

**Hebrews 6: 9-15; “The Full Assurance of Hope”, Sermon # 22 in the series –
“Holding Fast our Confession”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall
on October 18th, 2020, in the Morning Worship Service.**

What a pleasant transition the apostle Paul makes here following the very awful verses that he felt that he had to pen in verses 4-8 of this chapter. He had been speaking of the apostasy of those persons who had no doubt thought of themselves, that they were true Christians. He wrote in such a way that it shows us how a person can come so close, and yet not be saved; not really know the Lord. Having done that, he now goes on here in verse 9, to speak of the better things which accompany true salvation. Even though he knew that he had had to speak in the way of warning, he now wanted to bring comfort to those who he was convinced were true Christians. Let us take heart from this; that even as our Lord Jesus has said – “All sins and blasphemes shall be forgiven men except the sin against the Holy Spirit”, that they shall be forgiven, if they confess them. If that person has not spoken against the Holy Spirit, we may still hope and pray for their conversion to Christ.

Now, at this hour, I want to talk to you about how you can come to have full assurance of your salvation; a very important subject for every Christian. There are certain definite things that accompany true salvation; things which are set forth here for our instruction, so that we will attain to a full assurance of hope. 1st – Assurance of hope will be found in the Christian’s doing good works and laboring in love when they minister to the saints. 2nd – Assurance of hope will be found by the Christian in their diligence in good works and their perseverance to the end. And the 3rd – Assurance of hope will be found by imitating those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. So let us walk together a ways, in this passage, and let’s think together of the path of righteousness which we have been placed on. Let’s strive to understand what the full assurance of hope is.

1st of all – Assurance of hope will be found in the Christian’s doing good works and laboring in love when they minister to the saints. (verse 10)

“For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” We need to take notice of the fact that God, our God, has a perfect memory. He not only not unjust, He is perfectly righteous in every thought, word, and action that He takes. He remembers the good works of all His saints most perfectly. And He knows how to reward them perfectly as well. At the Last Judgment all men will be judged according to their works. All of your good works will be remembered dear Christian and they will be rewarded in the Day of Christ, if you have been faithful. The way that this verse is worded here might cause you to think that it would be possible for God to be unjust, but this is rather a declaration that He will never act unjustly; and particularly in this subject of which we are considering now, your works after you have been saved.

Salvation, we should all know, and remember, is not of works lest any person should boast. Salvation comes to us when we believe in Christ’s work of perfect obedience, His sufferings, death, and resurrection in relation to ourselves and our sins. And we receive Him to ourselves by faith. By God’s showing us this mercy we come to realize that we have born again to a living hope of eternal life. We are raised from our death in trespasses and sins. We are justified by faith in Christ. We are washed and sanctified through the work of the Holy Spirit. We are, by that work, set apart to God’s good purposes. And so, we should understand, as it says in Ephesians 2: 10, that we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. We will do all of the good works that we

will do because God prepared these things to be done by us, even before we converted, even before we were born.

This is an amazing truth, and one that we should receive and rejoice in, because we would serve God in righteousness, and fulfill His good purposes for us, that He prepared these things for us to do while we were still in our mother's womb. This truth was revealed to the prophet Jeremiah when the Lord called him to minister for him. Before he began his ministry, the good work of preaching God's word, God said to him – "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations. The same is true for you, dear Christian. God knows what good works that he wants you to do, and He will bring these things to pass in your life. When you first believed it was because God the Father effectually called you to come and partake of Christ, spiritually speaking. He saved you and called you with a holy calling, not according to your works, but according to His grace and purpose in Christ Jesus. You became a partaker of all the spiritual benefits of salvation and you were set apart to all of God's good purposes in what He wants to do with you and through you.

And from the very start of your Christian life, you begin to think about what He would have you to do; what He would have you labor and work at, what He would have you to do. The apostle Paul when he was in the midst of his conversion experience on the road to Damascus said – "Lord, what would you have me to do?" And even so, God would have you to think this way as well. Everyone who trusts in Christ should understand that when they are saved, they are expected by God to pursue holiness and righteousness in relation to receiving His word the Bible to their mind and heart. This is how God reveals His will to you. He does so in relation to His promises and precepts and principles of righteousness. He would have you to be holy even as He is holy.

Holiness is being separate from sin and pursuing righteousness through having communion and fellowship with God and Christ in your spirit. It is your learning to do what is right in by interacting with God in prayer and by faith, over all of the details of His word and over all the details of what He providentially leads you into, day by day. It is your consciously going about to do righteous deeds, and engage in good works, seeking to show love to all men; but the brethren especially, we are told here. And, as it says in our text, God will not forget the least of your good works that you do as a Christian, or the labor you put forth to do them. He will reward them, if not in your lifetime, most certainly at the Day of Judgment.

It further should be understood by us that the works which are done by us after our conversion to Christ, are works which are done in the power Christ's grace, and the wisdom that he grants to us, in relation to our prayers concerning such matters. These good works are works which are done in the strength which God supplies. Good works do not originate from our fleshly nature, our Old Man. They come from our New Heart and our renewed mind. They come from the seed of righteousness which has been planted in us by the Holy Spirit. They are the fruit of the Spirit's working in our heart and mind in relation to God's holy word. Our good works are seen by the Father as having been wrought (or done) in Christ. They are seen this holy way because Christ's righteousness is imputed to our works to make them acceptable in the Father's sight. And it is into these works that the Spirit will lead you, in conjunction with your understanding God's will according to His word.

If you are walking in the Spirit, your attitude towards doing good works will be one of eagerness to please God. You will manifest a joyful and a thankful spirit in your obedience to all of God's commands. You will be looking around you to do good works because you remember that it says in God's word that, now that you are a Christian, His commandments are not burdensome to you. (1st John 5: 3) You know that God has freed you from all the penalties and punishments of the law. You now love God's law because it has been written on your heart. It is your meditation all the day. God's commandments, you have read, will make you wiser than

your enemies for they are ever theirs. (Psalm 119: 98) And so you now find that you will pursue knowing God by means of learning to keep His commandments.

You want all the glory of whatever good works that you do, to go to God. This is what you come to realize when you come to the light of truth. John 3: 21 – “But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” And so, let us all see and understand that all of the Christian’s good deeds are done as a labor of love which is being shown toward Christ’s name. The specific focus of that love is that you minister to the saints and you will continue to minister to them for the rest of your life. This is how you will come to glorify God in the primary sense in relation to people. This is also how you will eventually come to have a full assurance of hope.

2nd – Assurance of hope will be found by the Christian in their diligence in good works and their perseverance to the end.

Verse 11 says – And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end... Now, you need to understand that there are 3 basic ways that you can come to have assurance of your salvation, and to know the reality of these lines of assurance speaking peace your heart and mind on a regular basis. Each of them will require diligence on your part. The first is what is called the assurance of faith. It is mentioned in Hebrews 10, verses 19-23. It says there – “Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” “Let us hold fast our confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

So, we can see here that the assurance of faith comes to you as Christian when you realize that you can draw near to God with a true heart because have believed in the gospel message concerning the Person and the work of our Lord Jesus Christ as Your High Priest. When you first came to Christ for salvation you looked outside of yourself to Him to find life, to find forgiveness, to be justified by calling upon His name. And righteousness was imputed to you. You believed the word of truth in the gospel concerning all that He, the High Priestly Mediator has done in your place. Christ has obeyed the law perfectly and He did so on your behalf so that you would have a better righteousness than your own. Christ went to the cruel cross and He suffered there on your behalf; He was punished there in your place as a common criminal, for the crimes that you have done. You saw the fact that you could not have life, you could not have salvation unless you believed in this Perfect Man, this Righteous Man, this Holy One of God who took your place in judgment.

So, in your coming to Christ, you found, or you should have found, that you could have assurance, even in your first believing in Him, even in your first looking to Him in faith, because you knew and you understood that this was what God required of you, the sinner who would be saved. Faith in Christ and His work, not yourself and your work. You looked to Him and lived. You looked to Him and you found forgiveness. You looked to Christ and you knew immediately that God was faithful to His word. You believed God’s word, His testimony concerning His Son, and you were assured by His word that because you had done this, that you were a saved person. That is assurance of faith.

Assurance of faith is your relying completely on the finished work of Jesus Christ. You have peace with God through Him. You are accepted in the Beloved, and you know that you can boldly come to God through Him from that time forward. You realize that it is your joy as well as your duty to hold fast this confession of your hope without wavering, for He who has promised is faithful. You may have many doubts concerning yourself, but you have none regarding Him and His faithfulness to His word. You realize that you are able at any time now,

or in the future, to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus Christ because He has placed you on this new and living way which He consecrated for you. By the rending the veil of His flesh by going to the cross, He by His death consecrated this on-going work for you, the believer, as well. You know that you can always and forever come to Him with all of your sins, all of your cares, all of your doubts, all of your fears. You can draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith now, having your heart sprinkled from an evil conscience and your body washed with pure water. O my friends, have you come to now the preciousness of Christ's Intercession?

Well that is the first line of assurance. The 2nd line of assurance comes shortly after you are converted, and is Christ's gift to you. After you believed the gospel of your salvation, you realized that you had been sealed with the Holy Spirit; that you had actually been given the gift of the Holy Spirit to live in your heart, and to abide with you forever. You received the Spirit and He convinced you by His presence in your heart and life that you were God's dear child. Christ sovereignly and lovingly sent Him into your life. His presence there in your heart caused you to cry out "Abba Father". And Spirit Himself bore witness with your spirit that you were a child of God. You found this blessed truth was written in God's word, that the Spirit is your Helper in all of your understanding of God's word, and in all of your obedience to God. You have found this true in your experience.

But there is one more line of assurance which we are told about in the word of God, and specifically it is found in the verses that we are studying now. It is an assurance which comes to you from your being able to good works by the power of the Holy Spirit. It comes in relation to your work and your labor of love in ministering to the saints, and continuing to do the same. This is called the assurance of hope. The assurance of hope is, first of all, God's promising to you in His word that He will not forget your work and your labor of love which you have shown toward His name. He will not forget the fact that you have been ministering to the saints, and that you do continue to minister to them. During all the years of your Christian life you persevere in this good work and labor of love.

As the Holy Spirit communicates to your heart, day by day, the graces of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, that you will need to minister effectually, you find assurance. You find, that in the midst of doing these good works, that you see the evidences of His approval and blessing of fruitfulness, in connection with your doing these good works and doing what He commands. You find real assurance that your work and labor of love is pleasing to God, and therefore conclude that at the end of your journey of living the Christian life, you will be received with approval into heaven and hear the "well-done, My good and faithful servant". You see, is why the apostle could conclude better things about those to whom he was writing; yes, things which accompany salvation. He saw their work and labor of love, and he concluded that they were true Christians. A Christian, knowing these same things are true of himself comes to have assurance of hope by their persevering in righteousness, holiness, and good works.

Verse 11 says – "And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope, until the end." The diligence which is being talked about here is what we call the perseverance of the saints; that a believer must continue to use the means of being diligent in regard to their labors and works in order to attain the end; that is, their obtaining this full assurance of hope that they are a true Christian, that their life is pleasing to God, and that they will therefore inherit heaven. In the context of these verses I want you to see that perseverance means that you will continue steadfastly on, in loving the brethren, and showing them this love, by means of good works. You will be pursuing holiness, without which no person shall see the Lord, as it says in Hebrews chapter 12, verse 14. In other words, these things must be pursued all throughout all of your Christian life, to the end of your life, if you expect know know the reality of this full assurance of hope.

3rd – Assurance of hope will be found by imitating those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (verses 12-15)

“...That you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” So what does it mean to be sluggish, here? It means to be lazy in regard to your exercising your faith in God’s word and His promises. That is, you are not living and acting upon them, in order to become useful and fruitful in God’s service. It means that you are not stirring yourself up to lay hold on eternal life; that is, to live in such a way that you are not a worldling, living simply for the pleasures of this world. You are not pressing on to become profitable servant to God, and a helper to people around you, to those around you who need to be taught and encouraged by you, to believe in Christ, and to follow Christ. If you would stir yourself up, by means of prayer and thinking of what good works that you could do, then you will be led on by the Spirit to become all that God would have you to become in regard to your ministry to others. Colossians 4: 17 – “And say to Archippus, ‘Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.

So, ask yourself whether this is what you are doing. Are you stirring yourself up to engage in good works according to the gift of God which has been given to you? Are you showing love to all the brethren? Let’s look at an example from God’s word to establish this truth of your need to engage in good works in order to have assurance of hope that you are a true Christian. James chapter 2, verses 14-17. “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works?” “Can that faith save him?” “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?” “Thus faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

I find these words very significant to our study here this morning. I think that many of us here today would say that they have faith. But if this is so, do you also have works that show to God that your faith is genuine; that your faith is sincere? Now, you can see from these verses that it is not enough for us as Christians to simply say that we believe in Christ, and conclude that we have salvation, if we have no good works or labor of love that we show toward the saints. The example is given of a brother or sister in extreme need; that is, a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and you might actually think to say to them – Be warmed and be filled, depart in peace, and you do not give them anything. You may say that you are a Christian, but the evidence of your real love for them is lacking. And so, too, it will be appropriate if your assurance of hope would be lacking as well.

Verse 26 of this same chapter 2 of James says, “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” This is what we need to see. If we do not love the brethren in very practical ways, when we see them in need, then we should not easily be able to conclude that we are a Christian. We should not expect to have strong assurance of hope if our feelings are shut up toward them; if we only think about how they could be showing greater responsibility in their providing for their own needs. And, so, you may even find yourself saying – Why should I be required to help them? And I answer you, it is because you have been given much, both in terms of grace and in terms of material wealth and spiritual blessings. And therefore, you should love much. And in doing so, you will find that you will have full assurance of hope.

We must learn by exercising our faith Christ, to become stronger in faith and hope and love toward all of God’s saints. We must learn to be patient and kind in little things related to the brethren that are important to our Lord. Listen to what James says a little further on in chapter 2, verses 18-23 – “But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’” “Show me your faith

without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.” “You believe that there is one God.” “You do well.” “Even the demons believe – and tremble!” “But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?” “Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?” “And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’” “And he was called the friend of God.” I think these words should be very encouraging to those looking for assurance of hope. They are very encouraging to the one who wants to persevere in their faith to the end of their life. If they desire this, they will understand that they are being perfected in their faith as they go about to do and keep God’s commandments.

We will talk more about Abraham when I preach to you a message from the next section of t chapter 6 in the book of Hebrews. But for now, I want you to see that Abraham’s being justified by works, in his offering up Isaac on the altar, was his rendering the best possible obedience that he could give to God; that he would offer up his son Isaac, his only son that God had given to him by he and Sarah. And in this ultimate act of his obedience, God took notice of his very particularly going through all of the preparations to really sacrifice Isaac, even taking up the knife to slay his son. And so the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, it says in Genesis 22, verse 12, and said – “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

It was then that God knew that his faith was made perfect. He was given assurance of hope in regard to His being called the friend of God. This was what it meant for him to by faith and patience inherit the promises.

The same kind of severe testing may come to us as well as we persevere in our faith. We should remember that we will be justified by our works, in this regard; that that which is most precious to us must be offered up to Him if he asks for it. But when we give it to him, it will prove that we are His friend. You are my friends if you do what I command you. To be the friend of God was a great commendation that was given to Abraham. And assurance of hope was given to him as well; that because he obeyed God, he would see the greater fulfillment of all of God’s promises to him, going into the future in his own life, and going on into the future, all the way through human history to the end of the age, and into eternity. “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.” “And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.” May it be so, for each one of you also, brethren, that you will patiently endure, and that you will obtain the promises, in relation to your fulfilling all that God has called you to do, and to inherit; by His blessing your faith and your obedience.