

Study Guide: 1 John Lesson 49

January 28, 2026

This study guide examines the theological and ethical dimensions of Christian hope as presented in 1 John. It explores the nature of hope, the tests of true faith, the necessity of sanctification, and the motives that drive a believer toward holiness.

Short-Answer Quiz

1. According to the provided text, what are the primary sources and foundational securities of a believer's hope?
2. How does the Apostle John define the ethical implications for "everyone who has this hope" in 1 John 3:3?
3. What are the specific doctrinal tests mentioned that can be used to determine a person's spiritual condition?
4. In the context of Christian growth, how is the process of sanctification defined?
5. Why is the "motive of fear" considered a legitimate driver for holiness in the life of a believer?
6. How does the Old Testament book of Leviticus reinforce the mandate for holiness among God's people?
7. According to the writings of the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:1, what role does the appearing of Jesus Christ play in motivating a believer's service?
8. What does the text suggest are the potential consequences of sin regarding a believer's "eternal reward"?
9. How does a materialistic society serve as a "curse" or an obstacle to living in the light of eternal hope?
10. At the judgment seat of Christ, what internal factors will God evaluate according to 1 Corinthians 4:5?

Answer Key

1. Hope is a gift of grace that comes from God and is explained in the Scriptures. It is secured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, confirmed by the Holy Spirit's work, and acts as a steadfast anchor tied to Jesus Christ Himself in the throne room of God.
2. The hope found in Jesus Christ has immense ethical implications, specifically requiring the believer to purify himself just as He is pure. This hope serves as a purging force that affects conduct and verifies the authenticity of a person's claim to be a Christian.
3. The doctrinal tests involve a person's view of sin and their view of Jesus Christ. These standards, along with moral tests such as obedience and love, allow a person's true spiritual condition to be determined.
4. Sanctification is the progressive decrease of sin and the progressive increase of holiness in the life of the believer. It is the fulfillment of God's expectation for purity and righteousness.
5. Fear is a legitimate motive because God is a sovereign judge who reacts to unholiness with chastening. Believers are called to conduct themselves in fear because they must answer to the Father, who judges each one's work without partiality.
6. Leviticus repeatedly commands "Be holy, for I am holy," establishing that God is the Lord and the sovereign judge. It outlines that God's people must separate themselves from abominable customs because God does not look favorably upon unholiness.
7. Paul charges believers to faithful service because Jesus Christ will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. The awareness that one will stand before the Judge serves as a motive for holiness and the fulfillment of one's ministry.
8. While Jesus Christ paid for the believer's sins, the "dross" and failures of a life can detract from or cancel out eternal rewards. Using the imagery of wood, hay, and stubble, the text notes that only that which has eternal value will remain after the Lord's evaluation.
9. A materialistic society makes it difficult to live in hope because it keeps people entertained and comfortable with temporary benefits and possessions. This focus on the present life prevents believers from maintaining an interest in the life to come and the purity it requires.
10. God will look beyond external achievements to bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the heart. The praise each person receives from God will be based on what was occurring internally rather than just outward appearances.

Essay Questions

1. **The Interconnection of Hope and Ethics:** Discuss how the "Purifying Hope" described in 1 John 3:3 serves as both a comfort and a moral standard for the believer. How does this hope differ from a mere "wish"?
2. **The Dual Motives for Holiness:** Compare and contrast the motive of fear and the motive of hope as presented in the text. How do these two motivations work together to produce sanctification?
3. **Tests of Faith:** Analyze John's use of doctrinal and moral tests to verify Christian identity. Why does the author argue that a "personal pursuit of purity" is an essential evidence of salvation?

4. **The Reality of the Judgment Seat:** Explain the theological distinction between the payment for sin and the evaluation of works at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. What are the implications for the believer's "full reward"?

5. **Cultural Obstacles to Holiness:** Evaluate the text's critique of "popular Christian culture" regarding its concern for holiness. In what ways does the call to be a "holy nation" contradict contemporary evangelical trends?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Abide:** To remain, stay, or stay faithful in Jesus Christ.
- **Anchor:** A metaphor for hope that is tied to Jesus Christ inside the veil in the throne room of God, providing absolute security and steadfastness.
- **Chastening:** The holy reaction or discipline of God toward the unholy conduct of His children.
- **Dross:** The failures, sins, and worthless elements of a believer's life (symbolized by wood, hay, and stubble) that are consumed at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.
- **Eschatology:** The study of last things, specifically the return of Jesus Christ, which should serve as a behavioral and ethical motivation for purity.
- **Holiness:** The state of being set apart from sin and separated unto righteousness; it is a mandate based on the nature of God.
- **Purification:** The act of purging oneself of sin in light of the hope of Jesus Christ's return; it is the primary thrust of the Apostle John's ethical teaching.
- **Sanctification:** The process of spiritual growth characterized by the progressive decrease of sin and the progressive increase of holiness.

Greek Language Study

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
<i>Menō</i> [^1] (men'-o)		A verb meaning to remain, stay, or abide. In the context of 1 John, it refers to staying faithful and remaining in Christ to maintain confidence before His appearing.

[^1]: This term is identified in the text as a favorite of the Apostle John, used to describe the believer's requirement to remain faithful so they are not ashamed at the coming of the Lord.