

Dr. David A. deSilva, Hebrews, Session 6, Hebrews 5:11-6:20: No Turning Back

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Hey everybody, and welcome back. We are going deep today. Yeah, into the book of Hebrews, specifically a really powerful sermon right in chapters 5 and 6. Okay, and you know, I think this is going to be super insightful for anyone listening.

Yeah, definitely. I mean, this passage tackles something we all struggle with. Yeah, what's that? It's how to keep growing spiritually. Oh, yeah, you know, especially when things get tough when things get tough, especially. Yeah, I feel like that's when I don't want to grow, right? I want to just be comfortable. Yeah, just in my little. Yeah, but the author of Hebrews—he doesn't beat around the bush; he's very direct. He's like, listen, y'all are being sluggish.

That's right in your spiritual growth. He calls them out. What? Yeah, he's like, you guys are is that a word that's actually in there? It's in there. Wow. Yeah, sluggish.

Okay, so he uses this analogy. Okay, he compares them to babies. Okay, needing milk instead of solid food. Okay.

Now that is a vivid drinking image. I've heard that before, right, but I've never really thought about what the solid food, right, of faith might actually be. Good question. So what? What do you think it means? Yeah, it's like the solid food. Yeah, it's like pointing to a deeper understanding of our faith. Oh, okay, you know, moving beyond the basics. Okay, to wrestle with more complex ideas.

Okay, and put them into practice. Yeah, it's about, you know, going beyond simply knowing about God. Uh-huh to truly knowing God.

So, how do we actually make that transition? Yeah, that's the question: from milk to meat, right, from milk to solid food. Yeah, how have you ever felt? Oh, yeah, like you were stuck on spiritual milk. Absolutely. I think we all go through those seasons, you know. I know for me, it often comes down to getting too comfortable in my routine.

Yeah, you know, and neglecting those spiritual disciplines. Oh, yeah, that challenged me to grow. Okay, so let's say we ignore those nudges to grow, right? What happens then? Yeah, well, he doesn't just say Hey, you should probably try to grow a bit right? There's a pretty strong warning in there, too. What is it? Yeah, he talks about turning away from faith. Okay, after experiencing God's blessings as Crucifying Christ afresh.

Whoa. Yeah. I remember the first time I read that I was like, whoa, that's pretty intense. Yeah, and it was meant to evoke a strong reaction.

Okay. Yeah, you have to understand honor and shame. They're huge in first-century culture. Oh, so to say someone was crucifying Christ afresh was to say they were bringing shame on themselves.

Oh, wow, their community. So it's like saying we go, our choices have consequences, right, and those consequences reach further than just ourselves, right? That's right. Okay, so it's a call to responsibility. Yeah, definitely. Well, I think that's something we can still relate to today.

Oh, for sure. You know, we may not use the same language of honor and shame, yeah, but our actions do have an impact on our communities and on our relationship with God, right? And this leads into another idea that I thought was interesting. Okay, the author of Hebrews describes God as this amazingly generous Benefactor. Yes, who showers blessings on his people.

He's very generous. Oh, it's like it's like a farmer carefully cultivating their land, expecting a good harvest. Okay, you know God invests in us, right? Hoping we'll respond with gratitude.

Okay, and live in a way that reflects that investment. So I'm seeing a connection here. Mm-hmm, that if we're not growing and bearing fruit, right? It's like we're rejecting that gift. Yeah, almost like we're saying thanks, but no thanks. That's a good way to put it to God's generosity. Yeah, and this reminds me of the imagery in Isaiah's song of the vineyard. Oh, yeah, where God describes Israel as a vineyard that fails to yield good fruit, right? Despite all the care he's poured into it. Oh, man, that's heartbreaking.

Yeah, but what's interesting is the author of Hebrews? Doesn't leave us dwelling right on that. He doesn't; he goes on to offer reassurance, doesn't he? He does. What does he say? He emphasizes that God sees and remembers our acts of service and love within the community. So those little acts of kindness, yes supporting our fellow believers it matters they matter it does. Okay, so he's saying our efforts he is are noticed in value. Absolutely.

I love that. It shifts the focus from feeling inadequate right to actively expressing our gratitude. Yeah, it's like instead of focusing on how we fall short. Yeah, we can focus on pouring out love and support, yes, to those around us. That's good. Okay, so it's a beautiful way to counteract that feeling of being stuck.

Yeah, but he doesn't stop there. He doesn't stop there. He takes us even deeper. Okay, where does he go? Exploring the unshakable nature of God's promises.

Okay, telling about that. Alright, so he starts by talking about God's oath to Abraham. Okay, which was a big deal back then. Okay, you see in ancient cultures an oath was the ultimate guarantee of trustworthiness. By swearing an oath, you put your reputation and honor on the line. So when God made an oath, you knew he meant business. Oh, wow.

Yeah, that's serious. Yeah, and the author of Hebrews is using this example. Okay of God's oath to Abraham. Yeah to highlight the reliability of all of God's promises of all God's promise. Yeah, okay, not just that one, not just to Abraham, but to all of us, all of us.

Okay, so for those of us listening, yeah, how does this connect to our own lives? Well, think about a time when you were facing a tough situation, a real storm in your life, right? You needed something solid to hold on to, something to assure you that things would be okay. Yeah, that's what God's oath provides. Okay, an unshakable anchor for our souls. So even when Everything around us feels uncertain.

Yes, we can cling to the certainty. That's the idea of God's promises. Yeah, I like that, and to drive this point home. Okay, it's one of the most powerful images in the entire Bible, okay? What's that? Hope as an anchor for the soul? Whoa, it's powerful.

I love that image. Yeah, it's so vivid and relatable. It is. I think we've all felt that need for an anchor in the midst of life storms. Absolutely, it speaks to that deep longing. We all have for stability and security. Yes, in a world that often feels chaotic and unpredictable.

It does feel that way sometimes, doesn't it? Yeah, it's actually lately, especially lately for sure. It's been a wild ride has been a wild ride. Yeah, okay. So we've got this image of hope as an anchor.

Yes, but what I'm curious about, yeah, is the author of Hebrews doesn't just throw this image out there, right? He connects it back to the Old Testament. He does that, right? Oh, he specifically points to God's oath to Abraham, okay, as an example of this unshakable hope in action now. That's the story I've heard many times. Yeah, but it always amazes me.

Yeah, here's Abraham ready to sacrifice his only son, ready to sacrifice his only son. That's by God's command because God told him to, yes, and yet he still holds on to this Hope that God will somehow make things right. It's incredible, isn't it? It's truly remarkable It's remarkable thing. Yeah, and the author of Hebrews uses this story to show us that even when things look bleak, right? Even when it seems like all hope is lost, yes, we can still trust in God's promises.

We can because God's promises aren't just empty words. They're not; he's actually put his own Reputation on the line by swearing an oath. That's right. So the author of Hebrews is basically saying that God is all in; he is all in when it comes to his promises. That's right.

And that's where we find true security. Yeah, not in our own strength. We're not in ourselves or our abilities. Yeah, but in the unchanging nature of God's character.

I love that. So it's like we're tethered. Yes to this rock-solid foundation rock-solid foundation that can't be shaken No matter what storms come our way no matter what that's such a comforting thought it is Especially when we're facing those times of doubt and uncertainty, you know, we all face those times we all do But there's another layer to this idea of hope, okay that I find really interesting what's that it's not just about individual security Right, you're picking up on something really important there. Okay, the author of Hebrews makes it clear that our hope is not just for us; it has a communal dimension as well.

So it's not just about me clinging to hope, right? It's about us clinging to hope together, precisely. We're all in this together. We are supporting each other.

Yes, encouraging each other and helping each other stay anchored in the midst of the storms. That's right. You know, that makes me think of the image of a group of climbers. Oh, yeah, rope together. Yeah, as they ascend the mountain, good analogy.

They're all facing the same dangers. Yeah, but they're stronger. They're stronger together and safer and safer together because they're connected to each other. That's right, and it highlights why the author of Hebrews places so much emphasis on perseverance. Yes, he

knows that the journey of faith is not a solo climb. It's not; it's a group effort. It is, and we need each other to make it to the summit. We do. There will be times when we stumble, right when we lose our grip.

Uh-huh. We feel like giving up. Yeah, but that's where our community comes in. That's right to pick us up. Dust us off and remind us of the hope we share. And that hope and the hope is not just some vague wish or desire right it's grounded in the very real promise of Inheriting all that God has for us. It is eternal life a new heaven and a new earth a new heaven and a new earth and the joy of being in God's Presence forever. Wow, it's a lot to look forward to that's a prize worth fighting for.

Yeah, yeah, hope worth holding on to, absolutely, even when the path gets rough, even when it's hard. But you know, going back to that image of hope as an anchor, right? I'm struck by how personal, yeah, and intimate it is. It's not just about clinging to an idea or a promise, right? It's about anchoring our very souls to something greater than ourselves. That's a beautiful observation. Yeah, and the author of Hebrews Doesn't shy away from that personal dimension, right? In fact, he takes the image of the anchor even further.

Oh, really? Doesn't he? He says that our hope actually enters into the inner sanctuary of God's presence. Wow, it's powerful it sends chills down my spine. It's amazing. It's like our hope is this rope that stretches all the way to heaven. That's a great way to think about it, connecting us directly to God. Yeah, so it's not just some abstract concept floating around in our heads. It's not abstract.

It's a tangible, real connection. Yeah, to the very source of life and hope, that's right. And this is where the author brings in the figure of Jesus. Yes, he does; he describes Jesus as our forerunner.

Uh-huh. The one who has already entered into the inner sanctuary of God's presence. Yes, on our behalf, on our behalf. So it's like Jesus has gone ahead of us.

Yes, blazing a trail. He's the pioneer, securing our place. Yes, making sure that our hope has a firm anchor in heaven itself. It's nice, and this is what makes our hope so unshakable. It's not based on our own efforts or our ability to hold on tight enough, right? It's based on what Jesus has already done for us.

It's based on his work. That's so encouraging. It is encouraging because, let's face it. Yeah, there are times when my grip on hope feels pretty weak. We all have those, but knowing that Jesus is holding the other end of the rope, so to speak, that gives me a sense of security.

It's a death. I could never find on my own. It's like he's saying Don't worry. I've got you.

Yeah, I've already gone ahead and secured your place. Yes, keep holding on to me, and you'll be safe. I love that. Yeah, it's like the ultimate safety net. It is, you know, this whole discussion about hope in Hebrews. Yeah, it makes me think about the importance of perspective. It's so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day struggles. It is the frustrations, the anxieties. Yeah, but the author is urging us to lift our gaze- yes, to look beyond the immediate circumstances and focus on the eternal reality of God's promises. That's right.

And when we shift our perspective like that, it changes everything. It changes everything, doesn't it? Yeah, it doesn't mean our problems magically disappear, right, but it does give us the strength and courage, yeah, to face them with a renewed sense of hope. It's like we're standing on solid ground, yeah, even when the world around us feels like it's falling apart.

That's a good way to put it. So, how do we practically cultivate it? Yeah, that kind of eternal perspective good question. What are some ways? We can remind ourselves. Yeah, this hope yeah, we have in Christ.

Yeah, I think it starts with intentionally immersing ourselves in God's Word Okay meditating on his promises Reminding ourselves of all he has done for us soaking in the truth Yes, letting it sink deep letting it sink deep into our hearts and mind into our hearts and mind Yeah, okay, and then it's about putting that truth into practice Okay, it's about actively choosing to trust God even when it's hard even when it's hard. Yeah, it's about reaching out to others in need. Okay, sharing our hope with those who are struggling and encouraging each other to keep pressing on.

Yeah, towards the goal, because in the end it's all about inheriting the promises of God. That's where true joy and lasting fulfillment are found. That's it, and it's a journey We're meant to take together. Yes, supporting and encouraging each other along the way.

That's right. We need each other. That's for sure, so, you know, we're talking about this idea of practically cultivating hope. I keep thinking about that passage in Hebrews, okay, where it says faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Yeah, that's a good one.

It's a good one, right? It reminds me that hope isn't just Passive wishful thinking, right? It's active. It's active.

It's fueled by faith Yeah, and it compels us to live differently it changes how we live it changes how we live. Yeah, so it's like hope gives us the energy to keep moving forward. Yeah, even when we can't see the finish line, right?

It's believing what God has promised will come true. Yeah, even if we don't see it, even if we don't see it, and that kind of hope, right, has a ripple effect. It does; it impacts how we treat others. Yeah, how we respond to challenges, even how we view ourselves. That's right. Speaking of seeing ourselves, okay, the author of Hebrews spends a lot of time talking about the importance of staying connected. Yeah, to the community. Why do you think that's so crucial? Oh, that's so important to cultivating hope. I think it goes back to that image of the climbers.

Oh, yeah, rope together, roped together. Yeah, you know, when we're isolated, it's easier to lose heart. Oh, for sure, you know, to get bogged down by doubts and fear, we need each other to stay anchored. Yeah, so like we're each holding a piece of the rope, yeah, that connects us to hope, uh-huh. And when someone starts to slip, right, we can pull him back up.

Yes, remind them of the truth. And help them find their footing again. That's right. And remember the author of Hebrews isn't just talking about receiving support from others. He's also calling us; he's calling us to be that source of support. Yes, for our fellow believers to be hope givers, to be hope givers and not just hope receivers.

I love that. It's important. It's like we're all part of this intricate tapestry of hope. Yes, each thread supporting and strengthening the others.

That's Beautiful; that's a beautiful image of what the church is meant to be, right? A refuge. Yeah, a safe haven, yeah, where we can find encouragement and support in the midst of Life storms. That's right, a place where we can be Honest about our struggles. Yeah, share our burdens.

Yeah, and celebrate our victories together. That's good, because let's face it. None of us can do this alone. We can't; we all need each other, and we all need that unshakable hope that comes from knowing we are anchored to God through Christ. That's right. So as we wrap up this incredible deep dive, yeah, into Hebrews, huh? I want to circle back to something you said earlier.

Okay, about making a choice. Yeah, the choice of where we place our hope. That's right. That's the core message.

That's the core message, isn't it? Are we going to trust in the fleeting things of this world? Right things that can be here one day and gone the next, the things that don't last, the things that don't last. Yeah, or are we going to anchor our souls right to the eternal? Unchanging reality. Yes, to God's love and promises. That's what the question is- that's a powerful question to ponder- and it's not a one-time choice.

Is it? No, it's not. It's something we have to choose. We have to choose it over and over again every day, every single day. That's right. You're absolutely right.

Yeah, it's a daily decision. It is to fix our eyes on Jesus, yes, to trust in his finished work, and to let his hope fill us with strength and courage to face whatever comes our way, to face whatever comes our way, because in the end, yeah, that's what it all comes down to. What's that choosing? Hope: choosing to believe that God is good.

Yes, that he keeps his promises. He does, and that he has a plan for our lives. It does. That is far greater than anything we could ever imagine. That's right. And that, my friend, is a truth worth holding on to no matter what, no matter what, as we're talking about, you know, practically cultivating this hope.

Yeah, I keep thinking about that passage in Hebrews that says Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. That's a powerful one. It is a powerful one.

It reminds us that hope isn't just passive wishful thinking; it's active, right? It's fueled by faith. Yeah, and it compels us to live differently. Yeah, it's like changes things it changes things Yeah, it's like hope gives us the energy to keep moving forward even when we can't see the finish line You know, it's believing that what God has promised will come true even

if we don't see it yet even if we don't see it and That kind of hope has a ripple effect Yeah, it impact like you were saying how we treat others how we respond to challenges, right? Even how we view ourselves, speaking of seeing ourselves.

Okay, the author of Hebrews spends a lot of time talking about the importance of staying connected to the community. Yeah, he does. Why do you think that is so crucial for cultivating hope? Well, I think it goes back to that image of the climbers' rope together. Yeah, you know, when we're isolated, it's easier to lose heart. Oh, yeah, get bogged down by doubts and fear. Let's try to do it on our own when we try to go alone.

We're going to fall. Yeah, we need each other. We need each other to stay anchored. It's like we're each holding a piece of the rope. Yes, that connects us to hope. That's a good way to put it, and when someone starts to slip, we can pull them back up, remind them of the truth, and help them find their footing again. That's right, and remember the author of Hebrews isn't just talking about receiving support from others.

No, he's not. He's also calling us to be that source of support for our fellow believers, to be hope givers. Not just hope receivers. Yes, it's a both and it's about, and I love that. Yeah, it's like we're all part of this intricate tapestry of hope. Beautiful, each thread supporting and strengthening the others.

Yeah, I love that image, and that's a beautiful image of what the church is meant to be. It's a refuge, a safe haven, where we can find encouragement and support in the midst of life's storms. Yeah, a place where we can be honest about our struggles, share our burdens, and celebrate our victories together, right? Because let's face it. None of us can do this alone. We can't; we need each other, and we all need that unshakable.

Hope that comes from knowing we're anchored to God through Christ. So as we wrap up this incredible deep dive into Hebrews, it's been a good one. I want to circle back to something you said earlier about making a choice- right, the choice of where we place our hope. That's the core message, isn't it? Yeah, are we going to trust in the fleeting things of this world the things that don't last, the things that can be here one day and gone the next? Yeah, or are we going to anchor our souls to the eternal? Unchanging reality of God's love and promises. That's the question. That's a question.

We all have to answer. That's a powerful question to ponder, and it's not a one-time choice. It's not a one-and-done. It's something we have to choose over and over again every day, every single day, every single day. That's right. It's a daily decision to fix our eyes on Jesus, to trust in his finished work, and to let his hope fill us with strength and courage to face whatever comes our way. And in the end, that's what it all comes down to: choosing.

Hope choosing, hope choosing to believe that God is good, that he keeps his promises, and that he has a plan for our lives. That is far greater than anything We could ever imagine that is a truth worth holding on to it is no matter what no matter Why well, I think we've covered a lot of ground today We've explored the challenges of spiritual growth the importance of community the power of God's promises and the Unshakable nature of hope and I hope our listeners have gained some practical insights and encouragement. Yeah, for their own journeys of faith. Absolutely.

Remember, you're not alone in this. You're not alone. God is with you always, and his hope will never disappoint. Never. Well, thank you for joining us on this deep dive into the book of Hebrews. It's been a pleasure. We'll see you next time