

**LETTERS FROM GRANDPA**  
**#292**

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with Hebrews 6:19: **"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain,"** The anchor referred to in this verse is known today as a "kedge anchor". These anchors are designed to be placed in a small boat, rowed to the desired destination, and then cast into the sea. Then the ship can be winched to the location of the anchor regardless of wind or tide. In 1812 the American frigate Constitution escaped a British squadron by using kedge anchors. This Scripture informs us that hope is a firm and secure anchor for the soul. It is "behind the curtain" so that it can draw us into the very presence of God. Regardless of shifting winds and tides our hope is a firm and secure anchor that draws us to God.

Abraham is used as an example to teach us the power of hope. Against hope he believed in hope (Rom. 4:18). His wife was not only barren, she was past the age of having children (Heb. 11:11). Since God wanted Abraham to take hold of this hope, He confirmed His promise with an oath. Because he never lost hope, Abraham waited patiently and ultimately received what God had promised. Since God also wants us to take hold of hope, He has confirmed His promise to us in such way that it becomes an anchor for our soul. This "firm and secure" anchor draws us into the presence of God (See Heb. 6:13-20).

At the risk of being indiscreet, it is important to remember that Isaac was not virgin born. Abraham's hope prompted him to action. He was not "weak" in his faith, nor did he consider his "own body as dead" though he was about a hundred years old. His hope transcended his age and the deadness of Sarah's womb and he became "fully persuaded" that God would perform what He had promised. That's why he did not "waver" but was "strengthened". Abraham believed in hope and was not disappointed. If we truly have hope, we will not be disappointed either! (Rom. 4:18-25).

How vividly I recall witnessing to a cancer patient many years ago. Though he was terminally ill, he admitted being too proud to confess Christ on his death bed. He foolishly vowed to die the way he lived. He did, however, have great confidence in modern medicine. Consequently, he was clinging to the hope that his cancer treatments would somehow make him well. Then the doctor inadvertently did something that pulled the plug on his optimism and totally destroyed his hope. As a gesture of kindness, the doctor removed all restrictions on his diet and told him that he could eat anything he wanted. The patient told me that now he felt like a condemned man on death row receiving his last meal. Almost immediately he was a different man. His face was drained of color. One moment he had hope in modern medicine, and the next moment he had no hope at all. He died within two days and as far as I know never confessed Christ. Like a runner giving up when the finish line was in sight, this poor man refused the only real hope there is. The absence of hope affected him physically and hastened his rendezvous with destiny. He didn't have to do it, but sadly his pride prompted him to die in unbelief.

Not so with Christians! We have been begotten again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Pet. 1:3). Like a warrior's helmet our hope protects our minds from discouragement (1 Thess. 5:8). Like a river of living water, hope purifies our lives (1 Jn. 3:3). We plough in hope and we thresh in hope (1 Cor. 9:10). We rejoice in hope (Rom. 5:2) and we are saved by hope (Rom. 8:24). Our hope transcends the temporal things of earth and like an anchor of the soul draws us within the veil to an eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:15). As Paul put it, if our hope is only in this life, we are of all men most miserable (1 Cor. 15:19).

But, as we have said before, hope is not passive. Once the anchor has been dropped at the desired destination, that's when the work really begins. Yes, the anchor is steadfast and sure. Yes, the cable can stand the strain of adverse winds and rising tides. Yes, God supervises the whole process so that we will never be tempted beyond what we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10:13). But someone must still operate the winch. God does not do this all by Himself, but has chosen to let us participate in this process. We are "laborers together with God" and hope helps provide the energy we need to succeed (1 Cor. 3:9). Isaiah said it like this: **"those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."** (Isa 40:31)

If you are not facing discouragement today, someday you will. Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward (Job 5:7). Your trouble may involve money, relationships, employment, health, or something else, but it will come. The wicked one will use this trouble to try and make you discouraged. Note that the words "encourage" and "discourage" both involve "courage". "Hope" gives you courage and the "lack of hope" takes it away. Please cling to a hope in Christ that is steadfast and secure for it can ultimately bring you safely to God and you can live with Him forever.

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce