***Hebrews 6:11-12 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.***

Hope – we’ve just lit the candle of Hope for Advent. As we wait expectantly in Faith, we wait with great Hope, a great expectation of a Promise made that will be kept. Hebrews 11:1 says - *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* There’s an old saying that the distance between a promise and the fulfillment of that promise is a process. Process fills the space between Promise and Product. After Amazon makes you a promise and before the product arrives on your doorstep, there is a process in between. God calls us all, not just to believe the promise and not just to receive the product, but to follow the process in between of praying, persevering, and pursuing Him with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and all our strength. Many are they that grasp the Promise and desire the Product, but are sluggish and dull of hearing in the Process of prayer, perseverance, and pursuit. Our Hope is anchored in Promise and the Product assured is Eternity with Jesus.

Verse 11 *And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end.* The writer of Hebrews sees much zeal in the works of the church. He sees an excitement becoming readily apparent, very visible, manifested in the form of works of love being done. Now, he desires with an aching in the heart, to the fullest extent possible, that the same diligence, the same earnestness, the same pure motives that have been made manifest in these works will also be directed toward attaining the Hope of the Promise of Eternity with Jesus. But this Hope is not just a Promise of Eternity with Christ, but our Hope is the full Presence of God while we are yet still alive. Full assurance is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within, the intercession of Jesus on our behalf anchored behind the veil, and the knowledge that God has grafted us in and adopted us to be His sons and daughters, co-inheritors of the Kingdom. Jesus is our only Hope and our Anchor to Eternal Life. He is our Assurance.

Not long ago, I was watching a video on YouTube about research stations in Antarctica. Ropes are strung between the different buildings of the outpost. When walking between these buildings, the wind blowing, snow swirling, and whiteout conditions all around, the scientists (carabiners) attach themselves to these ropes. They can’t see where they are walking, but they follow the ropes, and the ropes are a guide home. In Jesus, we are anchored to our Eternal Home. As this world swirls, and darkness presses in, we need not worry. We rest in full assurance.

Verse 12 starts *that you do not become sluggish.* We are to show vigor in Faith, and this will lead to diligent work for our Eternal Hope! We must not become sluggish. In Hebrews 5:11, this word sluggish is translated as dull of hearing. This makes sense, Romans 10:17 says *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*. Faith comes by hearing. In John 10:27, Jesus says *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.* We must never become dull of hearing our Savior. He is the Word become flesh. We hear Him and we follow.

So, we diligently seek the full assurance of Hope by listening attentively, never becoming dull of hearing, lazy, and sluggish, and – verse 12 finishes - *but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.* But imitate, be ye followers, be like those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Imitate the great examples of the Christian Walk we have seen in our lives, have studied in our Bibles, and learned of through the ages. Back to John 10:27, Jesus says – they hear My voice, and I know them, and ***they follow Me.*** We follow Jesus and we encounter other people following Jesus and we recognize them by their fruit. These are brothers and sisters who are entering through the narrow gate and following the difficult path and are inheriting the promises. They have full confidence and have tied themselves to the assurance of Hope until the end. They have accepted Jesus and do His Will – Matthew 7:21 *Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.* Titus 2 speaks of older men and older women, mature in the Faith, teaching younger men and younger women to be sober-minded, having a pattern of good works, and a doctrine or Christian Walk, showing *integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, and**sound speech.* We are to live our Hope in Jesus, be that example of faith and patience, and disciple others, knowing with full assurance the Hope, the Promise, we are going to inherit as adopted sons and daughters of the King. We hear His voice. We are His sheep. We pray, persevere, and pursue diligently.

Proverbs 13:12 says - *Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.* As we wait in Hope for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, our heart yearns almost to the point of feeling sick. But our Desire is on the way. He is our Anchor behind the veil, our Intercessor in prayer, our Great and High Priest in Heaven. We pray, persevere, and pursue. This is the Process between Promise and Product. We believe, persevere, and receive. He is our Tree of Life. Rev 22:20 says *He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.”* Our hearts answer with diligent excitement, as we scan in Hope for His Second Advent, *Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*