

## I. Biblical Resurrection

- A. As we start this two part teaching on the hope of the resurrection we must start by establishing the meaning of a few terms that we are going to hear and address frequently in this series. Some of these terms have taken on some unbiblical meanings (even in the church) though modern day language and use.
1. Resurrection - The biblical definition of **resurrection is the event or movement from the death of bodily life on earth to bodily life on the earth again**. It is critical that every Christian understands that resurrection or being raised from the dead is not synonymous with the soul going to heaven. According to the clear teaching of the bible we are all still awaiting this event and this event is the hope of the believer.
  2. Hope - When the scriptures use the Greek word translated “hope” in the context of seeing the promises of God come to pass it uses a word that means “the certain or full expectation of an outcome”. For the most part we do not use the word “hope” in this way but rather when we use the word “hope” it means the desired or possible expectation of an outcome.
  3. Heaven - The dwelling place of God. The bible tells us that this place is a city that He built Himself. It clearly has physical aspects such as walls, buildings, roads, gardens, etc.. The other terms the bible uses for this place are: The City of God, Eden, The Jerusalem Above, The Temple, or Tabernacle of God, etc.. The scriptures tell us that this place is not far away in distance as in mileage but rather an inaccessible and unseen distance through the effects and curse of sin.
  4. Earth - The created order in totality, not just the dirt and rock, but the created processes, plant, animals, ecosystem, planetary cosmos, and its functions.
  5. Gnosticism - A pervasive 2nd century belief that separates the spiritual soul and the physical body and physical creation into two categories or realms. Gnosticism labels all the things in the physical realm as being inherently corrupt, worthless, or evil. The spiritual soul, on the other hand, is pure and good, but is hindered or tainted by the physical realm. The Gnostics believe that the soul needs to be free from the physical realm so it can go to the spiritual realm where it truly belongs.

6. Salvation - In the beginning God created heaven and earth perfectly together and called it “good” (perfect/complete) and humanity— “also good”—dwelt with Him in His dwelling place. Upon finishing His work He called it “very good” (exceedingly/ultimately). When humanity rebelled against Him they had to be removed from His dwelling place, so that their sin and the curse of death through their sin placed upon them and the entire earth would not be destroyed by the holiness of his presence. Heaven and earth were separated but God made a promise to humanity that one day He would send them a savior (seed born of a woman) who would destroy sin and death and restore all that was lost through sin and death. The full work of this restoration process and reality was summed up in one word, salvation.

In modern day Christianity the word salvation has come to mean being forgiveness for your sins through faith in Jesus’s substitutionary work on cross. That is only part of the process of salvation that it was foretold and promised that the savior would do. His substitutionary work makes a way for humanity to be restored in relationship with God and even to dwell in His presence once again. What remains to be done is the restoration of heaven and earth. As the book of Revelation puts it, “Behold the dwelling place of God is with Man!”

**He has appeared (come) to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.** And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him **He will appear (come) a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.** (Heb. 9:26b-28)

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused **us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power **are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to **result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.** Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.** (1 Pet. 1:5-9)*

## II. The Issue of Hope

- A. The word “hope” in today's culture speaks of the greatly desired result of expectation of something that is still in the future. When examining how hope works, there are a few requirements for it to be the kind of hope the bible speaks about.
1. Desired or Promised Outcome - We need to have understanding and realizable aspects to the projected outcome of our future. We cannot hope for what we cannot understand or picture.
  2. Realistic Circumstances that Align with our Hope - We cannot sustain hope unless we can see a way forward to our hope being reality.
  3. Forward Movement - When there are no indicators or forward movement towards our hopes being realized, we are unable to sustain our hope and we move into despair and heartsickness rather than optimism and expectation.
- B. Example: Billy is hoping to get that dream job he applied for. This job is his dream and he can picture himself doing it with joy for the rest of his life. The position is open and he has applied for it.
1. Billy is foolish if he quits the job he currently has because he is for a different one if all he did was simply apply. However, once Billy received the call from the manager of the job he applied for informing him he got the job, then we would consider it prudent that he quit the current job and be ready to start the new one. Even though he doesn't start their new job immediately, his “hope” is now solidly established.
  2. Taking this scenario a step further, let's say Billy was offered a job in a foreign country and was promised that it was his dream job. The promised benefits and pay were lavish and the housing was provided in a paradise resort. The manager tells Billy that he was actually made for this job and it's where he truly belongs. Upon hanging up the phone, Billy immediately goes to the potential company website but can find very little information about the company or the role he would play in it. There is very little information about the foreign country that this company is based in, no actual pictures of the paradise resort, only short vague descriptions. What would you counsel Billy to do? Would you encourage him to “hope” in this new job?

### III. Common Christian Hope

- A. In general, most Christians today find themselves in Billy's shoes when it comes to the expectation of their eternal life and their hope in it. They have been taught to believe that they are going to heaven, but the details of heaven and their eternal life in that place are extremely vague. They have been told that they belong there but they cannot picture it. The problem with vague hope is that it's not hope at all and is not the kind of hope that "anchors our soul" in the waves of life. They find themselves generally in two types of common Christian "hope".
1. Reluctant Hope - They are not eagerly waiting to go to heaven; instead, they find themselves reluctant to die, not wanting to miss out on the experiences and joys of this life. They clearly don't want to go to hell, and believe heaven is a much better place, but if Jesus could hold off his return until they have lived a good full life that would be ideal.
  2. Gnostic Hope - Many hold a form of gnosticism that tells them that this earth and their physical life is not "good" as the bible tells us, but rather they need to be free from it and their physical body to go to heaven. Maybe their existence has been incredibly painful and full of suffering. They are ready to go somewhere else, a place of no pain, no suffering, and no tears.

### IV. Biblical Christian Hope

- A. Through the biblical narrative of promised Salvation, you have a sure and steadfast hope in your eternal existence. The fullness of the work of our savior is spoken of in over 170 chapters in your bible with elaborate details and descriptions. In general, the body of Christ is not familiar with these passages in a way that causes or stirs up hope because it's fairly unfamiliar with the full promise of salvation.
- B. In our next session we will do an overview or summary of the main themes of these chapters so that "hopefully" you will be established in Hope and you will join all the saints in eager expectation of the hope that is to be revealed in the last days.