

my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30). Because He is the Son of God, He can give an eternal rest for our souls. He lived and died that we might be able enjoy heaven. He became our High Priest and sacrificed His life so that we might live with Him forever.

UPON THE ROCK

February 2001

Volume 4 Issue 2



WE HAVE AN ANCHOR

Hebrews 6:19
February 24, 2001

9:00 OUR ANCHOR IN FAITH (N/A)*
Paul Hoover, Valley Bend, WV.

10:00 OUR ANCHOR IN JESUS CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST (N/A)*
Mark Reynolds, Muncie, IN.

11:00 OUR ANCHOR IN THE PROMISES OF GOD
Brandon Britton, Pulaski, TN.

12:00-1:00 —LUNCH IS PROVIDED

1:00 OUR ANCHOR IN HOPE (N/A)*
Mike Gors, Waynedale, IN.

2:00 OUR ANCHOR IN LOVE
Charles Blair, Indianapolis, IN.

3:00 OUR ANCHOR IN THE RESURRECTION
Ron Parsley, Auburn, IN.

(N/A)* – Articles were not available for reprint.

Our Anchor In The Promises Of God

Hebrews 6:13-20

We really cannot blame people for being skeptical. In fact, all of us are skeptical in many aspects of our lives, and well we should be. After all, most Americans have been lied to on a consistent basis for several generations. Too many times those to whom we have looked for guidance and instruction have cast our trust to the floor and danced upon it. Our former president Bill Clinton looked the nation he was elected to serve in its collective face and lied. He did not tell a mistruth, a falsehood or give an incorrect answer due to a misunderstanding in defining terms, he told an outright, boldfaced, lie. "I did not have sexual relations with that woman", he boldly declared while shaking his finger. As sad a day as this was for America, it was not the first time our highest elected official lied to us. A generation before Richard Nixon did the same thing when he made his now famous statement, "I am not a crook."

Similarly, our best and brightest educators have been spoon feeding us the lie that man just happened as the result of an evolutionary accident. There is no God, there was no creation, it was a spontaneous, coincidental big bang that started a chain reaction ending in the intelligent life forms that we now are. They have "proved" to us that we are nothing more than animals that walk upright and got smarter than all the others.

Our medical "experts" have not been exempt from deceiving us. They have told us the lie that homosexuals were "born that way", murderers and other criminals are suffering from chemical imbalances and other mental illnesses, and drunks and drug addicts are victims of society.

Children have been reared to expect to be lied to because many see it in their homes from the time they are born. Many parents, while gushing that their children are the most important part of their lives, prove themselves to be liars as they put their careers and recreation first in their lives.

in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Steadfast. The word means sitting, something that is settled, those who are settled or fixed in purpose according to several passages. "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister" (Colossians 1:23). "Nevertheless he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well" (1 Corinthians 7:37). When one arrives regarding truth and it is settled in his heart he should with all readiness contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3).

Unmovable. This word means perseverance in a course of steadfastness. To be unmovable is to be firmly persistent. One who is unmovable will not be moved from that which he knows to be right. He will not be moved by the enticements of the world. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

When one understands God's plan of salvation for the alien he knows that one's faith must lead him to obey the terms laid out in the gospel of Christ. As he obeys and continues to walk in God's way he knows that faith must be a working faith, motivated by love. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision: but faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6).

CONCLUSION

Our faith is based on the evidence or testimony of God. He has revealed them in such a way that all men everywhere can come to know and obey Him. The invitation of Jesus is based on the fact that He is the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16). When He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and

something stands under it is the foundation of that under which it stands. So faith is the foundation of our hope. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for-the resurrection from the dead, Christ's second coming, eternal life in heaven, etc. Faith is the conviction of the evidence or testimony of things revealed by God (Romans 10:17). The apostle John writes, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30,31). Faith is the conviction of things not seen - creation, Israel's deliverance from Egypt, Christ and His death on the cross. All of God's revelation stands under our hope. Without this revelation there would be no hope.

WE MUST GROW IN FAITH

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (II Thessalonians 1:3). The Thessalonians' faith grew exceedingly in the midst of persecutions and tribulations. As they endured, their faith grew stronger and they were counted worth of the kingdom of God (II Thessalonians 1:4). One grows in faith by adding the graces mentioned in II Peter 1:5-7. Our faith grows through the study of God's word. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Timothy 3: 16,17). Our Lord said, "Search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me (John 5:39). The Hebrew writer gives the results of those who fail to grow. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat (Hebrews 5:12).

CHARACTERISTICS OF ONE WHOSE FAITH GROWS

The apostle Paul sets them forth in I Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding

Even leaders in the religious community have been drinking from the ocean of deception. One reason for Americans' widespread rejection of all things spiritual is the dishonesty of those leading the way. While preaching morality and righteousness they have practiced adultery and embezzlement. Advertisers promise you that you have won ten million dollars and a one hundred percent money back guarantee if you are not completely satisfied. Athletes and coaches will publicly promise that they are not going to leave their respective teams on one day and then hold a press conference to announce they are accepting an offer from another team the next day. "They are just looking out for their best interests", you may argue. "They are only seeking to be paid what they are due", you may defend. The fact is, they lie. No matter what the reason, regardless of the "excuse" or intent, they lie. The reason we have a need for written contracts, which are no longer reliable since they are broken daily, is because a man's word cannot be trusted anymore.

These are but a few examples of how deceitful and dishonest the world can be. So why would we be amazed that most people are skeptical? God recognized in the long ago that men have a problem when it comes to trusting one another. "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife" (Hebrews 6:16). How many times have you heard someone say, "I swear on my mother's grave; I swear on my life; I swear on a stack of Bibles", etc? For many people this gives them comfort because they think, "surely no one would swear on their mother's grave." The fact is, many people would dance on their mother's grave if it was to their benefit and advancement. Nevertheless, God was willing to condescend to feeble man's needs, weaknesses and fears, in order to provide him with unquestionable security and an overflowing abundance of comfort. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability (unchangeability) of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable (unchangeable) things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation.., which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast" (Hebrews 6:17-19).

The point is, God understands that man far too often cannot trust man and seeks to confirm what is said by an oath. God, understanding this fear and need of man, made an oath, swearing to

keep His promises. But what is God going to swear by? Men swear by things that are greater than themselves, but God cannot do that because there is nothing greater than God. “For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself” (Hebrews 6:13).
 What a breath of fresh air in a world full of skepticism, deceit and lies. God swore by Himself and made promises to us in His own name. Why did He do this? Simple. God was “willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel...that by two immutable things, we might have a strong consolation...as an anchor of the soul” (Hebrews 6:17-19). God wants His children to be able to remain calm, confident and convinced that He will keep all of His promises. He will not lie to us, He will not change His mind, because He keeps His promises. Can you imagine how wonderful it would be to never have to question anything that anyone does or says? Never having to doubt the sincerity or truthfulness of statements and actions? That is what God offers to His people.

Did you ever make a promise to someone that you did not intend to keep? God never has, Have you ever made a promise that you fully intended to keep, but for whatever reason you were unable to do so? God has never faced that. Have you ever been forced to break a promise to one person in order to fulfill one made to another? Not God. It must be emphasized that God’s promises are often conditional. He may make a promise that has stipulations and requirements which must be met, otherwise the promise is void. “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy **toward them that fear Him**” (Psalm 103:11). “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth **them that fear Him**” (Psalm 103:13). “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting **upon them that fear Him**, and His righteousness unto children’s children; to **such as keep His covenant** and to those that **remember His commandments to do them**” (Psalm 103:17-18). There is a consistent pattern of God’s promises being hinged upon man’s obedience to His commands. So what are some of these steadfast and sure promises that God has made? There are basically two types of promises: negative and positive. Negative promises are those that are undesirable. Judgement, punishing, sins, second coming of Christ to destroy, eternal hell. These are promises that God has made, but they are promises that you do not want to receive.

Marriages can end in divorce. In order for that to happen, one or both parties, changed. God does not change. When we are separated from God, it is not because God changed His position but because we did (Isaiah 59:1,2). He will always love us no matter what we do. It is a serious mistake of the largest kind to think that the love of God means He will excuse our actions without proper response on our part. Sins can always be forgiven when we seek that forgiveness from God in His prescribed way.

We love God because He first loved us. Our commitment needs to be that we will make every effort we can to deepen our love for God (II Peter 1:5-8).

FAITH, THE ANCHOR OF THE SOUL

(Hebrews 6:11-20)

Larry G. Reynolds

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews expressed concern for the recipients of his letter. He was concerned about their lack of spiritual growth (Hebrews 5:11-14). First, he points out that they were dull of hearing (v.11). Secondly, they were still babes needing to be taught the first principles (v.12). Thirdly, they could not discern good from evil (v.14). If they continued in this direction they could reach the point of no return (6:1-8). The writer encourages them to be diligent and not slothful in following those who triumphed in serving God unto the end. The example that he set before them was Abraham, who with faith and patience believed God’s promise and endured to the end to obtain the promise (6:15). Likewise it would take a diligent faith, believing in God’s promises, to inherit the hope (heaven), which hope we have as an anchor of the soul. It is both sure and steadfast and will keep us on course (6:18-19). The faith that saves is an active obedient faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God (11:6).

FAITH DEFINED

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). The word substance means to stand under. It comes from a word which means substratum. When

look at the examples from the Old Testament of where God moved directly against His children, people are at a loss for words. They know on one hand that whatever was written beforehand (Old Testament) was written for our learning (Romans 15:4). When they see God move directly against His children how do they bring that knowledge into the time we are living in now?

The only way to accomplish such a task is to have God change what He is. The love of God does not cease. Yet we read in Joshua 7 about the case of Achan. He was found out, confessed that he did wrong and then he was stoned to death along with his family. How could God order such a thing, you ask? The answer lies in the fact that God does not think as we do (Isaiah 55:8,9). My job is not to adjust the scriptures in order to come up with a false God, but rather to adjust my thinking to think like God does as revealed in His Word. It was a God of love who sent Achan to his death because the nature of God does not change.

This provides us with stability to our souls. If I love God, I will keep His commandments (John 14:15). I know that as long as I diligently seek Him, He will reward me and heaven will be my home at the end of the way (Hebrews 11:6). I can trust that because it is impossible for God to lie (Titus 1:2). God does not want me to perish (II Peter 3:9). He loves me and has the power to keep me from falling away (Jude 24). I know that because His love never ceases, He will always be there for me (Hebrews 13:5,6).

My task is really quite simple. All I have to do is to spend just today and give my body as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1,2). When two people stand together to pledge their love to each other in marriage, do not the vows speak about until death do you part? Why should we see it any different from our love for God? In fact Paul describes our relationship in this way; we are married to Christ (Romans 7:4). The same writer speaks about the fact that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8:38-39). This makes our life stable because we know what we are about and where we are headed.

Then there are also positive promises. These are promised blessings from which we will benefit greatly. The forgiveness of sins, healing of illness, answered prayers, eternal life, resurrection at the second coming. Some of His promises are very desirable and those are assured to be kept (assuming we obey) and others are frightening but avoidable if we obey Him.

Negative Promises

“If I ever hear you say that again I’m going to wash your mouth out with soap.” “The next time you do that I am going to whip you with my belt.” “When your father gets home you are going to be in so much trouble,” What child has made it to adulthood without ever hearing these promises? They certainly are not the type of promises you want your parents to keep, but they are promises nonetheless. While many parents make promises like these, very often they are broken. I cannot recall how many times I have been at the mall, grocery store or Wal-Mart and heard a parent make similar promises only to break them almost instantly. “I’m going to count to five and if you don’t get over here by then I am going to spank you.” After counting to five about six times the parent still has not done what he said he would do.

Promise made and broken. I do my best to be a good parent, but I have been guilty of doing the same thing from time to time. Not because I am a liar, but because I forget what I have promised. Humans are like that. They make threats they have no intention of following through with and promises they forget to or refuse to keep. But not God. How do I know that? How can I be so sure that God will not do that? One main reason and one minor reason. The main reason I know this is because it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18). When God makes a promise, even those which come in the form of a threat (“but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the Lord hath spoken it, Isaiah 1:20), He keeps it because He cannot lie. It is not possible for Him to lie. Good people are capable of lying but they choose not to, but God is not capable of lying by His own nature. Some would argue that God can do anything and He can, but God does not deal in logical contradictions, such as making a square circle or a rock so heavy He cannot lift it, or tell a lie

which is inconsistent with His just and holy nature. The second reason is based upon evidence. Just by looking at God's track record it is obvious that He keeps all promises He makes, even the negative ones. Since the days of the apostles men have doubted this and denied that God will keep His promises concerning punishment and judgment. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Peter 3:3-4). There were scoffers who were accusing God of lying!! "I thought He was coming, where is He", they would exclaim. They sound like those who go around today claiming that God is all love and mercy and would never punish anyone, except for the most vile people like Hitler and serial killers. Peter answered this foolishness nearly two thousand years ago. "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (II Peter 3:5-6). How did Peter respond? He said look at the evidence. These scoffers were willfully ignorant (i.e. they ignored the evidence) of the fact that God had brought judgment upon the sinful and disobedient world in the form of the flood. The proof that God would bring judgment was that He had already done it once before. He continues to emphasize that, "the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (II Peter 3:7). The same word that brought destruction upon the ancient world is the same word that will bring final destruction. He summarized his proof with the statement, "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3:9-10). Men may be slack (inconsistent) in keeping their promises, but God is not. He has not destroyed the world as of yet because He is patient and does not want us to be destroyed. Although He is patient and wants us to repent, the day of the Lord WILL COME. He will keep this promise and when He does the earth and all that is in it will be totally destroyed. After providing evidence from the past that God will keep His promise of destruction

every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14). It is in knowing the truth that our lives are hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3).

At times there is confusion that arises over the grand theme of love. It is a word that falls too carelessly from the lips of those who do not understand its meaning. Love, by its design, is meant to be an anchor to our troubled souls. At the heart of this understanding must be our knowledge about God, Himself. He is the source of our spiritual knowledge and the strength for our journey on this earth. Let us then establish first of all that the nature of God does not change with the passage of time or the whims of culture.

Is there one God in the Old Testament and another God in the New Testament? This is a fundamental question that all Christians should be able to answer. If there is one God in the Old Testament and another God in the New Testament, you have a changing God. How stable would our souls be if He who is God, changes from one age to another? Listen to what God tells us about Himself. God declares, "...I change not" (Malachi 3:6). The will of God has been different in different ages, that is, what is required of man. However, the nature of God through all of the ages never has changed.

God used John to tell us this about Himself. God is love (I John 4:8). God cannot cease loving because He is God and He does not change. Note how Jesus told Nicodemus about the love of God. God so loved the world (John 3:16). At no point has that principle ever ceased. God is the source of that principle and God does not change. Jesus died in order to save all humanity (I John 2:2). Are there individuals who will not respond to the love of God and thereby be saved? A causal reading of Matthew 7:13,14 shows that not everyone will be saved. The fact that there are individuals who will not respond to the love of God in no way changes the principle that God is love. God continues to love in spite of disobedience on the part of man.

Here is a key area where confusion often arises. It arises because there is always an element that wants to excuse man's action when those actions are contrary to God's will. This is how they will sometimes word it. God loves us just as we love our children. Would you destroy your child just because they disobeyed you? When we

that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

CONCLUSION: Romans 14:9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living, It is clear that we have an Anchor in the Resurrection:

A. It is based in FACT and HISTORY. 1 John 1: 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

B. It is our FOUNDATION of FAITH. 1 Corinthians 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

C. It is the HOPE of our FUTURE. Romans 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

WE HAVE AN ANCHOR IN LOVE

By Charles Blair

An anchor serves to keep an object in the same place. What is implied in spiritual terms is there is a danger of drifting away from where God wants us to be in our spirits. The writer of Hebrews states that hope is an anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19). In some senses we are taught to always be moving forward in carrying out the will of God, as in preaching the gospel to the whole known world (Mark 16:15). However, the sense of this study is to remind us that there are certain areas that we cannot move away from lest we incur the wrath of God.

Our Lord warned us that there would be difficulties that would assault us in the living of our Christian lives for God (Matthew 7:24,25). We have no control over the “winds” and the “rains” that come against us. Our strength is in the Lord, who through His Word will keep us from being destroyed (Philippians 4:13). We must stay anchored in the truth of God lest we become as little children tossed to and fro by

in the future, Peter makes a plea for all men to be obedient and not suffer from the keeping of this negative promise. “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God” (II Peter 3:11-12). Since we know that God will keep all of His promises, even those that promise destruction and punishment, we should live in such a way that we do not suffer from the consequences of those promises. He has promised to judge the righteous and the wicked (II Cor. 5: 10), to punish sins (Ezekiel 18:20), to destroy the world (II Peter 3:10), to cast the lost into hell for eternity (Matthew 25:41). “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). This is not a promise that you want God to keep with you, but He will if you give Him no choice.

Positive Promises

Most promises are made for the purpose of giving comfort and assurance. The promised blessings that God offers to His children serve the same purpose. God knows that it is difficult to be a Christian in an ungodly world. How does He know? He became a man and lived a sinless life in this world just like us (John 1:1-4,14). He faced the same temptations and difficulties that we do, but He was able to overcome them (Hebrews 4:15). Since He knows how difficult it is, He offers us promises, blessings to keep us motivated and striving for purity. He did the same thing. Paul encourages us to look, “unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for **the joy that was set before him endured the cross**, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, **lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds**” (Hebrews 12:2-3). How did Jesus stay faithful to His mission and continue on until His death? He did it by keeping His eyes on the goal. He knew the promise of glory was awaiting Him and He was able to press forward. Paul tells us that Jesus is our example to look to the promises when it would be easier to quit than keep going. He warns that if we do not we may grow faint

and weary. That is much different than the steadfast and sure anchor that we have at our disposal. Paul knew from firsthand experience that this anchor would hold and help you get through the storms of life. How did he joyfully endure the time he spent in prison with a lacerated or beaten back? “I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14). Paul was able to stay focused and remain faithful in the worst of situations because he kept looking to the promises. They were his anchor and they are our anchor. What are these promises? There are so many of them it would be difficult to accurately list all of them, yet they can be easily summarized in one verse. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3). The faithful child of God has all of them, every single one.

In the long ago king David used this same method to improve his spirituality and faithfulness, In Psalm 103 he records his emotions as he reflects upon the blessings and promises he has as a child of God. “Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (Psalm 103:1-2). His joy is a direct result of not forgetting the benefits of being a child of God. Just as Jesus looked to the joy set before Him and Paul reached for the things to come in pressing toward the prize, David reminded himself of the benefits (promised and realized blessings) of being one of God’s faithful children. He then lists many of those promises as He praises God for them: forgiveness of sins, healing from illness, being saved from destruction, being crowned with loving kindness and tender mercies and being given good things that you desire (v.3-5). What an amazing list of blessings, promises God has made to His children. They are however, hinged upon our obedience. Five times in Psalm 103 (v.11,13,17,18,20) he states that these blessings are for those who fear God and obey His commands (cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13). God cannot lie to us. If He says that He will remove our sins from us as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12) then He will and must do it. What reason or evidence do we have to doubt Him? We have an abundance of

5. v 27 Christ has all things under his feet
6. v 57 Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

III. The Resurrection is our Anchor for the FUTURE not Fatalism.

Christ’s resurrection is the anchor of our own resurrection.

A. The RESURRECTION showed that God made it possible for all humanity of supersede the power of death by the Resurrection of His Son over death.

Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

(See also: Mk.16:19; Lk. 22:69; Ac. 5:31; 7:56; Ro. 8:34; 2 Cor. 6:7; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22)

B. It is upon this very FACT of HISTORY based on FAITH that the RESURRECTION is the Anchor for us today. Our Future is not Final here upon this vale of tears. Our Future is not Fatalistic but Fulfilled in the RESURRECTION OF CHRIST JESUS.

1. Ac 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. v37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? v38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. v39 For the PROMISE is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

C. That Promised in Anchored in the death, burial and RESURRECTION of Jesus.

1. We can OBEY this Form of Doctrine...Romans 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.
2. This FORM is found only in baptism. Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
3. This FORM is obedience that changes believers to a new life: Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death:

are the prophecies concerning God incarnate in Jesus Christ. All these things are attested to in human events such as Josephus in his Annals of Jewish History.

B. The Resurrection is SPECIAL revelation in that it is not revealed by NATURAL events. This is why it is difficult for many not to believe in the RESURRECTION. It cannot be tested in the context of present, natural occurrences and events. The RESURRECTION of Christ was revealed by God, God revealed it by Prophecy, Fulfillment and Recording.

C. The Resurrection is SPECIAL revelation because humanity destroyed the possibilities presented in the Beginning. Adam, “man”, not God, brought Death, Romans 5:12 states, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned....” (Also: Ro. 5:15, 17, 19; 1 Cor. 15:22) Therefore, God purposed to REDEEM (Gal. 4:5; Titus 2:14; Ro. 8:23; He 9:12) and RECONCILE man (Eph. 2:16; Ro. 5:10; 2Cor. 5:18-19).

D. The RESURRECTION is based in Fact and History. God’s SPECIAL written revelation attests to this, Paul enumerated the number of witnesses in I Cor. 15: Peter (Cephas), the twelve, Mary Magdalene, James’ mother Mary, Joanna, other women, 500 Christians at once, James and Paul himself (See: LK 24; Mat. 26; 28; AC 9; 12) Certainly, it is attested to by human history and God’s faithful recorders that the TOMB WAS EMPTY. Even the Jewish leaders were angry with the news to the extent that were offering bribes to spread a lie, (Mt. 28:13).

II. The Resurrection is our Anchor in FAITH. “A Christian faith that is not resurrection faith can therefore be called neither Christian nor faith.” (Moltmann, Theology of Hope, pg. 166)

A. Without the Resurrection our faith is “vain”, “futile”. (1 Cor. 15:17)

B. Without the Resurrection the apostles are “false witnesses” and preaching is vain. (1 Cor. 15: 14-15)

C. Without the Resurrection death remains the ultimate end of humanity and the DEATH of God Himself. (I Cor. 15:13; Ac 2:24)

D. 1 Cor. 15:20 “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.”

1. v 22 Christ made alive.
2. v 24 Christ delivered up the kingdom
3. v 25 Christ must reign
4. v 26 Christ will destroy the last enemy.. .death.

evidence to prove that He has done what He promised countless times before.

Conclusion

I have many jobs and responsibilities around our house: take out the trash, cut the grass, fix things when they break (or at least attempt to), but I have one job that is far more important than any other. Each night around 8:30 I have to put my two sons to bed, read them a story, help them with their prayers and kiss them goodnight. My youngest son is only three years old and, despite a night-light, he is afraid of the dark. He is fine if I am sitting there with him, but when I tell him those six words he does not want to hear, “Goodnight. Time to go to sleep”, this happy and content little boy suddenly becomes worried and afraid. He is afraid because I am about to leave. Every night I tell him that his brother is right there with him, but that is not good enough. He does not want me to go away because he knows that he is safe as long as I am there with him. To comfort him I tell him, “I’m right across the hall and I’ll see you in the morning.” When he hears those words he knows everything is ok. I have made a promise to him, “I’ll see you in the morning”, and he knows that I will keep that promise. He is able to rest, even though he is afraid, because he knows that I am not far away (he can call on me if he needs me and sometimes does) and that I will be back for him soon. My promise to see him in the morning is his anchor. It gives him assurance, comfort and it dispels any fears he may have.

Late one night Jesus was sitting with His family and He told them some things they did not want to hear. Physically they were big, strong, fully grown men, but spiritually they were still little boys (even this late in the game, the end of His public ministry). For example, when Jesus washed their feet to teach them to be servants, Peter missed the point entirely and at first refused to let Jesus wash his feet. Again, when Jesus said that He would be betrayed, they kept asking Him who it was that would betray Him, until He finally told them. Even when He told them they did not understand what He was saying. And now when He was telling them that He had to go away, they were terrified. Peter said, “Where are you going? Why can’t I go with you? I would die for you Lord” (John 13:36-37). Just like a child

he was talking without thinking, making promises he was not prepared to keep. Jesus knew that but Peter still would not listen. The thought of Him leaving scared them to death and they wanted to go with Him or for Him to stay. When He told them they could not, at least not yet, they wanted to know why. They were spiritual children, but they would have to grow up fast (read the book of Acts). His leaving was the part that got to them and they did not want to hear it. They had each other, but that could not dispel their fears. They wanted Him, not their brethren. They were afraid of the dark, but they knew they were safe when He was with them. After all, He was the Light of the world, but the Light was going away. Sensing their fear, Jesus dropped anchor. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know, Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:1-6). "Don't be afraid", He said, "you trust God, trust me too. I am going away, but I will come again for you, so that you can be with me." That was a promise. It did not take away their fears, but now they knew they would be able to rest because He promised to be with them again. For my son the return of daddy gets him through the night, for the apostles and us it is the promise that our Lord is coming back for us someday. Our fears may be different, but our anchor is the same, our Father's promises.

WE HAVE AN ANCHOR IN THE RESURRECTION

By Ron Parsley
10th & Jackson Church Of Christ
Auburn, IN 46706

The embalmed remains of Lenin lie in a crystal casket in a tomb in Red Square in Moscow. On the casket it says: He was the greatest leader of all peoples, of all countries, of all times. He was the lord of the new humanity. He was the savior of the world!

All is in the past tense for Lenin. How forward-looking, by contrast, are the triumphant words of Christ: I am he that liveth,...I am alive for evermore. Rev. 1:18.

Jesus taught the religious teachers of His day about the resurrection and marriage. He brought it all together in Luke 20:38, "For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." God made us living creatures with a living soul. His creatures have been given the opportunity of living forever by the RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. The proposition is clearly given in Rom. 10:9, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, thou shalt be saved."

There are several words for 'resurrection' or 'to rise' or 'raise'. They are: anastasis, anistemi, and egeiro. Kittel shows that the root of 'anastasis', 'anastellein', is found in the Hebrew 'ahmah' which means 'to sprout'. This should remind us of the 'first fruits of Christ' and the 'sown natural body' and the 'raised spiritual body' in I Cor. 15:20-23, 35-49. It is made possible through the 'quickening Spirit' in 1 Cor. 15:45.

However, there are those who do not believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some even claim to be Christians. The Resurrection of our Lord is fundamental to all that Christians believe, behave and proclaim. We have an Anchor in the Resurrection.

I. The Resurrection is our Anchor in FACT The resurrection is both revelation and history.

A. The Resurrection is what we call SPECIAL revelation. It is also a part of HISTORY. History is: "1. branch of knowledge concerning past events; 2. A connected or related series of events or facts... etc." (Great Encyclopedic Dictionary, 6th ed., 1977, Funk & Wagnals) The accounts of the Gospel of Jesus Christ concern and connect the series of events and facts of His birth, life, teaching, death, resurrection, ascension and promise. Jesus was born under Herod the King of the Jews (Mt. 1:7; Lk, 1:5) and Caesar Augustus was Emperor. Many other historical references are given. Included in this