



Attitudes of the Heart

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Preface

Many churches put an inordinate emphasis on outward conformity and reformation and teach very little on spiritual attitudes of the heart. For this reason, when I became the Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in April of 2010, one of my first priorities was to teach a series on internal attitudes that the Holy Spirit desires to produce in every Christian. This book is the culmination of that series.

How to use this Book

Open the Bible. This book is designed for Bible study. In order to fully benefit from the studies contained here, you must be willing to open your Bible and search the scriptures for answers. These studies are based upon the King James Version of the Bible. If you are accustomed to reading another version you may need to have both opened in order to discover the right answers.

Take your Time. The purpose of any Bible study is not to race to the finish line. If your time spent studying scripture does not produce a better understanding of the word of God then it is in vain. Take your time going through these studies. Stop and think about what you've read and take the time to apply the truths to your life.

Reflect. Throughout these studies you will see the symbol  followed by a question. There is no room to write an answer because these are designed for meditation. Take a minute and think about how the question applies practically to your life. Apply the study and be willing to change where God prompts you to. You will also see questions prefaced by **Think**. These were originally questions for open discussion in our church. There are no right or wrong answers for these just your own personal opinion.

Pray. Bible truths are only imparted by the Holy Spirit of God. While you study, pray that God would help you to understand and apply His word to your life.

Contact

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Hope


Romans 15:13

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.


In this study we will examine another attitude which should characterize and govern each and every Christian. It is the attitude of *hope*. When we first hear the word “hope” we generally think of something like a “wish.” This type of hope is nothing more than desiring that circumstances randomly align for our pleasure or benefit. There is no concrete basis for this hope, only a *desire* that something happen. This is not a Biblical definition of hope.

Unlike the world’s concept of hope, Biblical hope has no uncertainty about it. It is not helplessly wishing that something will happen, but *it is a confident expectation that God will fulfill what he has promised.*

The world does not have this hope.

 Prov 10:28; Job 8:13. **Q.** What will happen to the hope of the wicked?

Job 11:20 tells us that the hope of the unsaved will fail; it will be like a dead person “giving up the ghost.” Whether it be money, success, good works, or the belief systems they have invented for themselves, it is all empty and fleeting. The hope of the Christian is not this way.

 Heb 6:18-19. **Q.** What three words reflect the stable and secure nature of the Christian’s hope?

The Christian's hope is stable and secure because it rests on God's unchanging promises. This hope is not "wishful thinking"; it is confidently expecting that what God has promised he will bring to pass.

📖 Heb 11:1. **Q.** How is *hope* related to *faith*?

“
*The Christian's
hope is stable
and secure
because it rests
on God's
unchanging
promises.*
”

Faith and hope are inseparable. Faith is taking those things which we hope for and counting them as substantive and concrete. It is living in full assurance that those things which we hope for will indeed come to pass. This is a reasonable hope founded upon the promises of God.

The Reasons for our Christian Hope

In 1 Peter 3:15, Peter encourages Christians to “be ready always” to explain the reasons for the “hope that is in you.” Let's consider some of the reasons that underlie the Christian's hope.

1. Christ's Resurrection and Return

📖 1 Cor 15:14, 17-18 **Q.** What are the consequences if Christ is not risen from the dead?

If Christ is not risen than our faith and our preaching is vain, we are still in our sins and those who have died have perished like any other animal. This is a hopeless scenario. Thankfully it is not true of the Christian. Look at 1 Peter 1:3:

📖 1 Peter 1:3. **Q.** Because Christ *is* risen, what are we “begotten to” ?

All of God's promises are bound up in the person of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 1:20). It was his resurrection from the dead that set the fulfillment of these promises into motion. His resurrection was the confirmation that he was indeed the son of God and that he could and would fulfill God's promises (Rom 1:4). Look up John 14:2-3 to see one of these promises:

📖 John 14:2-3. **Q.** What did Jesus go to Heaven to do? According to v3, What *will* he do?

The resurrection of Jesus Christ confirmed that he was the son of God and made all of his promises credible. One such promise was his pledge to prepare a place in Heaven for us and to come again in order to receive us unto himself. Look at Titus 2:13 to see just how integral the return of Christ is to the Christian's hope.

📖 Titus 2:13. **Q.** What did Paul describe as “the blessed hope?”

It is Christ's return that ushers in the fulfillment of every other promise which God has given to man (2 Cor 1:20). If Christ had not promised to return than the Christian would have no hope in this world (Eph 2:12; 1 Cor 15:19) and if he did not rise from the dead then his promises would have no credibility. Because he *has* risen, he has left us with a lively, vibrant hope. This is the same hope that turned the depressed and discouraged disciples after Christ's death into powerful, bold proclaimers of the gospel following His resurrection.

“ *Because Christ has risen, he has left us with a lively, vibrant hope.* ”

2. Our Resurrection from the Dead

Not only has the resurrection of Jesus Christ given us a hope for his return, but it has also given us a hope for our own future resurrection.

📖 1 Cor 15:20-23. **Q.** v20. When Christ rose from the dead, what did he become?

The *firstfruits* were the first of a crop to be harvested and were an indication of the full harvest which would follow. Christ was the firstfruits and his resurrection paved the way for the resurrection of every believer. His resurrection was the assurance that we too could hope for our own resurrection. In fact, without this hope, the Bible tells us that the Christian life would be one of misery.

📖 1 Cor 15:19. **Q.** If our hope does not include our coming resurrection than what does this say about our present lives?

📖 Acts 24:15. **Q.** What did Paul have hope in God for?

📖 Acts 23:6. **Q.** How did Paul describe his belief in the resurrection from the dead?

As Christians we look forward the coming of Jesus Christ and our resurrection from the dead with a confident expectation. We know it will happen because God has promised that it will and has confirmed it by the resurrection of his Son. Our hope is not a fleeting, vain or futile hope but a hope which rests soundly on God's promises.

REFLECT
BEEFECT

Do you ever think about the return of Jesus Christ? How could dwelling on Christ's return help you with the hard times you face in this life?

Our hope rests in Christ's resurrection, His return, our resurrection and next of all, it rests in God's promise of our future *glorification*.

3. Our Glorification

Our salvation really has three tenses to it. The moment we were saved, the Bible says we were *justified*. This has to do with our immediate deliverance from the *penalty* of sin. The Christian will never face the wrath or condemnation of God because Christ has satisfied God's judgment on the cross. That is the *past* tense of salvation.

Secondly, there is the *present* tense. This is what the Bible calls *sanctification*. This is a continual process in the life of a Christian as God makes him more and more like Jesus Christ and gives him daily victory over the *power* of sin. In this sense, it is legitimate to say that we are "being saved."

Lastly, there is a future tense of salvation. Not only have we *been justified* in the past, and are *being sanctified* in the present but we *will be glorified* in the future.

📖 Romans 8:21. **Q.** What will we be delivered from? What will we be delivered into?

The moment we were saved, God made us "spiritually alive" (Eph 2:1). He made us new creatures on the inside but this did not affect our fleshly bodies (2 Cor 4:7; Rom 7:24). Our bodies are yet to be changed; this is what *glorification* is all about. It is the time when we will finally be made like Jesus Christ and even our fleshly bodies

will be made new (Rom 8:23). There remains an aspect of our salvation which has not yet come to pass. Because this final aspect of our salvation is yet to happen, it is something that we *hope* for.

📖 Romans 8:29-30. **Q.** What are the five aspects of salvation mentioned here?

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____

God loved us from the foundation of the world (foreknowledge [Rom 11:2]) and predetermined that we would become like Christ (predestination). He then called us to salvation and at that moment forgave us all of our sin (justification).

Notice that in this passage those whom he foreknew are the very same whom he predestined, and called and justified. Likewise, all who are justified *are glorified*. God's promises are so secure that even those which have not yet come to pass can be referred to in the past tense (Rom 8:17, 21).

God's promises are so secure that even those which have not yet come to pass can be referred to in the past tense

Each and every one of these aspects of salvation from foreknowledge to glorification are inseparable. There has never been a man who was "foreknown" of God but was not predestined and there has never been a man who has been predestined who has not been called or justified. Likewise, every man, woman or child who has ever been saved *will be* glorified.


📖 Philippians 3:20-21. **Q.** v20. What are we looking forward to (fully expecting to happen)?

Q. v21. What will Christ do with our bodies when he returns?


It is because there remains a future glorification for us that we read in the Bible phrases like "lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" and "now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." These refer to our final redemption and glorification; it is actually the completion of the salvation which began the moment we believed.

The Christian's hope includes an anticipation of the return of Christ, our resurrection, our glorification and finally, it includes hope of an *eternal inheritance in Heaven*.

4. Our Eternal Inheritance in Heaven

 According to Titus 1:2, What was Paul hoping for?

Paul prayed in the first chapter of Ephesians that the believers in Ephesus would enter into a deeper understanding of the “hope of their calling” and “the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints” (Eph 1:18). He wanted them to grasp and then stand firmly upon the hope that awaited them. The Christian hope looks forward to an inheritance in Heaven.


 1 Peter 1:3-4. **Q.** According to v4, What are we looking forward to?

Q. v4. In what four ways does Peter describe this inheritance? How does his description emphasize the sure nature of our inheritance?

Once Christ returns a series of events are set into motion. We are resurrected, we are glorified, we are given our eternal inheritance in Heaven and as 1 Thess 4:17 says, from that time on we will “ever be with the Lord.” These are tremendous promises which lead to a tremendous hope. We are not wishing for these things to come to pass but are confidently expecting them to happen based upon the unwavering promises and faithfulness of our “God of hope” (Rom 15:13).

The Abiding Character of Hope

Since the Christian’s hope in Christ’s future return and redemption is more than simple *wishful thinking*, it will have a real, practical impact on his present life. We can summarize the hopeful Christian’s character by simply saying “he abides in Christ.” We have already dealt with the topic of “abiding” in our lesson on *Joy*. This repetition is to be expected since it is “the God of hope” who “fills us with joy” (Rom 15:13).

 1 John 2:28-29. **Q.** According to v28, what is our motivation to “abide” in Christ?

The day is coming when Christ will return and we will all stand before him as our judge (Acts 10:42; Rom 14:10). This should motivate us in this life to “abide” in him. It is by abiding in Christ that we can be confident and not ashamed when he returns.

To “abide” simply means “to continue, remain or endure.” It speaks of the Christian who remains faithful to Jesus Christ throughout his entire life.

📖 John 8:31. **Q.** Who are Christ’s true disciples?

🧠 **Think.** The word “continue” in this verse is the same word translated “abide” in 1 John 2:28. What do you think it means to “continue in Christ’s word?”

“ It is by abiding in Christ that we can be confident and not ashamed when he returns. ”

📖 John 15:9. **Q.** What did Jesus tell us to continue or abide in?

📖 John 15:10. **Q.** How do we abide in his love?

📖 1 John 2:29. **Q.** Immediately after John told us to “abide in Christ” in 1 John 2:28, he went on to indicate one of the characteristics of abiding. What will be one of the marks of one who is abiding in Christ?

📖 1 John 2:6. **Q.** Summarize this verse in your own words.

Abiding in Jesus Christ requires that we live a life of continual obedience to his words. This obedience will result in righteous living and is clear evidence that we are indeed Christ's disciples. (Rom 6:16-22; 1 John 3:10; John 8:31).

☛ **Think.** *Considering the above verses, what should we think of the man or woman who professes to be Christ's disciple but does not obey his commands or live righteously?*

📖 1 John 2:19. **Q.** In this passage John is discussing the unfortunate fact that some who had once professed to be Christians had since left the church. What did their departure from the church reveal (manifest) about them?

Q. If they had indeed been Christians what *would they* have done?

The hope which we have in Christ is a pervasive hope. It permeates every area of our lives. It is not accurate or biblical to claim that someone is a disciple of Jesus Christ and has a legitimate hope for His return if his life is not characterized by obedience to His commands. In fact, according to John, the failure to continue (or abide) in Christ is a surefire way to tell if someone is an imposter.

Some would claim that this is an extreme or unreasonable understanding of salvation. They would assert that one can pray to receive Jesus Christ as their savior without continuing in a life of obedience to God and still be assured of their salvation. One of the main faults of this view is that it fails to give proper place to the doctrine of *regeneration*. That is, at the moment of salvation the believer is actually made spiritually new on the inside by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. This is a real transformation that results in a real change (2 Cor 5:17; Php 2:13; Eph 2:10).

Another doctrine that is essential to understanding this idea of *abiding* is the *indwelling of the Spirit of God*. The Holy Spirit not only makes us spiritually alive at the moment of salvation but he actually lives within us until the return of Jesus Christ (Eph 4:30). So then, the ability to abide in Christ has the Holy Spirit of God as its source. This fact alone should eliminate the idea that "continuing in the faith" is too onerous a measure of salvation. The reality is we abide in Christ because he abides in us. (John 14:16; John 15)

📖 1 John 2:27. **Q.** Immediately before John told us to "abide in him" so that we would not "be ashamed before him at his coming" he gave us this verse. What have we received from God? What will this cause us to do?

☛ **Think.** *We are told to abide in Christ, yet we are also told that the Holy Spirit is the one who causes us to abide. Is our abiding in Christ God's responsibility or ours? How do we reconcile this?*

Like many aspects of salvation, abiding in Christ is both God's responsibility and ours. He has promised that every believer who has been justified *will be glorified* (Rom 8:29,30); that we will never be *plucked from his hand* (John 10:28); that nothing will separate us from his love (Rom 8:38-39); and that he will continue his work in us until the coming of Christ (Php 1:6). So why are there so many other exhortations to *endure to the end* (Matt 24:13); to *hold fast our profession* (Heb 4:14; 10:23) and to *patiently continue in Him* (Rom 2:7)? Because these exhortations are some of the very means which God uses to keep us in the faith until the coming of Christ (1 Cor 1:8). The true believer obeys God's commands to abide and he does it through hard work. He struggles to continue, and endures until the end. He does it by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. This successful perseverance until the end is not *for* salvation but is the *evidence of* true salvation and the hope which accompanies it.

“ *Like many aspects of salvation, abiding in Christ is both God's responsibility and ours* ”

📖 2 Timothy 4:7. **Q.** What three ways did Paul characterize his life?

📖 2 Timothy 4:8. **Q.** Because he faithfully abided in Christ, what was he looking forward to? How did he feel about Christ's coming? How does this compare to 1 John 2:28?

The Christian's hope causes him to be faithful to Christ until the end. This includes obeying his words, living righteously and purifying himself (1 John 3:2). Paul was a man who, driven by his hope of a future eternity with Jesus Christ, fought to abide in Christ and to endure until the end. This will be the evidence of your hope and my hope as well. How might your attitude and lifestyle change if you were to spend time dwelling on the return of Christ and the inheritance that awaits you?

Review: Hope

1. What is the difference between the world's idea of hope and the Christians?
2. Using page 1 as your source, define Biblical hope.
3. How does the resurrection of Christ offer us hope in this life?
4. How does the Christian's hope enable him to be joyful even in the face of death?
5. How is God's faithfulness related to our hope?
6. How does the Christian's hope help him to be faithful to Christ?
7. Why do you think a life without a Biblical hope would be miserable? (1 Cor 15:19)