

Following Christ, the church's forerunner (Quality: Very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 October 2006

Preacher: Crowter, Harold (1923-2011)

[0 : 00] Well, again, I will ask your attention to the sixth chapter in the Hebrew epistle, verses 19 and 20.

The 19th and 20th verses in the sixth chapter of the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews.

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Amen. I proceed believing that those that are with us this evening have been with us previously, and so it doesn't require a review of what I've said earlier, but I will press straight on as the Lord may help me.

The hope which we have as anchor of our souls, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

[1 : 27] One of the things that speaks of absolute security is the one that raises us up by his grace and his teaching to a good hope.

Hope, good hope, is gracious, and it is graciously implanted in the hearts of his people as his Holy Spirit reveals to them the precious things of God.

especially it is the prerogative, as the Lord himself has stated. It is the prerogative, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.

He shall take of mine and show it unto you. My friends, what a favour if we're under the divine, revealing instruction and teaching of God the Holy Ghost.

And let me put this to it. There's none that teacheth like him. No matter how ignorant we have been as scholars, naturally speaking, and some of our teachers may well have almost come to the end of their patience as they've tried to teach us the things concerning this present world, God never, never fails in teaching his people what they need to know of the truth to save their souls and prepare them for ultimate glory.

[3 : 17] Oh, the whole of salvation is the handiwork of that glorious workmanship. Ye are his workmanship.

And it's God's work, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to communicate to us those things that will be the foundation of our praises in glory for a never-ending eternity.

And the subject matter is of such a nature, you know, we shall never grow tired of it. There's not such a thing as a tired songster in glory.

Every one is so gathered up and prepared and equipped in every way that the song of paradise is full-hearted and forevermore.

Well, now, I want to speak this evening more particularly from the 20th verse.

[4 : 30] Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

The first emphasis is on this word forerunner. Forerunner. Jesus has been the forerunner of his people.

Now, what is a forerunner? The one that leads. If we're running a race and there is a forerunner, the one that is at the front of the racing body is the leader.

And my friends, Jesus Christ is the forerunner of his people. He says in another place, He putteth forth his own sheep.

He goeth before them. And the Lord goes before his people. And that brings me to this point. His people are the followers of the forerunner.

[5 : 39] Jesus Christ is the forerunner and his people are his disciples. And they follow in his way.

For he says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. You see, the Lord Jesus Christ is our forerunner is absolutely essential to the brightness of our way.

Who are we following? Who are we following? I put this pointed question to you and it's got a very sharp point at the nose of it. Who are you following?

We're following somebody. We're following somebody. There was a time, probably in your remembrance, when you followed your own way.

You made, as it were, the way of the course in your own mind, according to your own preferences, which you would take.

[6 : 54] And you followed your own way. How sad. How sad. To be left to yourself. And that's the world, isn't it?

In a nutshell, really. God leaves them to themselves. They run the course that they choose. But what's at the end of that course? My friends, take the heed to the warning this evening.

If you're just running your own course, remember that if that course ends as now you are engaged in it, it will be terrible for you ultimately.

Jesus is the way. Jesus is the way. And we sing sometimes, all others lead to death. And that's an awful, solemn consideration, isn't it?

To be left to yourself. Left to pursue your own interests. Left, as it were, to map out your own course. And sometimes God so forsakes his people that they succeed in a temporal way to realize their ambitions.

[8 : 08] But when they've received their ambitions, what have they got? Everything outside of Jesus Christ has got death on it.

Indelibly described death. And I don't just refer to closing your eyes and passing from time. This time state, there's such a thing as death in the hereafter.

The death of the soul. The banishment of our souls justly under the righteous hand of the Almighty forever and forever.

Have you ever sung from your heart? If my poor soul was sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well.

Wonderful thing, my friends. To acquiesce in God's absolute judgment to send us to the bottomless pit.

[9 : 18] That's the emptying. The emptying. And the Lord empties whom he fills. He kills whom he makes alive.

He empties. They're absolutely sure that unless the Lord comes down and reveals himself and makes known the power of his life in their soul, they've got nothing before them.

But to be condemned, to perish as they deserve. But oh, when we reach the bottom, there's a sense in which we're safer than when we were left to ourselves and the proud, conceited attitudes of nature where, you know, if I...

God must be pleased with me because I do this and I do that and do the other. Our best is stained and dyed with sin. Our all is nothing worth.

Well, no. An emptied sinner coming to a full Christ is just as God would have it. We sang, Nothing in my hand I bring simply to thy cross I cling.

[10 : 41] how sweetly the language of the word is written in the language of many of our hymns. Well then, whether the forerunner is for us entered.

the Lord ran the race that was set before him by his Father. He didn't deviate from the course.

When it came to Jerusalem and that terrible anticipation of which he was foreknew, which he foreknew, my friends, he knew what Calvary was going to be.

You and I are mercifully spared the knowledge of the future when we're confronted with something that's adverse to our nature.

But the Lord knew everything. When he said, if this cup may not pass from me, he knew the full extent of the cup that was given him to drink.

[11 : 50] we don't, do we? But he did. He was God as well as man. And yet, he set his face like a flint to go to Jerusalem.

He didn't alter course. He didn't deviate. He didn't try and manipulate, as it were, the situation in the judgment hall and under the cry of the multitude.

No, he drank the cup as God brought it to pass, as the will of God unfolded in those terrible, indescribable adversities that confronted him.

No, he went on in a straight course, a straight course to paradise. And we find whether the forerunner is entered even within the veil.

and when he ascended, he went to heaven. He's still there. He's still there. The right hand of the Father. And we shall come to that in a minute.

[12 : 57] He's there as our high priest forever. Whether the forerunner is for him. My point at the moment is are we followers of Jesus Christ?

Are we followers of Jesus Christ? What about your life? What about your whole conduct? Does it give any verification to a profession that you are indeed a follower of Jesus Christ?

I say, if you don't end the course of your life with Christ as your confidence, you won't go where he is.

But however humble the follower and however I was going to say weak may appear to us the spirit of our discipleship because we're under constant attack from enemies, not the least of them ourselves, our nature.

Nevertheless, my friends, if our hope is fixed on Jesus Christ and we ask that grace day by day to be true disciples of the Son of God, the God of all grace can help us and can deal with the varying situations that plague us and can even deal with that awful malady within sin and unbelief and can wash us and purify us in the righteousness of his dear Son and present us faultless before the throne of God forever.

[15 : 00] Salvation is of the Lord. You'll never get salvation only by looking upward to the Lord, the God of all grace. Let me say, however low you may be in your own feelings and under temptation you're beset with awful fears that you're wrong will not be right in your end, that the weaknesses that are inherent in your nature are so strong that they'll lead you away and lead you astray and cause you, my friend, if you seek the Lord, he will find you.

He will find you. they that seek shall find the Lord will be found of you and he'll undertake your security through this enemy's land and he will give you the victory ultimately.

As sure as his word declares it to be so. Well, now, whether the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus.

Even Jesus. What a wonderful thing that God didn't leave as it were the church in the hands of high priests of Aaron's designation.

He didn't leave as it were his church under the keeping power and guidance of anything less than his own dear son.

[16 : 49] Christ Jesus is the shepherd of Israel he that leadeth Joseph like a flock.

Wonder of wonders it is. Even well the word of God in italics here enters this word even as though those that were as it were bringing the truth into our own tongue they must insert this wonderful emphasis even Jesus even Jesus did I say earlier what an amazing love of God is in the truth of the gospel that he would not spare his only begotten son as Jesus was the only one sufficient to redeem his people the Lord

God our heavenly father sent forth his only begotten son into the world that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life now whether the forerunner is for us entered he's finished the work the price is paid he's now in glory it sounds very strange and naturally is what I'm about to say but the price was paid for the redemption of his people right to the end of their life here below the price is paid the people of

God may through the gift of God's grace and the revelations of his spirit to their hearts enter into the joy of the Lord now in this present time state by reason of God given assurance that they are in Christ and they are among the redeemed of God forever and forever rejoicing in hope of the glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord my friends seek assurance seek that God will so reveal your interest in these great concerns of spiritual salvation that as it were the sky will clear of its clouds as you bask under the sweet comforting heart warming rays of the son of righteousness who heals with healing in his wings

I'm not speaking of something that I haven't tasted the happiest moments I've ever spent under heaven have been under the shadow of the almighty feeling absolutely persuaded that God ordains my salvation forever and forever the work is finished the price is paid but how jealous how jealous the heart becomes in the thought of sinning when such a price has been paid and God in his sovereign foreknowledge has dealt with every blemish of the soul well now whether the forerunner is for us entered even

[21 : 39] Jesus yes the Lord Jesus he goes before and he's now a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek now the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us as a king isn't he he's the king of kings everything is subject to his rule and authority we sing not a single shaft can hit until the God of love sees fit and it's very true we need much grace constantly to humble ourselves as things adverse to our nature manifest themselves in our experiences but Jesus Christ is not only the reigning power of the seed of

David he is the king of Israel by type in David and by fact in the Lord Jesus Christ but he also is our high priest now what was the responsibility of a high priest in the kingdom of Israel well we know that Aaron and his sons had to be anointed according to the will of God set apart as the high priests of the people of Israel and it was their responsibility to govern and guide in spiritual things sometimes their responsibility is referred to as sacerdotal on the sacred aspect now the rule of David was more on the temporal concerns of the children of

Israel but there we get the high priest he was concerned in the sacred aspects of life and the need of the people you know how it was responsibilities as in type they made the sacrifice of offerings under the law but remember this that it had to be Aaron or one of his successors in family relationship to be high priest and to go into the holy holiest of all the people they went in the outer court the Levites they went into the inner court but there is the holiest of all the very central place where

God was present the ark was set and the high priest he went in once every year with a sacrifice and we read it this morning in the seventh chapter of Hebrews of the fact that he alone was allowed in that place with a sacrifice for himself and for the people Christ is our high priest as I mentioned he doesn't need there's no sacrifice necessary because he's pure he's holy he's harmless he's undefiled but these priests of the success of Aaron and these high priests of Aaron and his family his sons who succeeded him they had to offer first for themselves oh that's a beautiful contrast the weakness of humanity in the presence of

God needed the shedding of blood needed a sacrifice but when it came to Jesus the sacrifice of himself was absolutely sufficient and satisfying to the omniscience and the holiness the holy presence of the Lord God Almighty our Father in heaven with whether the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek now if you looked at the 20 I've got it here I think it was the 14th chapter of Genesis yes chapter 14 in

[26 : 55] Genesis we have the record there of Abraham being informed of the conflict that took place among the nine nations that were at war and Abraham was told that these warring enemies four kings with five had took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their vittles and went their way and they took Lot Abraham's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom and his goods and departed and Abraham then gathers together his warring people and he sets out for the liberation of Lot from the condition into which

Lot had fallen at the hands of these enemies what a wonderful spirit in Abraham when his nephew was in trouble he was ready to do his very utmost for the deliverance of Lot from the adversaries and I'm going to cut a long story short but please read it in the 14th of Genesis you'll find a lot of names that are difficult to bear reference to and nevertheless they all have their place there's four kings with five and they took Lot Abram's brothers who dwelt in Sodom and his goods and departed God sent a messenger that Lot was in captivity Abram gets his warring people to arm themselves and go out and God

I say this advisedly because Abram identified himself with the four and the five would appear to be strongest in the conflict that was raging between those nine adversaries but Abram identifies himself with the four he goes forward and God gave to Abraham the victory over his enemies he brought Lot back with him and the goods and the people in his victory that was obtained and they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and they took Lot Abram's brother's son and we come to the point in this fourteenth chapter when

Abram has returned he's given the victory by the good hand of God upon him and he has a lot of goods the rightful possessions of the victor he as it were because of the conquest he has a right to take the belongings of his enemies under his own personal charge and while this is the situation Melchizedek comes onto the sea Melchizedek comes onto the sea and our father Abraham pays tithes to Melchizedek what at Melchizedek as a type of Jesus Christ and verily one hesitates to say but it may well have been

Jesus Christ himself that came forth to meet his servant Abraham at that particular point of time because the victory is under the good hand of God who overcame the superior enemies in the behalf of his servant Abraham and Abraham pays tithes he gives to Melchizedek some of the things that he's gained out of the conflict and Abraham says he doesn't want anything himself but a portion of it he gives to Melchizedek now let's think of our high priest the Lord Jesus Christ if we are the subjects of victory the victory we obtain is the hand of

[32 : 12] God in our behalf as our sovereign deliverer from our enemies our enemies would hold us in subjection eternally if it wasn't for the Lord thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ my friends every victory of your soul over sin is God's mercy and power to you if you're like me you know you've got the weakness of Peter the apostle when it came to the the climax he failed and how often have you and I come to climaxes in our spiritual life and we've had to acknowledge we've failed like Peter we haven't got a stone to throw at the man who even denies his Lord in the very case and place of the judgment hall but thanks be unto

God who Peter was given the victory Peter was given the victory and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter and my friends in that look was a look of compassion and a look of restoration into which Peter could enter with weeping heart and weeping eyes ashamed of himself but qualified to preach the sermon of Pentecost when he put all the crown on Jesus' head he said now I hope I'm not getting too much in way of confusing thought by multitude sometimes one fears but look here we're indebted to the Lord for victory sometimes your victory is made manifest by your loving heart to Jesus

Christ for giving even the minutest hope that you have an interest in his love and in his blood and every victory spiritually is a God given victory now faith is a victorious grace and faith wars but the Lord strengthens faith in the hearts of his people to overcome in the end they're victorious not to their own praise but to the praise of the Lord now Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek as the high priest at that particular point and place of revelation do we pay any tithes to our heavenly high priest is there anything that we ought to be attending to that manifests as it were our relationship with the

Lord Jesus and our confidence in him for our salvation the very receiving of hope is a foundation calling for some recognition what is the recognition if we believe in him that is if our trust is in him we have a solemn calling according to the word of God and the example of Jesus Christ to make it known that we are in the narrow way that our confidence is in the person of Jesus Christ who so liveth and believeth in me shall never die and there is a wonderful word in the last chapter of the gospel by

Mark the responsibility of ministering is made clear to go out into all the world and preach the gospel but this is the wonderful truth he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved baptism is the public response to a realization that Jesus Christ is our door of hope for the world that is to come we're not ashamed of him we're we're in that narrow way he's been our forerunner he went into Jordan's river with John Baptist John

[37 : 53] Baptist says no no no no no I ought to be baptized of thee the Lord says no his purpose there as he went through the water of baptism in Jordan was to set an example as our forerunner and then he says follow me follow me and my friends it is in a sense a tithe of thanksgiving to submit ourselves to that just and righteous command of the Lord Jesus Christ our forerunner that we follow him and become public attendants upon his example and consistent with his gracious commands to do whatsoever he commands us to do

I put that to you because I feel that a public testimony is the paying of a tithe of thanksgiving to him who has set the victory before us who has shown us the way of salvation who has revealed to us not generally to the world but to us the wonder of full salvation through the person of our gracious Lord and Saviour who was willing to give himself into the hands of a man a sinful man John Baptist what to do for thus it recometh us to fulfil all righteousness and part of the righteousness in which we shall be clothed if we go to heaven when we die is the righteousness of fulfilment by our

Lord as he submitted to be immersed in Jordan's river by that wonderful person who ran before the Lord in that sense John the Baptist you say alright my friends I'm not here to say baptism is essential salvation I would hesitate to say anything that would give that impression but I say this to rightly acknowledge our indebtedness to the Lord for his great goodness in bringing us into the hope of the gospel and giving us an affirmation of the fact of it puts us into such a situation where it becomes us to do what

Abram did in paying part of his bounty to the high priest Melchizedek at this point and place of time and now I've got to draw to the amen haven't I whether the forerunner is for us entered even Jesus made and high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek now Melchizedek is a high priest forever forever not such a thing as Aaron's eldest son taking over from his father because Aaron's got past it and he's about to be taken to glory having fulfilled the work that God gave him to do our high priest he rose from the dead he went at the ascension to the right hand of the father he's the high priest of the church today it's by the exercise of his high priesthood that our profession is rightly maintained toward the

Lord Jesus we depend upon him and his intercessions at the right hand of the father for our protection and care our help amidst all our sinful infirmities and we hope to gather ultimately the victory and we must say if we gain the victory if we obtain the crown having endured the cross we follow the steps of our forerunner who has gone before and set us an example that it is our wisdom continually to pray that we might be given wisdom and strength to emulate Jesus is our perfect example he is the fulfiller of every aspect of the will of the father toward his church here upon the earth now I hope you've been able to follow

[43 : 29] I I say I'm full of infirmities and I don't want to say anything to add to the teaching of God's holy word these things I hope I can say I see as the light the measure of light that the Lord has given me and I have a responsibility to convey those things to you Amen Subject of the Lord's will there will be a prayer meeting on Wednesday evening and Mr Bourmer is engaged to preach here next Lord's Day hymn 144 tune 301 Jesus my all to heaven is gone he whom

I fix my hopes upon his track I see and I'll pursue the narrow way till him I view hymn 144 tune 301 year I love Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[47 : 52] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Not many but love shall my presence.

[50 : 01] And will I turn to say I've come.

What the righteous Savior I have found.

Now I'm going to die with the healing blood.

And say in all the way to God.

Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh. Oh.