

Briefing Document: 1 John Lesson 50: The Doctrine of Purifying Hope and Abiding in Christ

February 4, 2026

Executive Summary

The following document synthesizes the teachings and community updates from the 1 John Lesson 50 session held on February 4, 2026. The primary theological focus of the lesson is the concept of "purifying hope," specifically how a believer's hope in the second coming of Christ serves as a catalyst for holiness. Central to this discussion is the Greek concept of *meno* (abiding), which is presented as the essential evidence of genuine salvation. The lesson argues that while salvation is a sovereign act of God, it requires a continuous, faithful response from the believer. Furthermore, the session emphasizes the importance of physical church fellowship and the reality of eternal rewards being commensurate with a believer's faithfulness and purity during their earthly life.

Community and Administrative Announcements

Before the theological teaching, several community initiatives and administrative updates were noted:

- **Mission of the Month:** Cowboy Ministries of Arizona (CCMA), which provides services at various cowboy functions.
- **Ministry of the Month:** The Sunday school teachers within the local church.
- **Memory Verse (February):** *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another* (1 John 4:11).
- **Prayer Requests:**
 - Intercession for "Leslie" during labor and for the safe delivery of her child.
 - Praise for the birth of a great-granddaughter, Mave.
 - Healing and support for a community member's sister facing a recurrence of breast cancer after 30 years.
 - Safety for travelers and guidance for the church's youth and teachers.

The Motives for Purity and Holiness

The lesson explores the biblical motives that call believers toward a life of purity. Two primary drivers are identified:

1. **Fear:** Believers should maintain a healthy fear of God's chastening. If one calls a holy God "Father," their conduct should reflect that relationship through a fear of the consequences of persistent sin.

2. **Hope:** This is a "purifying hope" rooted in the second coming of Christ. The expectation of living forever with an eternal reward should motivate the believer to pursue holiness now.

The speaker notes that while sin may not necessarily revoke salvation, it can "cancel" or diminish eternal rewards. The goal of the believer should be to eventually hear the commendation: "*Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things*" (Matthew 25:23).

The Theology of Abiding (*Meno*)

The core of the lesson focuses on the first of five perspectives on hope: **Hope is secured by abiding.**

The Meaning of Abiding

The Greek word *meno*¹ (translated as abide, remain, or stay) is a favorite term of the Apostle John. It signifies staying faithful and persevering in the truth.

- **1 John 2:28:** *And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.*
- **John 15:5:** *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

Evidence of Genuine Conversion

John's letters suggest that "real conversion is about staying power." True believers are identified by their ability to remain in the truth and the gospel.

- **Perseverance:** Those who depart from the faith demonstrate that they were never truly part of the community of believers. As 1 John 2:19 states, "*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.*"
- **Continuous Faith:** Abiding is not a "higher level" spiritual experience but the standard for all Christians. It involves sustaining faith in the gospel and the Christ of the gospel.

Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

The lesson addresses the tension between God's sovereign choice in salvation and the believer's exercise of will.

- **The Role of the Will:** The command to "abide" implies a human responsibility. Divine sovereign salvation does not exclude the will of the one being saved. If the will were not involved, there would be no biblical calls to remain faithful or steadfast.

- **The Power of the Spirit:** While believers are commanded to abide, it is the Holy Spirit (the "anointing" mentioned in 1 John 2:27) who energizes the believer to fulfill these commands.
- **The Inseparable Link:** Salvation is a miracle involving God's mercy and a "willing response to the gospel." A true Christian remains faithful to the truth, and in turn, God remains faithful to produce fruit, love, and holiness within that person.

The Necessity of Local Church Fellowship

The lesson concludes with a firm stance on the importance of the physical church body.

- **Social Acceptability vs. Biblical Mandate:** Modern society has made it socially acceptable to claim Christianity without participating in a local church. However, the lesson argues this is a detriment to the believer, as they lose the provisions and fellowship God intends for them.
- **Limitations of Media:** While online services or television broadcasts (such as "Flatline Forward Line of Troops") can provide teaching, they are not a substitute for active, in-person fellowship.
- **Proving the Faith:** Abiding involves loving the brethren, which requires active participation in the church community. As stated in 1 John 3:14, "*We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.*"

Phonetic Pronunciation and Glossary

The following Greek terms were utilized during the lesson to provide deeper insight into the original text:

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Brief Definition
Meno	MEN-oh	To stay, remain, or abide; to continue in a state or relationship.
Teknia	TEK-nee-ah²	Little children; used by John to refer to spiritually young believers or as a term of endearment for the church.

¹ *Meno* is the primary verb used throughout John's Gospel and Epistles to describe the relationship between the believer and Christ. ² Referred to in the transcript as "tech" in the context of "spiritually young."