

# Christian Hope: The Real Nature

by Rolfe Barnard

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*Rolfe Barnard's sermon challenges listeners to abandon false assurances of salvation and embrace a genuine hope rooted in Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 36:15

**Scripture:** Luke 6:43, Luke 8:4-7, Hebrews 6:9-11, Hebrews 6:13-14

**Topics:** "Hope"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by reading from Luke's Gospel, specifically chapter 8, verse 4. He then proceeds to explain the parable of the sower and the different types of soil where the seed falls. The preacher emphasizes the importance of Christian hope and urges the listeners to stay tuned for the next few Lord's days as he delves deeper into this topic. He concludes by highlighting the significance of bearing good fruit as evidence of true faith in Christ.

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## Transcript

And my friends, this morning I want to ask you to do something very, very important to me and I trust that you, and very special. I want to try to bring a message now, and it'll take me at least two or three of these broadcasts to anywhere near touch the subject, but we are trying to be true to the people who tune in to this broadcast, to your eternity-bound souls. And I want, if I may, to ask you to stay with me now for the next two or three Lord days.

I know that's the thing that a radio preacher ought not to do, but I'm going to beg you to do it as I bring you the first in a series of messages on what I believe to be the real nature of Christian hope. The real nature of Christian hope. What I'm going to say for this broadcast and the next broadcast or two is vitally important.

I'm going to be shooting at the fleshly confidence that we call assurance of salvation, which is strictly forbidden in the eternal word of God. I'm going to be saying and trying to prove what I say by the eternal word of God, that the scriptures of God seek to kill what we call our assurance of salvation, that having killed our assurance, the scriptures may thus give us hope. And the scriptures constantly exhort men and women to give up the assurance that they say they have, in order that they may have a hope which is based on the Lord Jesus Christ.

I'm going to ask you in your Bible to follow me in the book of Hebrews for our opening scripture at chapter 6. I want to begin this series of messages by reading first a tremendous warning from the word of God addressed to God's people. Then after we've read this tremendous warning, which is one of many in the word of God and will serve as a starting place for our messages these two or three Lord's days, then I want to read you the passage from God's word that tells us where our hope is, in whom it is, what's been done about it, and how our hope is based on that which has been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ within the veil, whether he as our forerunner has before us entered. In the 6th chapter of the book of Hebrews, there is one of the most tremendous warnings in all of the Bible.

And you'll miss it if you do not understand that this warning is addressed to God's professing people. In the 4th verse of Hebrews chapter 6, I read these words. That is a tremendous description of some kind of people, either saved people or lost people, either saved people who then got lost, or people who looked like they were saved people, never were really saved people, and finally when the test came they fell away.

Notice that these people have been enlightened, they've tasted of the heavenly gift, they've been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, they've tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come. The Holy Spirit now says, if people who've experienced all of these wonderful things, if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. That's strong language, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open chain.

And then he illustrates this 6th verse. And then he illustrates this 6th verse. Isn't that a tremendous statement? These people who having been enlightened, who having tasted of the heavenly gift, who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.

And I want us to be occupied for a while over this broadcasting station, these Lord's Day with the people that are talked about here. Now in verse 9, the scripture tells us where our hope is to be placed. Verse 9 says, And now he exhorts the people to whom he is speaking, We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that ye be not flawless, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself. And here is how the Lord swore, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he, Abraham, had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

For this promise was put up well fixed, for verse 16 says, And an oath of confirmation is to them in the end of all strife, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled far refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul. And it's both sure and it's steadfast, and this hope is an anchor of the soul, and it's sure and it's steadfast, and it's that which enters into that within the veil, Here is the Holy Spirit's exhortation for men and women to be followers of those who have gone on before, who through faith and patience have inherited the promise of God. And the men and women who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that is set before us, and then that hope is said to be an anchor of the soul.

It's said to be sure and steadfast, and that hope is in a safe place, rest God, for it's that which enters into that within the veil. And there the forerunner, even Jesus, has for us entered, a man who was made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Now will you follow Brother Barnard this morning and maybe the next two mornings? Now I'm going to be shooting at the thing that has just about made Christianity the lasting stock of this confused generation in which we live.

It's the multitudes of people who claim to be saved, but they have no need for prayer. They have no need for endurance. They have no need for a high priest.

They never get in trouble. They don't know what it is to repent, and they are always talking about their savings. And they are going to go to heaven when they die, and they can tell you when they were converted.

But they do not walk with the Lord. All through the scriptures, God's people who make profession that they know God in Jesus Christ, are urged to face the fact that the assurance, this carnal assurance that men and women prayed about today, must be given up so that men, having lost their little assurance and their little false refuge, may day by day patiently endure and lay hold upon the hope that's based on Jesus Christ, which by the Holy Ghost has been set before God's people. I say again that the scriptures wish to kill our little assurance that the scriptures may set us after hope.

The scriptures would bid us give up assurance that we might receive a hope which is based on the Lord Jesus Christ. And this assurance I'm talking about this morning is that fleshly confidence that we have. And all confidence in the flesh or in its desires or its accomplishments is strictly forbidden in the word of God.

The old flesh, that's old raw farners, old carnal flesh, yearns for security. And with its dying drops of blood, the old flesh, that's the nature of men, is yearning for assurance. But any fleshly assurance is counterfeit.

It is bootleg, and it will not stand the test of God's time and God's Holy Spirit. In the Bible, instead of fleshly confidence and assurance, confidence in our own accomplishments, in the Bible we have a hope that we are to lay hold of. And this hope is fulfilled in men and women who maintain their confidence steadfast to the end.

And the given evidence of this is persevering grace. And this persevering grace is known only to the Lord of life and the Lord of death. My friends, we are saved and are standing with God, his face on justification, when the cause of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy God receiving our faith, declares us to be just and righteous in his sight.

That's an act of Almighty God. But the fruit of justification is perseverance in holiness. The perfection of justification is no guarantee of persevering in that faith.

And men and women throughout the Bible are urged not to presume on their own so-called standing, not to preach their own faith, but to preach the grace of Almighty God. My time has already slipped up on me. I've just given you an introduction this morning.

If you'll stay with me these next few mornings, we're going to dig into your heart and into the word of Almighty God. And if we can, by the help of God, we're going to kill your assurance and set you to seeking that hope which is set before you. And now God bless you.

Here's Brother King Brown to tell you how you may contact us. Now, my friends, we come for the second message on the subject, the real nature of Christian hope. Last Lord's Day, we said to you that the word of God seeks to kill our assurance, what we call our assurance, that we may be driven to lay hold on the hope that is set before us, that the word of God seeks to get us to give up our assurance that we might receive a hope which is based on the Lord Jesus Christ.

We call to your attention the fact that the flesh yearns for security, but the Bible drives us to the Lord Jesus Christ. We close our broadcast, Last Lord's Day, by making this tremendous statement, that the highest act of worship of which a human being is capable is for that person to express to Almighty God his confidence that God may rightly condemn us and still be just and holy and loving, that the only unselfish act of which a human being is capable under grace is to so come under to God as to put our confidence in him, whatever the consequences be to us. Now, unless somebody is quickly going to say, well, I guess I better get ready to do that, I remind you, my friend, that the soul of man is so deceitful that we can counterfeit everything.

There is no way of describing man's capacity for deceit, even in the presence of a holy God, and we need to be slain here. We better quit trying to maintain a bootleg assurance under a theology of grace. Now I come to ask you, don't you go away and listen to me.

It was no accident that in days gone by, the old-time preachers, men of God, they didn't know as much as we think we know now, but under God a lot of what they knew was so. And it's no accident that in days gone by, under the old-time preachers, the people who came to make profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ were asked this question, Are you willing to be damned for the glory of God? Before you reckon it happened in our churches, if when men and women walked down the aisle and said, We believe in Jesus, we want to be baptized, we want to join the Church, and the preacher would say, Now I want to ask you a very solemn question. Are you willing to be damned for the glory of God? I'm afraid we wouldn't have so many people join up these days.

As I look you in the face through this microphone now, and I say that time is upon us again, and we're going to have to go to answering that question again. We've been using God for somebody to get something out of, all on God's use we got for God. If somebody told us he had planned salvation, we'd do a few things, we'd go to heaven, and when we died we'd miss hell.

And we've got saved, but never have got acquainted with God, and we know nothing of his glory. Oh, my soul, a woman came up to me the other day when God was being pleased to give us a landslide of souls. They would preach about two weeks, and the pastor backed me and didn't buck me, and didn't try to wipe tears away and stop people from mourning and stop the Holy Ghost from using the word of God to tear up our little false assurance and our little places of refuge.

And a woman who'd heard me, she'd gone away and said, I'm not going to go back to hear that preacher again. And said, he's trying to disturb me. And finally she came back and said, since I've come to see that God didn't have to save me, that he could damn men still be good, that he could damn men still be holy, that he could damn men still be just.

Oh, she said, my salvation's so glorious, isn't it wonderful that God who didn't have to do it was so kind and loving and merciful as to be pleased to save a sinner like me. My soul wouldn't be one if we had something like that going on these days. And that's why we buy this radio time.

I'm going up and down the country. I don't have time. I haven't got any money.

If you folks don't send money in, we can't keep this program going. I just can't do it. But if you'll stay with me, some of you friends will pay for the time.

I'll bring the messages. And God bless you, we're here, so that as we're away in meetings here in Winston-Salem, our voice may be heard, saying it's high time that we quit using God as somebody to get something out of. It's time we come back to face his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

And it's high time that somebody got converted in our churches that thought it was wonderful that God, instead of damning them, showed mercy to them and saved them for Jesus' sake. Oh, wouldn't you love to see that? I want to ask you again. Are you willing for God to damn you if it'd bring glory to him? Is all the use you've got for God is to get something out of him? Is all the use you've got for Jesus Christ to use him as a doormat and a fire escape from eternal hell? I want to ask you one more time.

Are you willing to be damned to eternal hell if that will bring glory to almighty God? You know, my friends, it's amazing. I turn to the book of Matthew and I find the Lord Jesus here in the 26th chapter. He had 12 disciples and they were up in the room, upper room, and the only one of the 12 disciples that had perfect assurance that he is okay, that's the one that betrayed the Son of God.

In verse 23, the Lord said, In verse 27 I read, verse 21 it is, I'll get it directly. As they did eat, the Lord said, Verily I say unto you that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, am I the one that's going to betray you? That don't sound like present day church.

I know, I'm all right, I'm all right. I've got to say, I've got to say, I'm all right. I'm once saved, always saved.

I'm all right. But when the Lord said to the 12, One of you is going to betray me. There were 11 broken hearts there.

They knew what was in them. They knew of what they were capable of. Brother, they didn't have the flesh or confidence this generation held, raising church members of God.

They searched their own heart under his piercing glance. And John said, Lord, am I the one that's going to betray you? And Peter said, Lord, am I the one that's going to betray you? And he said, He that dipped his hand with me in the dish, the same that shall betray me. He said, The Son of Man goeth as it is written of him.

But woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It had been good for that man if he'd not been born. Then, then finally Judas, which betrayed him, he didn't do it.

The 11 did it before it broke their hearts. And when old Judas was put on the spot, he kind of hemmed and hawed around and he said, Master, is it I? See, at first he said, Oh, no. I imagine old John will betray him, but I'll have you understand I'm a church member and I'm Christian.

I'm once saved, always saved. And I've been, I'm a born again Christian. I'm a this and I'm a that and I'm a the other.

We hear those expressions today. The only one of the 12 who had perfect assurance is the one who betrayed the Lord Jesus Christ. Somebody says, well, Brother Barney, that's true of those 11 disciples, but

that is before Pentecost.

You know, my friends, everything now we got to put in a pigeon hole and forget in a hard place and kind of hemmed up in the word of God where the shoe fits and pinches a little bit. We say, well, that is either for the Jews or a lot in the Bible is for the Jews, but there's a lot for Gentiles, too. And we say, that is either, that is before Pentecost.

Yeah, I know. A lot happened after Pentecost, but a lot happened before. But I tell you right now, this Lord won't do.

I wish you'd look in your hearts. I'm trying to look into mine right now as I'm bringing you this message from God's word. The only one of the 12 disciples who had perfect assurance is the one that betrayed the Son of the living God.

Now, my friends, I want you to turn with me, if you have your Bibles, and I want you to turn with me as now throughout the rest of this broadcast and maybe the next Lord's Day. And I'm not certain whether we'll get through then or not. I want us to examine just a few key scriptures on what I'm talking about, namely, that self must go, Jesus Christ must be enthroned.

All our fleshly confidence and our fleshly assurance under God must go. And we must throw that away and give it up to God and come naked to Him and be slain and die to this fleshly confidence we've got so that we may start running to lay hold on the hope that's set before me. Let's let the Lord Jesus speak to us here in the 6th chapter of the gospel according to Luke.

And I want to read verse 43 of Luke's gospel, chapter 6. And the Lord's talking about what I'm trying to preach to you now over this radio. Let's listen to the Lord speak in verse 43 of Luke's gospel, chapter 6. I want you to mark this scripture down, dear one, and study it. The Lord says, For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit.

Now, that's clear enough, isn't it? A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit. Now, it brings forth fruit, but a good tree doesn't bring forth corrupt fruit, neither does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Now, a corrupt tree, the Lord said, will bring forth fruit, but it won't bring forth good fruit.

Now, the Lord plainly says a good tree will bring forth fruit, but it won't be corrupt fruit. It won't be bad fruit. And he says a corrupt tree will bring forth fruit, but it won't be good fruit.

It'll be bad fruit. And then verse 44, he says, For every tree is known by his own fruit. For a thorn's men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good. And an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil. For of the abundance of the heart he is now speaking.

Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? What you go around here claiming you believe in me, why are you professing to be a follower of me, and you don't do the things which I say? And he illustrates that by plainly teaching that you can't tell whether a tree is a good tree or a bad tree until the fruit has been borne. I wish the Holy Spirit would help us to camp here and only the planter, the groundkeeper, the owner, the Lord of the harvest can tell what kind of fruit it is. Now, if we had sense enough to come in out of the rain, we'd pay some attention here.

Here are two trees. They are both peach trees. One of them is a good peach tree.

The other is a bad peach tree. No one owner can tell you which is which until the fruit has been borne. Did you get that? You go out certain season of the year and both trees look awful pretty.

You say, well, they're peach trees until that. Sure. But you can't tell whether one of them is a good tree and the other is a bad one until fruit-bearing time comes.

You go out there in that orchard and on one tree are beautiful peaches. On the other, little old scrawny, corrupted, half-rotten peaches. The good tree doesn't bear that kind of peaches and the bad tree doesn't bear good peaches.

A tree, the Lord said, is known by his own fruit. He said, why do you call me Lord, Lord? And you don't do the things which I say. How do you prove you belong to the Lord? By obedience and endurance.

And then in verse 47, the Lord Jesus gives us this tremendous illustration of what he's talking about. What's he saying? I'm saying that our standing with God is what we call justification. That's an act of God.

I'm saying that the fruit of our right standing with God is perseverance and faith. I'm saying that our profession of being justified is not a guarantee of perseverance. I'm saying that the only thing that determines a tree is not how it looks in certain seasons, but what kind of fruit it bears.

I'm saying that's what the Lord is talking about here. He illustrates it in verse 47, here in Luke's gospel, chapter 6, after this was. He says, Whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I'll show you to whom he is like.

Why? Whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings, he just keeps coming to the Lord, listening to him and doing them. He said, He is like a man which built a house and digged deep and laid the foundation on a rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock.

But he that heareth and doeth not is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth against which the stream did beat vehemently and immediately fell. And the ruin of that house was great. Isn't that strange language? Isn't that strange language? Oh, why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? A tree is known by his own fruit.

A good tree bears good fruit. A bad tree bears evil fruit. The fruit of right standing with Almighty God through the blood of Jesus Christ is one thing and one thing only, bearing good fruit.

What is it? Perseverance. Perseverance in holiness. Perseverance in faith.

Perseverance in profession. Perseverance in obedience. What kind of tree are you? Are you a good tree planted on the rock or are you a bad tree? The foundation's not right.

When the storm comes, you'll be swept away. That's a serious question. I have time to ask you now to turn to the eighth verse, eighth chapter of Luke.

And I won't be able to get through this, but I want to start it here in the eighth chapter of the book of Luke's gospel. Here is the record of the sower who went forth to sow. I think I'll spend the time now just a minute beginning at verse 4 in this eighth chapter of Luke's gospel.

And we'll continue here the rest of the broadcast and start next Lord's Day. Verse 4 of chapter 8 of Luke's gospel says, And when much people were gathered together and were come to him out of every city, he spake by parable. And he said, A sower went out to sow his seed.

And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside. And as it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away because it lacked moisture.

And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. And others fell on good ground and sprang up in bare fruit, and a hundred foals. And when he had heard these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And I'll have to close now and we're going to start exactly there on the next Lord's Day, when the Lord gives interpretation of that parable.

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