

Hope (2)

II Corinthians 3:18: "But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Psalms 84:5-7: "How blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the highways to Zion, passing through the Valley of Baca. They make it a spring; the early rain also covers it with blessings. They go from strength to strength; everyone of them appears before God in Zion."

Hebrews 6:19-20: "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast, and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

I John 3:3: "And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

Let's pray:

Father, we come to Your presence with thanksgiving and praise because You have given us such a standing in Your Son. There is no way we could have obtained this, but You have given it to us as a gift, and we worship You. Lord, only You can reveal the things that are on Your heart. There is nothing I can say, nothing we read that can reveal You except for You, and so we appeal to You this morning, that You will reveal Your heart to us and what You have done for us through Jesus Christ. Lord, we commit this time to Your Holy Spirit. Illuminate what is on Your heart to us. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Like all good teachers you start with a little review. I am going to read what I started with last time. As you know my subject is hope and it is not hope as in just a thing, but it is what our hope is as Christians. God has given us a hope. And hope is a favorable and confident expectation. It is not a wish but an expectation. It is not myopic or nearsighted. It has to do with the future and what is at the moment unseen. And I likened it to baseball spring training, everybody has the hope of winning the pennant, but they cannot see down the line, but their hope is there.

A Christians' hope is given him by God; it is an expectation God gives me concerning His plan and His purpose for me, and we could say for the whole church. It gives purpose to my life; it gives me a higher perspective to why He saved me. In other words, our hope does not depend on who we are or what we have or where we might be. It is a gift from the Sovereign God, and He calls us into it.

Our hope is not just that we go to or be in heaven, but our hope is to be transformed into those spirits of just men made perfect who dwell in the heavenly Zion. Hope is meant to be realized. That is the reason it was given, and God never gives a false hope.

Today, we want to look at this hope as our being glorified. Remember, that was the whole thing of last time. We see ourselves justified, we see ourselves called, but how little we see ourselves glorified in Christ, shining with His glory because He shares it with us. How little we do that, and yet this is really what God has meant for us when He saved us. It is to share in that glory

of His Son who is the beginning of a new creation. This is what is meant for us as Christians. So this morning I would like to bring, "How does this hope play out." I do not want to say get accomplished, but how is it realized? How do we realize it? How are we brought through to the transformation we see of these spirits of just men made perfect. How does that happen in me? How does that happen to you? How do we come into the hope of this glory?

I want to start out with a parable, not a Biblical parable. But this is my own made-up parable. A parable is to illustrate a truth by using an earthly story. So I am going to use an earthly story which actually happened. So maybe it is more of an allegory than a parable but you can decide which it is. I want to preface it by saying that the verses I read in II Corinthians 3:18 and Psalm 84 are what refer to this story.

When I was a young man in high school, I played basketball. Now this is not a story about me; it is a story about this year. Our high school was a football school; basketball was an afterthought, and our school was known for the league champion of the football team almost every year. Basketball was not bad, but it was not a champion; it was never a champion. We had a good season in my junior year and coming back my senior year, I think the coach had high expectations for us. I remember in 1970, fifty-three years ago. We came out of the summer, which was the first year at school, our dress code was made more lax. For the first time guys could have facial hair and hair below our collars. We could wear shorts if we wanted to. We could not wear shorts in those days unless it was "Bermuda Day." And I remember the first day at school one of our starting guards had a full beard, seven feet tall and had this huge beard, really cool looking. Remember the movie, "Billy Jack?" I had a Billy Jack Indian reservation hat, with a head band around it and I decorated it. We came to school and my coach saw us, and he called me and the guard with the beard into his office, and he said, "What are you guys doing!? Here you are with a beard and you come like some Indian out of a Western!" He was really upset, and I think it was because he felt like, "These guys, there is such promise that I have for them, and I do not think they realize." That was it. This is what he did.

The season did not start with practice until November 1, and colleges could start October 15th. My coach was captain of the 1952-53 UCLA Bruins Basketball team, and at that time UCLA was the cream; you could not get any better. As a matter of fact, when I was in high school, from 1964 to 1975, in twelve years, they had won ten NCAA championships, ten out of twelve years, and in between those twelve years they won seven in a row, seven championships in a row. The New York Yankees did not even win seven World Series in a row. This is the greatest feat you can see. In 1970 they had just won '67, '68, '69, '70. They had just had their fourth in a row. So everybody knew UCLA.

So just before our season started our coach decided to take a group of us to watch them practice, and it was an awesome experience. Mr. Reed, who had a motor home, took seven of us to see the practice. And there we were in Poly Pavilion, the royalty of gyms for basketball. You can see the banners of their championships up above us. Out on the floor there were a couple of all-Americans. Then Johnny Wooden, the wizard of Westwood, came up to our coach and called him by his first name: "Barry, it is good to see you." Man, we were floored; He knew our coach. I was captain of the team, and I said, "Yeah coach, right?" Then you see him; he was so familiar, and our mouths dropped.

As we are watching the practice, we realized that all the drills that we do they are doing. They were practicing the offense that we ran. Oh, maybe because we are running their offense. The man to man defense, the press, everything you could think of was just amazing. When we left that gym and we were riding home, a couple of us had an epiphany; we saw something, and I do not want to say we *were* them, but we saw us in them. We saw it as it was; we were them and they were us. It was an amazing thing, and all of a sudden, "What is wrong with you guys in us?" And a few of us caught this little epiphany, this little vision, and we started to say, "We are champions." They were champions; that is us, we are champions. Just because you see something does not mean necessarily that it is right there or it is just going to be handed to you. This was before our season started, so how can you be a champion at the beginning of a season? You can't. Why not? Because you haven't played the season! And so the whole idea was we had seen ourselves as champions; we saw the end of the picture. And the only thing was, you had to go through the things that brought us to that place.

You know, that is the whole idea of being brought. I do not want to use it as a process and make it mechanical, but there is a whole life to be lived, there is a whole season to go through that brings you to that place. We had to go to do our conditioning. Nobody likes conditioning. We want to play the games. No, the first three weeks is all conditioning. All we are doing is running and running and running. Then you have the preseason practices. You have not even played a game yet, and you are doing all these practices where you are learning the press or you are refining the press, refining the offense and doing all those things that you are supposed to do. Then that vision is tested. How? By the games you play. We had eleven preseason games, a potential of eleven preseason games, and we had made it through the eleven, and then we had a league season, another fourteen games. And every week, at least twice a week that vision was tested, our vision was tested.

The other thing that goes with this is the idea that what was going to get us through? We had a coach who knew how to get us there because he had gone through it before, himself. He was a forerunner to that glory. Like the Holy Spirit he knew how to lead us through the things that we were going to go through to the end which he had in store for us, and all we had to do was trust him, and in trusting him that meant submitting to what we had to do. And in coming back from that time at Poly Pavilion we gained a whole new respect for our coach; a respect he could have gotten no other way, in my thinking, than by taking us there. We had such a new respect for him and because of that there was a submission to his tutelage instead of just, "We will play the games." No, there was a submission to this, and we were saying that we trust him because he was with John Wooden. He was like his son, how could we not trust him? You go through the season, you play the games, you practice, and you hone in on your weaknesses. You do that all through basketball season, but another thing happened.

In the 1960's and 70's when Lou Alcindor played for the Bruins, they started to televise the Bruin games on Friday and Saturday nights. They would televise the games on tape delay so you could get home at 10:00 o'clock and watch the Bruins play. Our games were on Tuesdays and Fridays, so afterwards if we would have a victory it was not just to soak in your victory, "Oh yeah, we are the greatest," because it never got to that. We would get home on Friday night and

instead of going out and partying, we would turn on the tape-delay of the Bruins. That fortified that vision; that's us; we are champions just like them, and it really fortified us.

Can you see that as being like in II Corinthians 3? We are beholding as in a mirror the glory, that image that we are being transformed into. We are being transformed game by game by game into this thing that we have seen, and it was glorious to us. And it goes from glory to glory, from to game to game, from practice to practice; it is being played out. The thing is that when we saw that first practice, all of a sudden what happened was a highway was built in our hearts, a highway to that championship. Just like the Sons of Korah, a highway to Zion was being built in their hearts that helped them, that led them through hard times and high times, but led them through all the way to where they were supposed to be.

We were champions three times. We did not win the final championship; we lost one game that year, and it was the last one. It was quarter finals of the state tournament, and it was a hard blow. But we won two tournament championships, and one of them was the biggest high school basketball tournament west of the Mississippi at that time, and then we won our league, and we were undefeated all the way through. We won twenty-five games before we went to the playoffs. Then we won twenty-seven games in a row. So the whole idea is how we are brought through. We see what we are to be, and the Lord begins to build a highway in our heart to say, "I can travel this highway." And you go step by step, and you reach the destination not by being translated all the way to the end, but you have to go through the life that brings you to the place where you stand before God in Zion complete. So that is my parable. This is the way we are brought through.

The hope for us in being a championship was not sure. The hope that God gives us is sure. It is a sure hope. It does not mean we have to go through things, the thing in the end is sure. And as Christians we must see that it is secured for us, that this hope has been secured for us. Sure means this: it is certain and it is secure. Why is it certain and secure? Because the Author of this hope is God. So hope is a double-edged sword. Hope is the thing we are hoping for, but it is also in the One who will bring us there. So we have the hope of that championship. We also have the hope, the trust in the One who is leading us to it. We trust Him implicitly, and this God is Sovereign.

I want to bring up this point about God's Sovereignty. More often than not when I think of God's Sovereignty, I think of Him overruling things. He overrules a government. He overrules a circumstance. He overrules a weakness that I might have. He overruled my enemies and their designs on me. That is how I think mostly of God's Sovereignty, and that is a part of His sovereignty, but there is an aspect of God's Sovereignty that does not overrule. Instead of overruling He acts to bring us through things that are obstacles, things that are against us. He does not necessarily overrule, He does not remove them from our path, but He brings us through things, and we overcome these things because of the hope that is within us and the God who has given us that hope. Notice that I am tying them together. The hope alone does not get us there; it is the hope in the One who has given us the hope. That is what brings us through to the hope given.

Let me give you an example of this. You know when Jesus went to the cross for us and for His Father, death was not overruled; God did not overrule death. He did not let Jesus be on the

cross and say, "Okay, that is enough; You are willing." As a matter of fact, death took Jesus into himself and kept Him there for three days. Death was not overruled, but on the third day Jesus Christ overcame death through the resurrection. There is a big difference. Death is not overruled; it is overcome in victory. That is why, "Death, where is your sting?" This is why the last time I talked about the hope of the resurrection is that we do not fear death anymore. We do not fear men, we do not fear death, it has no hold on us because through Christ we overcome death, even if we die physically. And that is when all those martyrs I was talking about who went to the stake or to a gallows or to the firing squad, were not frightened about their dying. They went knowing they were going to meet the Lord and be in His presence and share in His glory.

Now we can look at this idea of God's Sovereignty playing out this way in the life of Joseph. We see this aspect of God's Sovereignty in Joseph's life. Joseph was given a hope and to him that hope was sure because God gave him that dream twice. So it was not just a fluke one time. He gave it to him again and said, "This is real; this is really going to happen." He bragged about his hope. That is what most of us do; we brag about things. And his hope was challenged by so many contrary circumstances. The ill will of his brothers towards him challenged his hope. "This guy is going to rule over us; let's kill him and see if he rules over us." He was sold into slavery: "Let's see him rule over us as a slave, it is not going to happen." He was thrown into prison and forgotten. Remember the baker who said, "I will remember you before Pharaoh." "I forgot you for two years. Oops!" And it was not that everything was contrary because during this time he also knew that God was blessing him. He knew God's favor during this time of trial; during this time of contrariness, he still had God's favor. What a wonderful thing. It helps you go through things when you know that you have the favor of God on you while you are going through things that are so contrary and would scream out and say, "If God really cared for you, if God is really going to bring this hope, these things would not be happening." But no, he went through them. God saw him through all these things through to where he sat on the throne of Egypt. It is an amazing thing from slave to throne.

When Joseph was sold into slavery, he was only seventeen. When he gave Pharaoh his dreams, he was thirty. When he first saw his brothers after two years of famine, he was thirty-seven. That is a long time, isn't it? And yet did the hope come through? Was it a secure hope? Yes, it was, by God's doing, by God's Sovereignty. In this whole process a transformation took place in Joseph, just like the transformation that we are looking forward to, a transformation took place in Joseph. And that transformation showed him that the hope that was given to him was not just for him. In other words, it was not just to be lavished on him. It was for a purpose, and the purpose was that God wants to save many people alive, (Genesis 50:20). When his brothers were thinking that he was going to come down hard on them after Jacob was buried, he said, "You meant it evil for me, but God meant it for good, and the good that God meant it for is not that I am sitting on this throne; it is that He might save many people alive, and that included his brothers who did him wrong. It was a whole transformation of heart for Joseph. Here is a little kid thinking, "Yeah, I am on top of the world." Through all of those things God transformed him into a humble man, a humble man whom God could show His compassion through, and he embraced that. Joseph embraced the role that he had there. That was the spirit of this man made perfect. Now sometimes it is not our circumstances that are against our hope being realized. Sometimes it is just us; it is our own failures, our own propensity to sin, our own falling.

In thinking about this, let's consider the Apostle Peter. The Apostle Peter had a hope and it was not just to be fishers of men. In Luke 22:30 at the last supper, they were arguing about who is the greatest, and the Lord talked to them about the greatest will be the servant. He also said to them, "But you will sit on the twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel." That was an expectation for Peter. Wow! What a glorious thing to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel! But you know, by the end of the chapter he had denied His Lord three times. He did not even get out of the chapter. And it says, "He went out and wept bitterly." What a bitter pill to swallow, our own inadequacies, our own self-strength being the very thing that we felt would carry us through is the very thing that keeps us from being able to go through. What a bitter pill to swallow, and no spoonful of sugar helps that pill go down. Nothing! And that is why he wept bitterly. "If I cannot do it, how can it be done? I am hopeless." But hallelujah God has given us a great High Priest, a great High Priest. As our High Priest we see Jesus going before us into the presence of God the Father, taking His blood as a propitiation for our sin. He presents it before God the Father in that heavenly sanctuary thus sealing our forgiveness for our sins, thus sealing our redemption. Again, this is the Sovereignty of God, and the Sovereignty of God is not that He overrules sin. He does not say, "I am going to make a new law, and in that override this because I can do it; I am Sovereign. He does not do that. But what He does is to take sin and judges it in the flesh in Jesus Christ on the cross where He suffered and died. He said, "The wages of sin are just and needs death, and I will pay sin the just wages." That is the sovereignty of God: "I will pay sin its just wages, and in doing that the debt is paid in full, and the account with sin is settled forever." This is one of the things we really need to grasp because we want so much after sinning to do penance. I must do some works to prove to God that I really am sorry for my sins.

We were studying the Prodigal Son, and in that the son rehearsed before he came. He said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and You. I am no longer worthy to be called Your son. Make me like one of Your hired servants, and I will serve You." When the Prodigal gets home and his father sees him, he goes to him saying, "I sinned against heaven and you; I am no longer worthy to be your son." The rest of what he said, "Let me be one of your servants," he never got a chance to say that. Why? Because the father embraced him and took him to himself.

This is often the same with us. If we only see as was said this morning how it is His good pleasure in adopting us. It is His good pleasure. Oh, could we see how pleasurable it is for Him to bring us to Himself through the blood of Christ. This is not something that He is saying, "Oh, I try to hear this." No, He is rejoicing just like the father in the parable, and he is saying, "We must make merry." So often we say, "Now I have to do penance, I have to do the twelve labors of Hercules before I get in there." No! The Father welcomes us in through the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ is the great means of recovery. It is the great means of restoring us not just to God but to the hope that He has given us. It is never an elementary thing. It is a magnificent thing. We have been reading "The Normal Christian Life" and it never says, "Well, I am past needing the blood of Christ. That is for young Christians." It is for all of us forever. We will never outlive our need for the blood of Christ. Isn't it interesting that in Revelation you always see the Lamb as if slain. Why? Because the blood of Christ ever speaks. When Jesus rose from the dead, what do you see? His wounds. His wounds are there. Charles Wesley wrote: "Five bleeding wounds He bears, received on Calvary's tree; they pour effectual prayers, they strongly plead for me." What a wonderful thing has been given to us. We have a High Priest who does not take a lamb to

sacrifice, but He takes His own offering of His own blood and brings it before the Father. It is that blood that is a propitiation and atones for us. That is the only blood that atones for us. It is the blood that cleanses our conscience and allows us to freely come before God, with a clean conscience. It is nice to be forgiven, but it is even better having been forgiven to have your conscience clear because of the blood of Christ. Not because I made up for it, but because of the blood of Christ, the blood of Another shed for me.

And as the High Priest, He intercedes for us. When Peter said, "I will be there for You, Lord," Jesus said, "Satan has *demanded* to sift you as wheat." Now there is that Sovereignty of God again allowing the demand of Satan to be fulfilled. Peter was sifted as wheat for three days. I do not want to enter into whatever he had to go through in his own heart and mind, but some of us have gone through things that to us are just as bad. But Satan has demanded of you, and I have prayed for you that your faith fail not and you come through, and when you have come through, strengthen your brethren. God has given us a great High Priest who intercedes. Thank God for help from heaven! It is not just help that came down from heaven but having come down from heaven, having died and rose again and ascended to heaven, He still pleads for us. What a wonderful Savior we have been given! This is the mercy of God, and this is the mercy that secures that hope. I will not let this poor ransomed sinner die. How wonderful it is to know that we are secured not only by an offering but by the prayers of an ever-living High Priest who has on His heart the will and the pleasure of His Father and also the hope of us, which He carries on His heart. Not only on His heart but also on His shoulders because the names of those twelve tribes are on His shoulders. He bears us before God. How wonderful that He is able to bear us before God. All that we are He is able to bear us.

Hope is also an anchor. There are two ways an anchor was used. There could be more, but I saw two. One is that an anchor keeps you moored, and moored keeps you in the dock. John gave a message years ago and I still have it on my refrigerator, "Don't drift." An anchor keeps you from drifting. It keeps you from going this way or that way. But also you want to be moored during a storm. A lot of shipwrecks come from that hurricane tidal surge and brings those boats miles inland and they are all cracked up. So hopefully this anchor keeps you moored in the harbor during a storm.

An example of this mooring Margaret Barber wrote a hymn: "Wrecked Outright." It has four verses. And in this is the story about a boat (which is a metaphor for her or Christians) that is weathering or has weathered a storm. In verse 3, where after going through such seas, a storm, the trials of life she went through, which for her were devastating, ruined her reputation. She had to leave the mission society that she was in. Her reputation was railroaded. What a hard thing! So when she went back to China, she went on her own. You could say almost disgraced, but in the will of God. But she infers: "My hope is secure because I am anchored to infinity." I am anchored to Someone who is greater than me, greater than my trials, greater than my ambitions, greater than my hopes. I am anchored to infinity. I am anchored to an infinite and living God. In other words she is saying, "If not for these very things that I went through I would have never known not only the vastness of the power of God to keep me through the trial but the depths of His compassion and commitment to me in bringing me through to His end." Sometimes we are lost in the power of God. Don't let us be lost in the power of God to the exclusion of His great

compassion and commitment to see us through. Oh how God loves us! “The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell. It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell” (see Hymn 35 in Christ in Song.) What a wonderful God we have! She was brought to see this anchoring. She was anchored to Him in complete and utter trust, unreasonable trust. There is no reason for it other than the love of God for me that He would bring me into His very purposes. How wonderful is this God who has saved us and given us hope.

Also an anchor is used to draw a ship through a narrow channel into a harbor. You could not trust the ship to get through so they would send a boat ahead of them with an anchor, and it would go through that channel, and then it would put the anchor on some rock strong enough to hold and then the boat would be pulled into harbor. So the anchor would be used as something to draw, not just something to hold but something to draw.

We have a forerunner who has gone through the veil. We look at the veil as a number of things—the veil of his flesh, the veil that keeps man out of the Holy of holies. But a lot of times I think the veil is what’s unknown ahead of us. We do not know what is ahead of us, but we have a Savior who has gone through everything that a man could have conceived of going through. Did He know loss? Yes, Joseph, His earthly father died; He knew loss. He knew things that were against Him; His brothers did not believe in Him, Herod was after Him, the Pharisees and Scribes did not believe His teaching; they were against Him. He knew the powers of the heavens against Him, Satan and all the demons that He encountered; He knew all of that. He knew sickness because He took it from people, and He knew death because He suffered it. He knows the whole unknown, and He has gone through the veil of unknown for us, that we might say, “I made it through. I have overcome.”

Remember at the transfiguration He could have walked right into heaven, but it was not the will of God that He go into heaven without bringing many sons to glory. This is the way as Forerunner that He brings many sons to glory. He goes ahead of us, trodding the pilgrim way that we are to trod. He goes through all of that and brings us to its end.

What is the effect that hope has on the one who hopes? It is not that we go “Oh, it is secured now, and I can just relax and let Him pull me through.” He secured it but I think the men in the ship pulled the ship in because it was very weighty. He who has this hope purifies himself.

Let’s clarify purifies. We think of purify as “I have to be better.” That is not what it is saying. Let’s look at it this way. He who has this hope makes himself ready. Have you ever heard of a hope chest? In the old days it was not only known as hope chest but as a glory box. That is an interesting term for hope chest. Hope chests are not new; they have been around since the Renaissance and some people say that it was even before that. My mom had a hope chest made out of cedar, and a hope chest made out of cedar was first of all so fragrant that it is a beautiful smell; it even overcomes moth balls. When you open the box, you do not smell moth balls, you smell the cedar. It is a fragrant odor; it is a fragrance of life. The other thing is that it is resistant to insects who would help it rot. But the thing about a hope chest was it used to be that in our culture, in the 1800’s especially, women who were looking ahead to their wedding, who had the hope of being married, would buy a chest or maybe someone made it for her, and she would fill it with everything she deemed was important to her anticipated marriage. Some women would

make their own wedding dress, and as they made it they would put it in that hope chest, sometimes taking it out and adding something to it. They put it in there in anticipation of that day. And then they would consider life after the wedding ceremony. I have to live with my husband, so what do I need? So she might buy fine china, linen, tablecloths, sheets, silverware, all sorts of odds and ends that you would keep or little knick-knacks that mean something to you that you want to bring into your marriage. Sometimes she would bring in an album of pictures and photographs of the family to remember her heritage. All of this was then stored away. When I say stored away I do not mean like the lost art that is put in Washington, DC with all the other things. Every once in a while she would come back and open it up and look in it, which would revive that hope. "My hope is revived. I am looking at the dress I am going to wear. This is going to be wonderful. I will have his parents over for the first time, and I am going to set this china before them on this linen. Our beds are going to be made up of these. Our couch is going to be beautiful. I am looking forward to the whole thing, and my hope is renewed." Then it is stored away in preparation for that day. It is preparation, not storage. If you go in my attic it is storage; I still have the kids Legos. But this is preparation. The waiting for that day was not a passive wishing but an active participation in what was to come.

It was a glorious day when I got married and to see my wife come down the aisle in her gown, she was radiant. Her gown was purchased by her mom. This is what the Lord is looking for, a radiant bride, who is prepared with her gown. In Revelation it talks about the ornamentation of the bride's gown which is the work of righteousness of the saints. How wonderful it is to know that we can adorn the gown not for merit but out of love for the One who is coming to marry us. What a wonderful thing! Seeing our hope is sure and drawing near of anticipation of it. May it become that desire in our own hearts for this hope to be realized. May it be that highway to Zion created in our hearts for that better day ahead. This is our hope. Every one of them appears before God in Zion, and I just want to add to that, appears before God in Zion complete, nothing lacking. The spirits of just men made perfect. Let it be so.

I just want to end with these verses: I love hymns because they say things that I can't because these people have experienced something that I haven't.

Hymn 863 is by Frances Bevan who writes children's biographies. She has done one on the Wesleys and it is called, "No More In Earthen Vessels."

Verse 4: "Undimmed (and this is talking about the glory of Jesus) "in that great vessel,

The glory of that light,

Illum'ning with its fullness

The earth in radiance bright.

Verse 5: All in His new creation

God's glory there shall see;

The vessel for that shining

The Lamb's own Bride shall be."

The spirits of just men made perfect.

Oh Lord, bring that to our hearts and our minds more and more. Father, we thank You for such a hope that is ours, but not that we just have such a hope but that Lord, You have secured it for us. You have been the One who can bring us all the way through, and it is because of who You are, Your sovereignty, Your power and Your might, Your commitment and Your great love towards us. You have secured for us what is unimaginable and something we could never have had on our own should we have a thousand lives to live. Oh Lord, we thank You. We thank You for the anchor that You have given us that anchors us, that holds us to You forever and that draws us to You that we might be complete in You and brought through all the things that are mysteries to us that we cannot see ahead of us. Oh Lord, You have gone through as our Forerunner to bring us through. How we praise You! How we thank You. We have such hope, and we have such a God who gives it to us. We thank You in Jesus' name. Amen.