



#1 in the Anchored series

My Anchor

Forest Park Church

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I can't help but feel that maybe more than any other time in my life our culture, families, and Churches find themselves feeling adrift.

In our society, we more than ever are surrounded by choices. We have so many options that we have a perception that there is always a better option out there.

- So if things do not meet our expectations in one job, marriage, city, etc,
- we tend to flit from thing to thing as though we're channel surfing, looking for something better.
- But this tendency hinders our growth in life, and our walk with God.
- In the past we felt that we might only reach our highest potential by fully committing to things and ultimately to God.

Or maybe think about it another way, are we hungry?

- Are we running on empty
- Blindly staring into the refrigerator
- Stepping back from the pantry saying there is nothing to eat.

What are the things in your life that your hungry for?

- Success
- Friendship
- security
- Acknowledgment

We know there is something to anchor on and something to fill our hunger but it seems we are afraid to, why?

I. What is my life built on?

If everything changed tomorrow what would I hold on to?

We tend to not be willing to drop our anchor on something because we can't know ahead of time that a commitment will for sure "work out for us."

- We can research and learn about it ahead of time but these facts don't guarantee the outcome.
- There are all these options out there.
- Which one is the BEST for ME?

We fail to ask the real question which one is truly BEST.

Ultimately our fear of things "not working out" and our constant desire to find something better will leave us empty.

- We feel an intense pressure like the clock is ticking and we need to "live our best life now."
- This can cause us to quit and move on even when we shouldn't.

This is an indication that we are looking for meaning and fullness from the world around us instead of from Christ.

Paul described his hope this way.....

Romans 8:35-39

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers,

nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- If you are getting your fullness and life from Christ, you have the inner comfort and security to take risks, and achieving perfection in your worldly life loses its significance.
- We are more likely to stick with jobs or friends or marriages that may be imperfect, and say no to temptations to “trade up” because we know that it is not the source of our life.
- It reduces the pressure of getting happiness from that thing,
- because we are already full inside.

Heb 6:19

*We have this as a sure and **steadfast anchor of the soul**, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*

The context of the phrase involves God’s promise, first given to Abraham, now inherited by all those who believe in the same God that Abraham did.

- This is the promise, the text tells us, that God not only promised but went the extra step and guaranteed with an oath.
- This is the promise that all the descendants of Abraham would be blessed, and indeed we are.
- Not with anything so trivial and fleeting as health, wealth, and prosperity, but instead we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
- This hope is the anchor of our souls.

Maybe as you listen to this this morning your thinking really.....

II. Have we fallen for a lie?

Could it be that the whole Idea of self actualization is a lie.

- It creates a hunger in life.
- This principle is what is illustrated in Genesis 3. This story is the quintessential example of “possibility chasers” living in the center of their own universe.
- The serpent says to Eve “you can do better!”
- You should self-actualize, and reach your full potential, instead of trusting God for your fullness.

All about me!

This way of thinking is diametrically opposed to what Jesus taught:

Matthew 10:39

“If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it”

This runs very counter to the cultural norms of our world!

You’ve probably heard of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

The model describes 5 varieties of needs, each of which must be satisfied before one can move up to the next level of the pyramid.

1. At the very bottom, there are physiological needs like the need for food, water, and sleep. If you haven't got enough food, for example, it's very unlikely that you'll feel motivated to pursue the needs at the next level of the pyramid,
2. Safety needs. These include feeling financially secure, safe from harm, and being healthy.
3. Social belonging, such as feeling loved and having friendships.
4. Esteem needs, such as a sense of mastery and competence.
5. Summit of the pyramid, the ultimate goal of self-actualization.

It gives us the impression that so long as we work hard, we can make progress to the top of the pyramid.

Could it be that, our dogged pursuit to become the best version of ourselves and live our best lives might be doing more harm than good.

If we look closely, we will see that the word “self” is the focus of Maslow’s theory. Life is all about the self. All about what I can achieve. The very thing Jesus taught against.

We’ll never know the joy God intends without a complete commitment

- Peter Walks on the water.
- We can never be the complete source of our personal estimation of ourselves. (Self Esteem Self worth).

Are you hungry?

1. Is Christ Enough?
2. Do you think about the possibilities a lot?
 - Are you stressed?
 - Are you restless?
3. Are you feeding off of things God doesn't approve of?
4. How deep are your commitments?
5. What would it take for you to trade up?
 - on your friends
 - On you marriage
 - on your family
6. Would you be willing to sell all to gain his kingdom?

Stop looking at this world with hungry eyes!

Start making Christ the center of the universe.

How do we start living life in fullness rather than Emptiness?

III. Faith is the Soul Anchor.

“I wish I had something that I could trust unconditionally.”

In the rough waters of life we all need some guidance, we can find the direction we need in a couple ways.

A: Ask God to provide personal wisdom.

James 1:5-6

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

Wisdom is more than information, its applied information.

But sometimes we simply don't have the information we need. Then what?

B: Seek grounded guidance.

Consider the vital nature of the buoy. As an essential aid to navigation, the buoy is critical for guiding ships into port safely.

- Much like curbs and stripes mark the path for cars and trucks to travel along a road,
- it is the network of buoys that communicates the same message of right-of-way to oceangoing ships.
- Without buoys, ship captains would find it very difficult to know where the channels are, where the dangerous shoals are, and to what side of the channel they need to stay for safe passage.

Beneath the bobbing and floating buoy is a chain that extends to the very bottom of the ocean and is attached to a large concrete block.

- The chain is just long enough to allow the buoy to adjust to the changing tides and currents, but not so long that it allows the buoy to stray too far from its designated station.
- As long as the buoy remains firmly anchored to its base, it is able to provide guidance, safety, and direction to all the ship captains who depend on its stalwart presence to guide their way.
- Without that anchor, however, the buoy is a worthless piece of debris floating aimlessly—and dangerously—in the waters.
- Not only can it lead mariners astray, it could actually cause a catastrophic disaster.

That's one reason God gave us this thing we call Church.

Ephesians 4:11-16

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **to equip the saints for the work of ministry**, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, **so that we may no longer be children**, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by **every wind of doctrine, by human cunning**, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

A: Equip the saints for the work of ministry

B: To the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

C: No longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by

- Every wind of doctrine,
- By human cunning,

- By craftiness in deceitful schemes.

D: Speaking the truth in love,

- Grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,
- From whom the whole body, joined and held together
- when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Wrap up:

Why do we need an anchor?

1. Because hard times will come.

The book of Hebrews was written to a group of struggling and suffering Christians who were undergoing persecution can be summarized like this: Just keep going. Continue on. Endure. Persevere. Do not give up the faith though hardship is a present reality.

So it is with us.

- Hardship is a present reality just by way of living in a broken world, but there will be seasons in your life and mine when that hardship will become more acute.
- But our souls can remain secure because they are anchored to something secure – the hope in Christ that does not change.

2. Because our hearts tend to drift.

We also need an anchor for our souls because no matter how long we've been walking with Jesus, we have a tendency to drift. If you left a ship in the middle of a body of water, no matter how calm and serene that water might seem on the surface, it will inevitably start to drift. That's because even though the surface appears calm, there are currents constantly operating below the surface. So it is with the human heart.

- We might seem fine on the surface.
- Life might be put together.
- Our theology might be on point.
- Yet inside us all is the undercurrent of sin.
- Because it's there, we all have the tendency to drift.
- And no one drifts toward Jesus; only away from Him.
- This is why we need to be anchored – it's because if we are not, then we will slowly but surely start to drift away.

3. Because we are too easily pleased.

What can cause that drift? Many things, really –

- it could be an enticing relationship.
- Perhaps it's the love of money or the chasing of some ambition.
- We take our focus from Christ and instead begin to meander our way toward other things – things that promise us satisfaction and joy, but never truly deliver.

But we believe that promise because, as CS Lewis famously said, **"we are far too easily pleased."**

4. Because we settle.

We become content to find temporary pleasure and satisfaction in the things of the world instead of, by faith, believing that the greatest and only real lasting satisfaction can be found in God.

This is why I need an anchor for my soul:

- it's because I know myself,

- and I know that unless I am firmly anchored in the promise of what is and what's to come, then I will settle for something less.