

# Ground of Hope

#0079

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—November 3, 1972

I found a text over in the book of Job that I'm very thankful for: Job, the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter, and the 19<sup>th</sup> verse:

"Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high" Job 16:19.

A witness is one who testifies. He's supposed to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Every one of us is listening to the testimony of somebody or something, perhaps several sources, and from those testimonies, we are forming our conclusions. The particular point that I want to study with you tonight is the "ground of hope"—how to be sure of salvation. And whether you are sure or not and whether you have a certain hope depends upon whose testimony you listen to and accept. Job says, "My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high."

Too many people in their religious experience consult either their own feelings or the attitude and opinions of others, or they seek to appraise and evaluate their own attainments or the results of their work. For many or all of these, they draw conclusions as to how they're getting along and whether they are, to use the phrase, "going to make it" or not.

Where is *your* hope, friend? Do you *have* hope? Do you believe you're going to be with Jesus in Heaven? What makes you *think* you are?

"Well," somebody says, "I've had a better experience this week than I did last."

Well, I'm glad you have, but that's not a good ground for hope; not a good ground at all. The ground of hope is not anything here on earth. Job says, "Behold, my witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high."

Now we'll put another text with that, over in Hebrews, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter, verses 18–20. How good it is to see so many people turning the leaves of the Bible. The *message* of God is in His Word, and the *power* of God is in His Word. Here we find not merely information but inspiration, not merely *what* to do but power to *do* it. Hebrews 6:18:

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:  
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 for ever..." Hebrews 6:18–20.

Now notice: Paul says here that hope is like a what? It's an *anchor*, and it enters into that where? Within the veil. This agrees with what Job wrote. Job says, "My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high." Paul says, "Our hope, like an anchor, enters into that within the veil where Jesus has entered for us." Our hope is not in ourselves; it's in *Jesus*. The ground of our hope is not our experience, whether it be sad or glad, up or down. The ground of our hope is *Jesus*. He has pledged Himself to redeem us, and if we let Him, He'll finish what He's begun.

Let's turn over to 1 John, the fifth chapter, and the ninth verse, first

part: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater..." 1 John 5:9.

Do you believe that? Which would you rather take—*man's* word or *God's* Word?

[Audience responds] God's Word.

Do you? Which testimony would you rather accept—the way you *feel* or what God says? Are you a Christian? Have you given yourself to Jesus? Do you believe His promise to forgive your sins and to get you ready to meet Him?

Somebody says, "I wish I could *feel* it."

There's the question: Which is greater, the testimony of men or the testimony of God? What does this say? "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater..." Now, which do you want: the witness of God or your own witness? What is it that you're longing for, for you to *feel* a certain way? Or are you willing to accept the Word of God? He says if we confess our sins, He does what? Forgives them. (See 1 John 1:9.) He says, "...Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Then if I've come, did He accept me or cast me out? What do you say? He says, "...If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him..." (Revelation 3:20). Have you opened the door? Have you given Him your heart? Well, if you have, what did He do? He came in. When did He come in? When you opened the door. How do you know? He says so.

"Oh, but I can't *feel* it."

Well, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater..."

Turn back a page. 1 John, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter, and the 20<sup>th</sup> verse:

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart,  
and knoweth all things" 1 John 3:20.

“Ah,” somebody says, “that’s the trouble. My heart condemns me.” What’s the next line say? “...God is greater than our heart...” Is He? “If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” Which would you take, what *God* says or what your poor, wavering, uncertain heart says? “If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” Then if I listen to what God says and accept what He says, I can be certain, sure—I can have hope—because my witness is where? In Heaven. Is that where God is? Is that where my Priest, Jesus Christ, is? Is that where the mercy seat where He’s ministering is? Oh yes, all in Heaven. My witness is in Heaven.

Turn back now to our opening text, Job 16:19. I want to look at it a little more. And yes, I’m hoping that somebody leaves this chapel tonight happier than you came in—more certain, more satisfied with God’s way of salvation. Job 16:19:

“Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high” Job 16:19.

I want to read this to you in other translations.

“Yet even already, heaven has a witness for me and there is one on high to vouch for me” Job 16:19 (Moffatt’s Translation).

“Yet now though my witness is in the heavens and He who testifies for me is on high” Job 16:19 (Smith and Goodspeed).

Who is speaking for me? Jesus. Who is vouching for me? Jesus. Didn’t He say, “Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32)? If He says I’m accepted, that’s a good witness, isn’t it? That’s a good witness.

“Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and He that vouches for me is on high” Job 16:19 (*Revised Standard Version*).

“Even now, behold my witness is in heaven, and He that testifieth of me is on high” Job 16:19 (Jewish Translation).

“For look, my witness is in heaven. There is one on high ready to answer for me” Job 16:19 (*New English Bible*).

He takes *my name* on His lips. He stands for me. He represents me. I’ve put my case in His hands.

You know, if you have a case in court and you employ a lawyer, the lawyer is the one that pleads. You may be called upon to answer certain questions, but your lawyer

has the right to tell you when to speak and when not to answer. He's there to appear for you.

"My advocate is on high..." Job 16:19 (*The Septuagint*).

So in both the Old and New Testaments, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.

The thing that I pray that God will impress our hearts with tonight is this simple but stupendous fact: *this* is where our hope lies. This is where the *ground* of our hope *rests*. Our hope doesn't rest in our feelings. It doesn't rest in our attainments. It doesn't rest in our accomplishments. It's nice when we can see certain things accomplished, but that's not the thing that's to give us hope of salvation. Salvation is not something we do, or have done, for God; it's something He does for us.

Somebody says, "Well, I wish I had more faith."

Listen to this interesting sentence from *Messages to Young People*, page 111:

"We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God"  
*Messages to Young People*, page 111.

My faith is *weak*. My faith in God is weak, but His faith in me is *strong*. He has a lot more hope for *me* than I've ever had for myself. If He hadn't had, He never would have *invested* so much in me. When we look at Calvary, dear friends, we can't help but be impressed with the fact that God not only had great *love* for us, but He had great *faith* in what could be accomplished. It was what He *saw* to be accomplished *in* us that moved Him to invest *everything* for our salvation. He's not shaky about it. He's not uncertain, and He doesn't want you and me to be uncertain about it.

Somebody says, "I fall so many times."

Well, is that where your hope of salvation rests—in how many times you *don't* fall? Is that what your hope rests on? If it is, I fear that you *will* be shaky, and that'll make you fall all the more. Why not put your hope of salvation where God says to put it—in His *promise*?

Turn to Philippians, the first chapter, and the sixth verse. "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." There is One there to vouch for me. Philippians 1:6. I want you to read this one with me. All together:

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun  
a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus  
Christ" Philippians 1:6.

The margin on 'perform' is 'finish.' Here is God's guarantee that He's going to *do what* with what He started? He's going to *finish* it. But it says it's going to take Him until when? Until the day of Jesus Christ, until Christ appears. It will take all that time to get

us browned in the oven, so we're ready to take out of the oven.

Now listen. Do you see, friends, that if I *wait* until He takes me out of the oven to *believe* that He's going to finish the work, I'll have to spend *every* moment in this world in a state of uncertainty? Do you see that? Why do that? In the first place, it disappoints *Him*; He wants me to be happy and settled. In the second place, it's hard to give the witness to others that we ought to if our own experience is shaky and uncertain. And in the third place, friends, the more shaky and uncertain we are about our hope of salvation, the more likely we are to fall when we're tempted. Why not put aside *all* that business of trusting in our faith or in our experience or anything of that kind?

"Well," you say, "Brother Frazee, don't you think we ought to cultivate faith?"

Yes. But "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by..." what?

[Audience responds] The word.

The Word of God. (See Romans 10:17.) Faith doesn't come by studying my heart and seeing how I *feel*. Oh, no. Faith doesn't come that way at all.

I'm reading now from *Volume 5*, page 199:

"Many make a serious mistake in their religious life by keeping the attention fixed upon their feelings and thus judging of their advancement or decline" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 199.

We even have an expression in the world and in the church too. Somebody greets us and says, "Well, how are you feeling this morning?" I don't know whether that's a good question to ask or not. That really is a signal to start off some things. [Laughter] However, it might be a good opportunity for us to cultivate a positive expression of faith. It might be a good thing sometimes to say, "Well, friend, you asked me how I'm feeling. Really, that isn't important. It's what I *know* that counts. I know that my Redeemer liveth. How I feel doesn't really make very much difference." I may have a cold in my nose and a pain in my stomach, and my feet may ache, but I know that Jesus lives and that He's begun a good work in me. And I know He's finishing and *will* finish what He's started.

"Many make a serious mistake in their religious life by keeping the attention fixed upon their feelings and thus judging of their advancement or decline" *Ibid*.

Are you further ahead this week than you were last?

Somebody says, "Oh, yes. I *feel* so much better tonight."

Well, I'm glad you feel better, but does that prove it?

Somebody else says, "Well, I was hoping I'd have a good witness tonight, but really, I've had a battle with the enemy all day today."

Let me leave this statement; I'll come back to it. Here's one from *Our High Calling*, page 313:

"We do not always consider that the sanctification we so earnestly desire and for which we pray so earnestly is brought about through the truth and, by the providence of God, in a manner we least expect. When we look for joy, behold there is sorrow. When we expect peace, we frequently have distrust and doubt, because we find ourselves plunged into trials we cannot avoid. In these trials we are having the answers to our prayers"  
*Our High Calling*, page 313.

What do you think of that? We're praying for more faith, and God lets us have some trials so we can *develop* faith. We pray for victory, and God lets us have some temptations so we can *get* the victory over temptation. Who's managing things in our lives? Who is? God is, if we *let* Him. And He's arranging the circumstances—now hot, now cold, now wet, now dry, now rain, now sunshine, now everybody's smiling at us, and again things are hard—He's arranging all that. What for? To lead us to get to the place where we know that our ground of hope is in His promise, not in *anything* on earth. "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." There is One there who vouches for me. He is *my* witness. I'm listening to *Him*. He's speaking *for me* in Heaven, and He's speaking *to me* here on earth. I'm listening to what He says. And He says that I'm His child; He says He's forgiven my sins; He says He's accepted my case, and He says that He would send every angel out of Heaven rather than let me be lost.

"But do you mean that you lived all last week *sinless*, without committing a sin?"

That isn't the point, friends. God knows better than *my* poor heart knows how many times I have failed. But I've asked Him to forgive me for those sins the same as I did years ago when I first came to Him. And I believe He forgives me. My confidence in salvation doesn't rest in the assurance that I will *never* again disappoint Him. I don't *want* to; I'm not *planning* to, but friend, whatever the reason, if I fall, I know He's going to be there to pick me up. Why? Because He *loves* me. Oh, how sad it would be for me to think that He's *almost* exhausted His patience.

"I just believe that He's forgiven me up to now, but if I'd failed Him once more, that'd be just one time too many."

No. No. I don't want to fail Him ever again, do you, friends? But the ground of my hope is *not* that I will never fail Him again; the ground of my hope is that He has never failed *me* and never will. That's the thing. I *know* He'll keep *His* word.

Now somebody says, “Yes, but suppose a man here just deliberately goes Naturally, friend, if a man’s determined to be lost, God’s not going to get a rope around him and drag him into Heaven. No, no. I don’t mean anything like that. But I mean this, friend: as long as you and I *want* to walk with Him, however weak and full of failures we are, He’s ready to work with us and teach us His way. And the ground of our hope does not lie in our achievements. It lies in His promise.

Now back to my statement in *Messages to Young People*, page 111:

“We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God.  
...We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling or no feeling.  
...We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light” *Messages to Young People*, pages 111–112.

Let’s do it. What do you say?

Now, I’m back to *Volume 5*, where we started a few moments ago. *Volume 5*, page 199:

“Many make a serious mistake in their religious life by keeping the attention fixed upon their feelings and thus judging of their advancement or decline. Feelings are not a safe criterion. We are not to look within for evidence of our acceptance with God” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 199.

Where are we not to look? Within. We are not to look within. Where *are* we to look? Shall we ask other people, “How do you think I’m getting along anyway?” Can anybody else read our hearts? No. “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.” Where shall I look then?

“We are not to look within for evidence of our acceptance with God. We shall find there nothing but that which will discourage us” *Ibid.*

If you haven’t found that which discourages you in your own heart, you just haven’t dug deep enough, that’s all. It’s there—plenty to discourage.

Now let’s turn to Hebrews, the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, and see where we get hope and comfort and courage and inspiration. Hebrews, the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, the first two verses:

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” Hebrews 12:1.

Now, read together with me the second verse. All together:

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” Hebrews 12:2.

Where shall we look? Look to Jesus. Where *is* He? He’s at the right hand of God. “My witness is in heaven.” Oh, let’s listen to Him, what do you say? Remember, and don’t forget it, He speaks *for* you there, and He speaks *to* you if you’ll open your heart and listen. Jesus is speaking His word of peace and assurance through His Word. He’s saying to you, “...I will never leave thee, nor forsake Thee” (Hebrews 13:5). I will finish what I’ve begun. I have given My life for you, and I would die for you all over again if that’s what it took to save you.

Oh friends, I *know* that my Lord loves me, and I *know* that He’s going to find some way to get me up there with Him. He’s just set His heart on it, and He can’t take *no* for an answer. He’s going to have me.

It’s true, I can frustrate all that if I deliberately set my will to oppose Him, but God help me, I’m not going to do it. That isn’t enough to make us certain and confident that we’re going to get there. The thing that makes us certain and confident is what He has done on the cross, in the sanctuary, at the mercy seat, and His pledged word that He’s going to finish what He has started.

“There is everything in Him to inspire with hope, with faith and with courage” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 200.

“Those who look within for comfort will become weary and disappointed...As we rely upon His merits we shall find rest and peace and joy. He saves to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him” *Ibid*.

So tonight, friends, I thank the Lord with all my heart that my Witness is in Heaven; my record is on high. There is One there who vouches for me. He holds up His wounded hands. He points to the marks of shame and cruelty upon His brow and in His side and in His wounded feet. And the whole thing is for me. I know He’s going to finish what He’s started, and I’m happy in that tonight.

I wish there was more evidence in my life, but friends, He tells me that the more evidence there is in my life, the less I may see or notice it. So I’m not going to keep studying *that* in order to get buoyed up or inspired. I’m going to leave that with Him. I’m going to find my hope, my confidence, my assurance, in Him, in His Word, in what He *has* done, in what He’s promised to do, in what I know He will carry out. What do you say?

[Audience responds] Amen.



Now, there's probably at least 20 people here tonight that got something definite and special you feel is just for you, that would like to come up here and say so in your own words, in your own way, to the glory of God. You may come now and witness for God.

[Testimony service]

[One of Elder Frazee's comments following special music] That's why I know I'm going to get there. He's paid such a price for me and all through eternity, He's going to keep those scars in His hands to remind me of the love that will never let me go. That's what's going to hold me a million years from now; that's what can hold me tonight. Oh, let's look to Him, what do you say? Let's look to Him.

How many would like to send Him the word tonight that we're going to look away from ourselves and look to Him, may I see your hands? Thank the Lord, thank the Lord.

[Elder Frazee announces the closing song.]

Come every soul by sin oppressed,  
There's mercy with the Lord,  
And He will surely give you rest,  
By trusting in...

Trusting in what? Your feelings? Your faith? Your attainments? Your accomplishments? He will surely give you rest by what?

[Audience responds] Trusting...

Trusting in what? His Word.

And if there's somebody here that hasn't gotten the blessing that your soul needs, come up here and seek God for the blessing tonight as we have this closing song, and we'll pray for and with you.

[Closing hymn, "Only Trust Him," stanzas 1 and 2.]

Now, you know, friends, I'm so thankful for all the blessings that so many have gotten tonight, but you know, the thing that my heart goes out on is this: there's somebody here that's watching all the other folks eat and you haven't had anything. I want *you* to have a blessing before you go. You dear ones that *know* that you're anchored in Jesus, just now send earnest prayers to Heaven that God will bless the poor, hesitating one that needs to anchor within the veil. Somebody here that either knows you're without hope and without God or doesn't know for sure that you *do* have hope, why not, friend, get rid of that uncertainty, that doubt, that darkness? Why not find in Jesus the answer to your problem? Come as we sing this next stanza.

[Stanzas 3 and 4 of "Only Trust Him."]

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