

## Briefing Document: 1 John Lesson 47

January 14, 2026

### Executive Summary

This document synthesizes a theological examination of "Hopeful Theology," primarily derived from 1 John 2:28 through 3:3. The central thesis posits that biblical hope is fundamentally distinct from worldly "wishing"; it is a sure and steadfast anchor for the soul, secured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ and granted through divine grace.

Key takeaways include:

- **The Continuity of Scripture:** The transition from 1 John 2 to 1 John 3 forms a cohesive block of instruction regarding the Second Coming and the believer's future state.
- **Definition of Hope:** Unlike worldly uncertainty, Christian hope is a "living hope" that functions as a spiritual privilege, provision, and gift, dispelling worry and introducing joy into sorrow.
- **The Goal of Sanctification:** The realization of hope culminates in the "redemption of the body," where believers will receive glorified bodies made in the image of Christ.
- **Responsibility of the Believer:** The possession of this hope necessitates a commitment to personal purification, modeled after the purity of Christ.
- **Defensibility:** Biblical hope is not an abstract fantasy but a reasonable expectation grounded in the truth of the Scriptures and the historical reality of the resurrection.

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### The Scriptural Context of Hope

The analysis of 1 John suggests that traditional chapter breaks may obscure the thematic unity of the text. Specifically, 1 John 2:28 through 1 John 3:3 constitutes a single section focused on "Hopeful Theology" and the appearing of Christ.

### The Appearing of Christ

The text emphasizes the "appearing" or Second Coming of Christ as the focal point of Christian confidence.

- **Abiding in Him:** Believers are exhorted to remain in Christ to avoid shame at His return.
- **Confidence at His Coming:** *"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming"* (1 John 2:28).
- **Practicing Righteousness:** Righteous living is identified as the evidence of being born of God: *"If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him"* (1 John 2:29).

## The Love of the Father

The transition into the third chapter highlights the current status of believers as children of God, a status the world fails to recognize.

- *"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him"* (1 John 3:1).
- *"Beloved, we are now children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is"* (1 John 3:2).

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## Defining Biblical Hope

Biblical hope is categorized as one of the three great pillars of evangelical terminology, alongside faith and love, as referenced in 1 Corinthians 13:13. It is described as a gift that provides a "wonderful spiritual privilege."

## Hope vs. Worldly Wishing

In a secular context, hope is often synonymous with a wish or fantasy. In a biblical context, hope is a certainty.

- **The Anchor:** It is described in Hebrews 6:19 as *"an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil."*
- **The Light:** Hope acts as a light in darkness, dispelling worry and introducing life into scenes of death.
- **The Necessity:** Life without this specific hope is described as "bleak." As Paul notes in 1 Corinthians 15:19: *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable."*

## The Source and Means of Hope

- **Origin:** Hope comes directly from an unchanging God who cannot lie.
- **Grace:** Hope is a gift of God's grace, not something earned through works. *"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace..."* (2 Thessalonians 2:16).
- **The Word:** Hope is dispensed and understood through the Scriptures. Romans 15:4 states: *"For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."*

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## The Culmination of Hope: The Glorified Body

A significant component of "Hopeful Theology" is the future realization of salvation, which includes the transformation of the physical form.

## The Redemption of the Body

Believers currently live in "unredeemed flesh," described as a sinful body that has a debilitating impact on the mind and heart. True hope looks forward to liberation from this "incarceration."

- **Eager Waiting:** *"Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body"* (Romans 8:23).
- **The Future State:** The greatest elements of salvation are not yet realized. Salvation is only "full" when the believer is in the presence of the Lord in a glorified body.
- **The Image of Christ:** The new heavenly body will be made in the image of Christ. Evidence of this "glorious body" is seen in the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, where He could be touched and was able to eat, yet possessed supernatural qualities.

## Categories of Resurrection

The timing of receiving these glorified bodies varies by group:

- **The Church:** Received at the Rapture (the removal of the church before the Tribulation).
- **Old Testament Saints:** Received later, prior to the Millennial Kingdom.
- **Tribulation Saints:** Received in a separate category following their period of trial.

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## The Security and Defense of Hope

The validity of Christian hope is not based on feeling but on historical and scriptural evidence.

### The Resurrection as Security

The hope of eternal life is secured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"* (1 Peter 1:3).
- Because Christ lives, the believer has the assurance of also living (John 14:19).

### A Reasoned Defense

Believers are expected to be intellectually prepared to explain their hope.

- *"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear"* (1 Peter 3:15).
- This hope is "defensible" because it is grounded in the Word of God, which is described as being able to "defend itself" to any honest, open-minded reader or student.

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## The Misery of False Hope

The document contrasts the "living hope" of the believer with the various forms of false hope found in the world.

### Characteristics of False Hope

- **Hypocrisy:** "*The hope of the hypocrite shall perish*" (Job 8:13).
- **Materialism:** Placing hope in gold or wealth is described as a "fool's comment" (Job 31:24).
- **The Wicked:** "*The hope of the righteous will be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked will perish*" (Proverbs 10:28).

### Consequences of Hopelessness

Without a sure hope in the life to come, individuals often attempt to "drown their misery" through:

- Alcohol and sex.
- Acquisition of material goods.
- Sequential relationships.
- **Necromancy:** The text specifically condemns modern attempts to use technology (AI) to simulate communication with the dead, labeling such practices as "a lie straight from the pit of hell."

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### Greek Terminology and Pronunciation Guide

The following terms used in this briefing are derived from Greek origins and are essential to the theological framework discussed.

Term	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
<b>Theology</b> <sup>[^1]</sup>	thee-OL-uh-jee	The study of religious belief and the nature of God; specifically "Hopeful Theology" in this context.
<b>Necromancy</b> <sup>[^2]</sup>	NEK-ruh-man-see	The practice of communicating with the dead; identified in the text as a sinful "false hope."
<b>Christophany</b> <sup>[^3]</sup>	kris-TOF-uh-nee	A pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament (e.g., to Abraham).

[^1]: From the Greek *theos* (God) and *logos* (word/study). [^2]: From the Greek *nekros* (dead body) and *manteia* (divination). [^3]: From the Greek *Christos* (Christ) and *phainein* (to appear/bring to light).