beginning in verse 7, where the writer of Hebrews by the Holy Spirit writes, "Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end, it will be burned.

Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case- the things that have to do with salvation. God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them. [Verse 11] We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, 'I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.'

And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God, [verse 17] wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Let's pray, if you would join with me, we'll ask God's blessing on our understanding. Thank You Lord. Thank You Lord, for Your Word. Thank You for this portion that we have here before us today, in Your Word, Lord, we need at this time for You as only You can, by the Holy Spirit to get our attention and hold our attention. Keep it so we're not distracted or our minds don't wander, because certainly the enemy does not want us to hear what You have to speak into our lives today. So, Lord, we approach Your throne of grace with ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to receive. Lord, will you speak, please? Your servants are listening. Thank you. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen. Amen. You can be seated. Thank you.

Today's teaching is a message of hope and how it is that hope is that which can greatly encourage us as an anchor for our soul. Been really looking forward to today's teaching. Very excited about what God has for us today. For those who are really hurting right now and seemingly losing hope with each passing day, this passage here in Hebrews is for you. And my prayer and my hope is that you will be encouraged today. Like with the Hebrew Christians then, so too are we as Christians now prone to fall prey to the devil strategies. What do you mean? Oh, as the Apostle Paul would write to the Corinthians, don't be ignorant of Satan's devices, his strategies; he strategizes, you know. He studies the map of your life like a military strategist waiting for the optimum time to attack, as the enemy of your soul. He doesn't want you to have this hope as an anchor for your soul.

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In John's gospel, the 10th chapter and 10th verse, easy to remember, Jesus is speaking, listen to what he says. "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." You know what He's saying here? He's saying that the enemy of our soul is hell bent, quite literally on stealing, killing and destroying. What does he want to steal? What does he want to kill? What does he want to destroy? Well, he seeks to steal, kill and destroy, in that he wants to steal our hope, kill our joy, and destroy our faith; riddling us with doubt and paralyzing us with a spirit of fear which does not come from the Lord.

I would suggest that this is exactly what he had succeeded in doing with some of the Hebrew Christians so as to get them to go back to Judaism, because his sole goal was to rob them of the blessings that were theirs, to steal from them the hope that was theirs. And once he steals a Christian's hope, he replaces it with doubt and fear. It's not long when he does, before the Christian then begins to question the love that God has for them. Nothing's changed since the garden. He planted that seed of doubt in Eve- "Hath God said?" And he twisted scripture and he pointed the finger of accusation and blame at God. God doesn't want you to eat from this tree because God is holding out on you.

And he stole from them and all of mankind throughout human history because of that. After all, he's the father of lies is he not? The accuser of the brethren, is he not? And the author of confusion. Enter the text before us today, where the writer of Hebrews, though interesting, he's been very harsh heretofore, very intense in his letter, he's now wanting to encourage them. Clearly, the strength of this letter serves as a much needed warning to them, but it also serves as a much needed encouragement for them, and that's what he wants to do. Certainly, they were discouraged, they were under tremendous persecution, pressure to go back to Judaism.

And so the writer of Hebrews by the Holy Spirit wants to encourage them, and so what follows are two such encouragements to any Christian who finds themselves in that place of discouragement and even despair. I want to preface before we jump in, this way, and hear my heart on this. You know, often times as Christians, we don't feel safe sharing with other Christians our struggles and discouragement. And sadly, it's due in large part to this notion that if you're discouraged, well, where's your faith? You're discouraged? Well, you must not be a very strong Christian.

And there's also that fear of sharing our struggles one with another that you're unsafe in that they will judge you, they will gossip about you. And I tell you, we talked about this in the Prophecy Update, this plays right into the hands of the enemy because what happens, and it always ensues, it's textbook; there's this biting and devouring and gossiping and it will destroy one another. And in the wake of this are the lives of many Christians who want nothing to do with the church, they want nothing to do with the things of God because of this. I preface it this way to say, God cares, God knows and if you're here today and you're discouraged, you're in very good company. I mean, even in despair.

Do you know the Apostle Paul, who we're going to talk about a little bit later, despaired even of life? And he was in very good company, too. Throughout the pages of scripture, we find men and women of God who were just given over to total and complete despair, had given up all hope and actually wanted to die. How's that one? I think of Job for those of you that were with us through our study, through the book of Job. Boy, how gnarly was that? That was a trial in and of itself, studying the book of Job. I mean, Job is like, you know, God is withholding from me the one thing that I desire the most, that He would take my life. Elijah, here's this man mightily used of God. I mean, on the

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heels of this miracle where he calls fire down from heaven and then he slays four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. And then he hears that Jezebel wants to kill him, and he starts running for his life, hides out in a cave. He wants to die. He wants God to kill him. Just end it right now, Lord. All throughout scripture you'll find it, and these were men and even women that were mightily used of God.

I think of Esther, just came to me, maybe this is the Holy Spirit for somebody here today. Here's a woman mightily used of God, and she is now faced with this life and death decision of whether or not to approach the king uninvited. Because you have to understand that if you do that and the king does not hold out his scepter, you're over, game over, it's off with your head. You're dead. And she knew that before going in. And so she makes this, this statement, and really it's a prayer because they're praying and fasting. And she famously says these words, "If I perish, I perish." Wow! That's intense.

Again, the preface is that that's where these Hebrew Christians were. And the writer of Hebrews wants to encourage them and give them hope to anchor their soul. And the first one is, you won't be forgotten by the Lord. This is in verses 7-12. The writer turns a corner of sorts and he acknowledges, and this is what's interesting, he acknowledges that he's had to speak in a very severe manner to them. I mean, it really is, if you look at it and as we've been studying, he's been pretty blunt with them. But it's not to be harsh with them, rather, it's to lovingly warn them and encourage them that the Lord is not unjust and He won't forget them. Again, sadly, this is one of the devil's most successful lies. He gets us to think that God's forgotten us, that God doesn't care. I mean, we're going through the trial of our lives we're hanging on for dear life, hanging on by a thread.

And isn't the enemy right there in your life? I know He's always there in my life. He's right there always on time, in fact sometimes He shows up early. Puts thoughts in my mind- I don't know, man, doesn't seem like God's hearing your prayers, He's certainly not answering them. It seems like your prayers are bouncing off the ceiling. Maybe the reason why He doesn't hear your prayer is because He doesn't care. And we believe that, we believe that. That's the devil trying to steal our hope, kill our joy and destroy our faith, And if he's successful, even in some measure, he's replacing all three of those, by the way. So instead of hope, it's hopelessness. Instead of faith, it's fear. And instead of joy, it's sorrow and anxiety. Nehemiah 8:11, "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

I know this might come as a surprise but it's true, Satan knows the scriptures better than you, better than me. He knows the joy of the Lord is your strength, so if he wants to render you powerless and weak, how is he going to do it? Oh, got to kill that joy, because that's the source, that's the fuel in the tank of their strength, and he knows it. What about when he starts planting those seeds of doubt and they begin to germinate and sprout? Isn't it true that we begin to question the Lord, His goodness, His love? That's a biggie, by the way.

We start to question the love that God has for us. Talk about that more in a moment. The second one that I want to spend the remainder of our time on today is in verses 13-20, and it's this encouragement that you are firm and secure in the Lord. You will never be forgotten by the Lord. You are firm and secure in the Lord. Here, the writer reassures them of the unchangeable promises of God that he swore on oath. I appreciate the Holy Spirit's inspiration, when the writer of Hebrews to articulate this and communicate this. See, God has a problem, not that God has problems, I'm just speaking in human terms, right. He has this dilemma, maybe better said. What's the dilemma?

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Well, you know, when we swear on oath, we swear to God. We we put our hand on the Bible and we swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God. Right? Do we still do that? I don't know, I haven't been in... Hopefully it's a Bible. Now, what's God going to do? I swear to Myself. That's basically what He's saying, you know, because you're swearing on oath and I'm the one that you're swearing on oath to. And so I want to swear to you, on oath to you, but I'm God so I'll just swear to myself. What are you swearing? I'm swearing, and by the way, maybe this is as good of a time as any to clear up a misnomer concerning Peter.

You know, when we're told that he swore the third time he denied Christ, that's not foul vulgarities that he swore that came out of his mouth. No, he swore that he never knew Jesus, he swore on oath that he never knew Jesus when he denied Him the third time. So what's God swearing on oath? God's swearing on oath that he cannot lie, it's impossible. See it like this, I hope this isn't making it even more complicated; I don't mean to do that if it is. But it's not that God won't lie, it's that God can't lie. Do you see the difference? That's a game changer, right? So He's swearing on oath, it is impossible for Him to lie, He absolutely cannot lie. OK, so what are You swearing on oath? Oh, I'm swearing on oath that I will never forget you and that you are firm and secure, anchored in hope because of Jesus. We're going to see this more in Chapters 6 and 7, this high priest Melchizedek.

For those of you that were with us in our study through the Old Testament, this was a type of Christ. By the way, prelaw, Melchizedek, the the high priest. And Jesus is likened to Melchizedek as the high priest who enters in as a forerunner to go in before us and for us. And that curtain is torn and he makes atonement. And that's it, that's our hope, our hope is Jesus. I love that song we just sang, actually all of them, but that last one. You know, it sometimes may be cliché when we say that Jesus is our only hope, but Jesus is our only hope.

It's been said that you'll never know that Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have. I look at the landscape in the world today and I got to tell you, and I know we talk about it every week in the updates, I don't know what I would do if I didn't have that hope, that blessed hope that at any time now that trump is going to sound and the dead and Christ are going to rise first, and we who are alive and remain will be caught up, raptured up to meet the Lord in the air. That's not like we talked about last week, this blessed hope like, I sure hope. I sure hope so. No. It is an anchored hope in the person of Jesus Christ who cannot lie. It's settled. It's the truth. It's the truth. And it's for this reason that we can take hold of the hope set before us and be greatly encouraged, having no doubt that we are secure. So much so that this hope is an anchor for our soul that stabilizes us and keeps us in the shipwrecks when the storms of life hit, and the storms of life hit, don't they?

If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the most encouraging examples of hope in the midst of life's storms, it would have to be the account in Acts 27; in the gospels too. How many times were the disciples caught in a storm in the middle of the Sea of Galilee? Actually, one of my favorite, well, they're all my favorite, was when Jesus sends them on ahead in the boat on the Sea of Galilee and says, I'll meet you on the other side. And there's an urgency on the part of the Lord. And there's an interesting detail in the gospel accounts, because we're told that Jesus immediately, with urgency, got him into the boat, into the lake, into the storm, knowingly. Here they are out smack in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, and they are in the storm of their life. This is a perilous storm and they think that's it, we're all going to die! And Jesus is watching everything. And that's when Jesus comes to them walking on water in the midst of the storm, He hasn't calmed to storm

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yet. And Peter, I love Peter. He's like, at first they think it's a ghost, full of fear, And then Peter goes, wait! It's the Lord! Lord, if that's you bid me come. And Jesus said, go ahead. Come. And what does he do? I mean, I know you've heard this taught maybe a hundred different ways. He steps out of that boat, the storm is still raging, and he walks on water. We're not told how long he was walking on water.

I like how one suggested humorously that it wasn't very long because he took his eyes, were told, off of the Lord and he was looking at the storm. One suggested that he was looking back at the disciples going, hey, look at me, I'm walking on water and boom, down he went. I mean, that'll preach, but that's not what happened, maybe. So he takes his eyes off the Lord and down he goes, and then Jesus saves him when he prays a three word prayer. He doesn't have time for, 'Our Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy...' He's done. It's a three word prayer, Lord save me. God answers three word prayers. Sometimes you're in the midst of a storm, that's about all you're going to get is three word prayers, and God hears those prayers and God answers those prayers. And God saved him, and then they get in the boat and then He calms the storm.

There's another account you're familiar with it, when He's actually in the boat when the storm hits and He's sleeping, and the disciples are like incensed. They're like, don't you care? We're going to die! And they wake Him up, He's like, man, I was really getting a good, you know, nap in and why did you wake me? And He calms the storm. I think He went back to sleep. And there's always a kind and gentle exhortation and encouragement when He asks them why? Why did you doubt? Why did you doubt? Why is your faith so little when your God is so big? He's the God of the storm. There's one other detail and then we'll get to Acts 27.

But it's very interesting because the very thing that they feared was the very thing that Jesus walked on top of and came to them and silenced and calmed with a word. With a word. Could you imagine the relief if I'm one of the disciples and that happened, I'm in that boat just- [breathing hard.] That was close! We almost died! Here's the thing, they were right smack in the middle of the storm of their life, yet they were right smack in the middle of God's will for their life. Jesus sent them into that storm. It was God's will that they be there.

You know, we do err greatly when we misinterpret the circumstances in our trials as: I must be out of God's will, I must be out of God's favor, I must be out of God's love, otherwise this wouldn't be happening. No. In fact, the opposite is true. You can be right smack in the middle of the storm of your life, and yet be right smack in the middle of God's will for your life. How does that work? Well, I like how one explained it. It really, just the light bulb went off for me, and the Lord just opened up my eyes to that account. You know that urgency that Jesus had to immediately get them into the boat and to the other side immediately?

Well, it just came on the heels of this miraculous feeding of the multitudes. And imagine you're one of the disciples, and this little boy brings you his lunch with some fish and some bread. And Jesus says bring it here, And He blesses it and breaks it and multiplies it miraculously, and they started distributing it. Now, we're told there were... But these are just the men, when you count the women and children, you could be well like 20,000 people. And the disciples are passing this out, and every time someone's hand went in there, there was more and more and more. In fact, there was so much they even had leftovers.

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Now, if I'm one of the disciples, and this is a healthy thing to do, by the way, put yourself there. What would you do? And stop with this shedding yourself in a favorable light. 'I would have never doubted the Lord.' Yes, you would have. Yes, you would have. You know, when we get into the Old Testament, the Israelites are murmuring and complaining. I'd never do that. You'd be right at the front. Were there not enough graves in Egypt, you brought us out here to kill us! So why pray tell, was Jesus wanting to immediately get them in the boat with such urgency? Because he was protecting them from a greater trial.

See, if I'm one of the disciples and I'm there and I'm doing this, I'm thinking Oh! And they're looking at me like, wow! You're like, yeah, I know, right? Pretty cool, Yeah? We've got an instant megachurch. Jesus, why do you want to get us to the other side? We could start a church right here. Calvary Chapel of the Multitude Feeding, first church, second church, whatever they call them. And that was the trial of pride that Jesus was wanting to protect them from. That was the greater trial. Sometimes God will send you into a trial to protect you from a greater trial. That's the urgency. Well, it certainly had a purpose with the Apostle Paul of all people.

The Apostle Paul had actually given up all hope of surviving yet another perilous storm and imminent shipwreck. This was not Paul's first rodeo, so to speak. Here he is again, let me set the stage. He's on this ship with other prisoners and they're on their way to Rome, where he is to stand trial before Caesar. And they, against Paul's advice, set sail and they're coming into the hurricane season. And sure enough, a nor'easter hits and they are throwing everything overboard. You'll forgive the graphic nature of it, but they're throwing up, they can't eat, that detail, not the throwing up part, but they're not being able to eat part is in there. I mean, this ship is being tossed like a toothpick to and fro and it's falling apart and they're throwing everything overboard and it's going on for days.

And we pick it up in verse 20, Acts 27, "when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, [We, Luke is writing, Luke is there] We finally gave up all hope of being saved." Interesting. We, all, finally. In other words, they had held on to hope but then it just kept going, and the storm continued raging. And they finally said, this is it, this is how it ends, we have no hope of surviving this. And even the Apostle Paul gave up hope. We, means we, all of us. Everyone on board had given up hope.

Now, it's important to understand that Paul had already been shipwrecked three times before this storm on route to stand trial before Caesar. And I point that out because in this storm, Paul had resigned himself to the reality that he's not going to make it. You ever felt like that? I'm not going to make it out of this one. This one's really bad. I don't know, this is this is how it ends. I mean, God has pulled me through before, but this storm, there's no hope. But God. But God, as only he can, sends a reminder to Paul and it comes at night, and isn't it interesting that it's usually in those dark passages, those seasons in our lives, the night seasons in our lives?

I'm convinced in my own life that the reason why God will speak to me in those night seasons is because that's when it's quieter in my life and he's got my undivided attention and the volume of my life is turned down. And I'll even take it a step further and venture to say that God, like with the disciples, will deem it fit sometimes to send us knowingly into the storm just for that reason alone. Because isn't it true that it's when we're in those storms of life, those trials of life, those anguish, anguishing, painful, I mean, painful... That's when God has our attention, that's when we're hypersensitive to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit. That's when God has us all to Himself, and

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He can speak into our lives. Hey JD, there's something I want to show you. I had to allow this so I could show you this, because had I not allowed this, you would have never seen this. Hey, JD, there's something I want to tell you, I want to speak to you, but I'm not going to clamor and compete with all the other voices in your life. So I had to allow this storm in your life so that it would be only me that you would hear. And when I speak, I speak in that still small voice, it's a whisper. In the original language it carries... This is Elijah, by the way, it carries the idea of a still small refining voice where God just fine tunes, I mean, He gets right down to that deep recess in our hearts that only He knows. Only God can know that., Only God could speak like that. And it's in those storms and this is what He does for the Apostle Paul.

Everybody on board had lost all hope, it's just a matter of time. So we pick it up in verse 23. After the Lord sends this angel to Paul, Paul stands up and he starts speaking to everyone on board. And this is what he says, "Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong [I like that] and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul.'" Stop right there. Come on. This is Paul we're talking about. Fearless, unflinching fearlessness, the Apostle Paul! He walked into a room, everybody paid attention. That's Paul. Do you know who that is? That's the Apostle Paul. No way. Way. Whoa. He's afraid. Why would God send an angel to tell Paul, do not be afraid, if he wasn't afraid? I know that is deeply profound. And again, replete throughout scripture we find this time and time again.

I think about Joshua. Man, the first chapter of Joshua, I mean, "be strong and courageous," "do not be afraid." Why would God say that to him? Because he was afraid. He was discouraged. He was terrified. And I would be, too. He has just succeeded Moses. There were some big sandals to fill right there, and he is taking them into the promised land and he is so afraid, and God says, don't be afraid. Here's Paul so afraid, and the Lord sends an angel that says, don't be afraid. Maybe that alone is a word for someone here today. Do not be afraid.

Yeah but pastors you don't understand, I am toast with a capital T and a capital TOAST too. I mean, I am so riddled with fear and I'm so filled with anxiety, I am so afraid of what's going to happen. Well, don't be afraid. He tells Paul, "you must stand trial before Caesar." And he's telling this to the men on board. "And God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you." That's all of you guys. "So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as He told me."

And you know what happened? It happened just as God said it would. Imagine that. Wow! God said it's going to happen this way and it happened that way. Well, by the way, spoiler alert for those of you that are unfamiliar and have not seen how this movie ends. Not a movie. It's a real account. But the ship did wreck and they're hanging on to wood to float ashore because they didn't know that on the itinerary God had a stop for them. It's been said that God directs our steps, but sometimes he directs our stops too. What do you mean? Oh. There was this island, it wasn't the island of Oahu, it was the island of Malta. And apparently God loved the locals, the islanders there, because that's where they end up.

And would you believe that they come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ when that ship... I would also suggest, by the way, that those men on board, if I'm one of those guys on board, I'm getting saved right there. When Paul gets... he had me at 'we're all going to live.' What must I do to be saved? The God whom you serve, where do I sign? I'm getting saved right there. And then they end up on this island and the islanders get saved. Is it a... This is a... for lack of a better word, I wish

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there were a better word. This is a fabulous account. I wish someone would make a movie, I mean a real movie. Not this rubbish that we are subjected to. This is not based on true story, this is a true story, I would have loved to have seen this. They all get saved. He ends up exactly as God said, he ends up in Rome. He always wanted to go to Rome, by the way. But instead of an all expense paid cruise ship, it was a prisoner ship that got him there and God had a couple of stops on the way. And because God had a plan through this perilous storm. And the Apostle Paul of all people, he had already had this promise, by the way, he had forgotten it. And the reason I point that out is because we are so prone to forget the promises of God.

See, God had already told him, you're going to stand trial before Caesar. And so here he is in the ship and maybe he's thinking, well, either God forgot about that promise and I'm not going to stand trial before Caesar or something happen and God's in heaven going, They shipwrecked? Where? Malta? When? No, this was all part of God's plan. In other words, sometimes God will get us where He wants us, but he won't get us where He wants us the way we want Him to get us, where He wants us. Let's be honest with ourselves, right? That's not what I had in mind, God, I wasn't thinking.

The whole shipwreck thing, prisoner, you know, Malta, snake bite. A viper fastens itself to his arm. And what does he do? Shakes it off. And here's the islanders going, 'he's a god', they start worshipping him. He's like, stop! How many times have they seen those snakes kill people? And nothing happens to Paul. Why? Because he has to get to Rome. He has an appointment to stand trial before Caesar. Why does he have an appointment to stand trial before Caesar? Because God loves the household of Caesar and they're going to get saved. Oh, really? Yeah. I think of any prisoner I mean, any jailer that was chained to Paul is a prisoner, I mean, they're getting saved. You talk about a captive audience. What's my schedule today, guys? Oh, you got this guy, Paul, he's in cell number 42, because they chained them, you know, to the prisoners. Here's Paul going, what's your name? Let me get to the point and bring it to a close.

God has a purpose, He's not forgotten you, do not lose hope. Oh, if you only knew what He has for you, it's what you could have never thought of, never imagined in your wildest imagination. And it is not like God can let you in on it, because then you wouldn't be walking by faith, it would be sight. No need for faith, because I see. So it would defeat the whole purpose. God just wants you to trust Him, and I mean, I could just picture Him wanting to say, hey, I just want to give him kind of a hint. But no, I can't, he needs to trust Me. Yeah, but he's given up hope. He'll see, he'll see what I'm going to do. Oh, I'm going to see him through, but I'm going to do it in a big way because I'm a big God. Whatever that trial is, whatever that storm is, I want to assure you and testify to you, because I can, by the way, that God will see you through. You be encouraged. God will never forget you.

God will never leave you. God will never forsake you because God loves you. He likes you, too. Imagine that. And here's the thing, and you'll forgive the crass way of saying it. But did you ever think of it like this? He has a lot invested in you. The Holy Spirit indwells you as the down payment, by the way, that's sealing you for your day of redemption. He's got an investment in you. You think He's going to let go of you? That you sink, that you drown? No. He's the anchor of hope for your soul, the lover of your soul, who knows, sees and truly cares about everything you're going through and will absolutely see you through. You just wait. You'll see.

You know, as parents, when your kids were young, you would always just tell them, just wait. You'll see. And they don't want to wait. Of course, adults don't want to wait. I want to see. Well, just wait. See, we always say, well, God's never late, His timing is always perfect. But have you ever thought of

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it like that God is never early either? And the truth of the matter is, we don't want Him to be early, because if He was early, it could thwart us of that which He wants to do in us and even through us. But we impatiently want Him to get us out of that storm. And God's saying, I'm not going to get you out of the storm, I'm going to get you through it. And by the way, if you only knew the reasons why you wouldn't want Me to get you out of that storm because of what I'm going to do in and through that storm.

One last thing, just... maybe this is another word for someone here today. You're in the midst of a perilous storm and it is terrifying and rightfully so. The uncertainty, the fear, the anxiety, I mean, those are very real, and for good reason. I want to encourage you with this truth, and I speak it on the authority of God's Word, but I also speak it personally in my own experience in walking with the Lord. No matter how bad it is, it cannot change how good God is. God will have the final word. As dark as it seems, as bleak as it seems, as scary as it is, God will see you through.

And when you're on the other side of this thing, looking back on it, you're going to be like, whoa, that was amazing! It's like God's going, I know, I'm amazing. My grace is amazing. God, that was awesome! I know, I'm awesome. I'm in awe of You, Lord! That's the whole point. I cannot believe that you did that! You can't? Well, I did it. You see it now. Yeah, I see it now. I wish I would... I wish I would have seen it then through the eyes of faith.

Because had I known this, had I been assured of this, I wouldn't have freaked out as much when I was going through this. I wouldn't have fought You and feared and struggled and wrestled and stayed up all those nights tossing and turning, had I known. It's like Lord saying I tried to tell you, but you wouldn't believe Me. Now we say seeing is believing, it's really the other way around, believing is seeing. Why don't you stand and we'll have the worship team come up and we'll close in prayer.

Man, my heart really goes out to anyone that's struggling, and I know many are. We get many people that email us and contact us and ask for prayer. They're just going through some very, I mean, serious, just serious things. Many are losing everything, and they're very downcast and discouraged, and I got to believe that's representative of the church locally here. I just want you to know God loves you so much.

And just wait. You'll see what He's going to do. Let's pray. Father in Heaven, thank you. Lord, that hope, You're our hope, You're our only hope. And so, Lord, I pray for anyone who has been losing hope and that hopelessness is giving way to despair. Lord, I pray that You would baptize them afresh in the Holy Spirit. Fill them anew. Reveal Yourself to them in a miraculous way, as only You can. And remind them that You will see them through no matter what. Lord, thank you. Thank you for that hope. In Jesus name. Amen.