

We See Jesus (6): We Have an Anchor!

(Hebrews 6:13-20)

I. Introduction

- A. Life is hard when you're a pilgrim and a refugee. *Ask the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock*
1. Pilgrims came to Massachusetts in 1620 as refugees of old world religious persecution.
 - a. Half of those first arrivals died during that very first winter— "*the starving time*"
 - b. They faced unknown dangers of an unknown world looking for place to call home
 2. Life is hard when you're a pilgrim and a refugee. *Ask the Vietnamese "Boat People"*
 - a. They fled the Viet Cong in 1975 in fishing boats, row boats, and even bathtubs
 - b. By 1981, some 300,000 refugees reached Thailand— many drowned on the trip
 - c. It is estimated that 80% were attacked by pirates and many of them were killed
 3. Life is hard as pilgrims and refugee. *Ask the Syrians caught in the war with ISIS*
 - a. These are innocent people who happen to live in the wrong part of the world
 - b. They are caught in a perpetual war zone, between the devil and the deep blue sea
 - c. They can't remain in a home reduced to rubble; no one else seems to want them
- B. It's hard to live as pilgrim and refugee... we should know. *We pilgrims and refugees!*
1. There are no easy political answers on how to best respond to displaced persons
 - a. But Christians should feel solidary and commonality for we share their identity
 - b. As believers, we live in a land that is not our own pilgriming to a far off home
 - c. Because of that, there are times when we just don't fit in with the world around us
 2. Peter no so gently reminds us of our "exile" or "refuge" identity (**1 Peter 1:17, 2:11**)
 - a. And that is also the identity that is held up for us in Hebrews (**Heb 11:13**)
 - b. If we fit in and get too comfortable with the world, we're giving up on our identity
 3. **Test:** Doctor says, "*I don't know which way we should to go here, let's pray.*"
 - a. Maybe it's your financial planner. Would that just be totally strange or what?
 - b. We're people of faith, right? Would that make you feel better... or more uneasy?
 - 1) Shouldn't it make us feel more secure decisions are made with God in mind?
 - 2) Or are we uneasy our "professional" isn't more confident in their own ability
 - c. We're people of faith, we sometimes it seems we have more in common w/ world
 4. It's tough to be a pilgrim and a refugee, and the readers of Hebrews were giving up
 - a. What they needed was something to hold onto—what they needed was an anchor
 - b. That's what the writer gives them, but he starts with the importance of patience
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II. The Father of the Patient (Hebrews 6:13-15)

- A. He begins with the promise God made to Abraham (**Reading: Hebrews 6:13-15**)
1. This three-part covenant with Abraham lies at the heart of the Bible itself
 - a. Abraham will have many descendants that will become a great nation.
 - b. This special nation of descendants would come to possess the Promised Land.
 - c. Through these descendants, a Messiah would come that would bless whole world.
 2. Abraham was no dummy; he saw immediately the logistical problem with God's plan
 - a. Abraham was 75 years old when he received the promise and he had no children
 - 1) He would wait 24 years to see his son (*"many descendants" would be later*).
 - 2) Only land he owned was cave where buried Sarah (*"Promised Land" is later*)
 - 3) Only nation he saw foreign one where he wandered (*own nation is much later*)
 - b. Abraham kept following God, waiting for the promises to he kept (**Heb 11:8-10**)
 3. Abraham was the *"father of faithful,"* but he was also *"father of the patient,"* right?
 - a. He kept putting one foot in front of the other while he trusted God to keep his word
 - b. His great faith led him to trust that God's promises would come true... eventually
 - c. His great patience allowed him to wait on God's timing... and he kept on pilgriming
- B. Sometimes it's so hard for us to believe well because it is so hard for us to wait well.
1. So much of what Christianity promises us is fulfilled only after time and waiting
 - a. Land to which travel is far away; we want our hopes and expectations now.
 - b. *We don't wait well!* Think about that for a half-a-second. OK that's long enough
 - 1) If traffic is bad, do we thank God for extra solitude or.... *We don't wait well.*
 - 2) Service is slow at restaurant; enjoy extra fellowship or... *We don't wait well.*
 - 3) Line is slow at Wally-World; thanksgiving we have so much... *Don't wait well*
 - 4) Wait for hours waiting room, pray for those who can't afford... *Don't wait well*
 2. Life gets hard, and when life gets too hard to stand—kneel! What we should do.
 - a. What we do is gripe and complain. Because we just don't wait very well, right?
 - b. God always comes through for us, right? I mean, we're here today, aren't we?
 - 1) We've been through some difficult storms and some of us are pretty beaten up
 - 2) No matter how beat-up the boat may look, it's going to get us to our destination
 - 3) It may be leaking the bow is sagging, the mask is broken—we'll get to shore
 - c. We know because God swore by Himself— *"Honest to me!"* (**Heb 6:16-19**, NLT)

III. We Have an Anchor... and a Forerunner

- A. **First**, “*we have an anchor*” that secures our faith— our hope. (**Heb 6:19**)
1. Ships use two kinds of anchors—both are important to give the ship stability
 - a. Regular Anchor is used to keep the ship fixed, from drifting with the current
 - b. Sea Anchor is dragged behind ship when underway to provide stability
 - c. Both Anchors serve to help hold position when wind/waves try to drive it off-course
 2. In the same way, without hope, Christian faith is at the mercy of the world.
 - a. Thus, hope serves as anchor of the soul; without hope, we are quickly off course
 - b. Some want us to think that Christian faith and life INSULATES us from storms
 - 1) No, opposite is true; we’re pilgrims & refugees. *Storms come more frequently!*
 - 2) You just have to make sure your little refuge boat is anchored in right place
 - c. Remember, this is Hebrews; Notice where anchor line is tethered (**Heb 6:19**)
 - 1) Only one thing to tie off to “behind the curtain” right? Ark of the covenant
 - 2) This is presence of God imagery he is using here—powerful stuff for Jews
 - 3) Later, he’ll have us entering behind the curtain into God’s presence (**10:20,22**)
 3. For now, our rope is tied to an anchor planted firmly in the presence of God.
 - a. We live our lives on the surface; that is where the storms and high seas are.
 - b. But our hope, our anchor, is planted firmly in the presence of God in heaven.
 - 1) Tie your boat to the surface, to the things of this world— and you’ll lose it.
 - 2) If your anchor of hope is planted deeply in heaven, you can weather the storms
- B. **Second**, we also have a “*forerunner*.” (**Heb 6:20**). The word here is “*prodromos*”
1. Literally “*forerunner*.” Hebrews plugs Toyotas and Acts plus Honda (“*one Accord*”)
 - a. The word “*dromos*” means course or race. Paul, “*I finished the race*” (**2 Tim 4:7**)
 - b. So the word “*prodromos*” means “*raced-before*” or “*ran the course before*”
 2. Jesus is our forerunner; He has already run the race perfectly that we must now run
 - a. Jesus went before us, living as a pilgrim and a refugee just as we do as His followers
 - b. He suffered the things we suffer and he overcame them we must do in His name
 - c. Now He is at God’s right hand, waiting there for us as our anchor and as our hope
 3. We can have hope because we have an anchor and we have one who went before
 - a. We don’t see that hope if we look only at the here and now, at the storms of life
 - b. But he have to have an anchor—we have to have hope!

IV. Conclusion

- A. It is not easy to believe because it isn't easy to wait
1. The world around wants us to focus on the word around us—here and now.
 - a. The present material reality is for most people the only real reality.
 - b. The here and now wants our attention right here and right now!
 2. If we accept values, standard and beliefs around us-- faith is shipwrecked.
 - a. If we get impatient, we give up on faith and we're swamped by the storms of life.
 - b. *Our only hope is hope!* Let me say that again—our only hope is hope!
 - c. Hope is the anchor that ties our reality to the true reality beyond what we see.
- B. Sometimes what we see can be a very distracting handicap. *It's all we can see!*
1. I learned to drive on a 1974 Sedan De Ville Cadillac with huge hood ornament
 - a. That hood ornament served as a cross-hair that I used to aim the car down the road.
 - b. **Problem:** I kept looking at the cross-hair hood ornament—and not at the road!
 - 1) Maybe that's why I'm such a lousy driver— hoodwinked by hood ornament!
 - 2) The only way to drive a car properly is to keep looking down the road
 2. Same way with life. It's so tempting to keep looking right at the front of car (boat).
 - a. We want to look at what is happening right now right in front of our lives.
 - b. When things go well, we're contented to sit back and take everything for granted
 - c. When the wheels fall, we get frustrated and impatient... and we start giving up
 3. We need to take our eyes off of hood ornament and starting look down the road!
 - a. We need to make sure our anchor is planted deeply in hope of God's presence.
 - b. We need to make sure we look, not at world, but at Christ—anchor & forerunner
- C. Where is your anchor today? Will it hold when the storms of life inevitable come?