

**A Cup Overflowing –  
A study of the Christian life**

# Schedule

- This quarter we'll be studying the Christian life, with a focus on God's nature to abundantly bless those who give their life to him.
- Our schedule:
  - A Hope-filled Life
  - A Fruit-filled Life
  - An Evangelism-filled Life
  - A Forgiveness-filled Life
  - A Freedom-filled Life
  - A Grace-filled Life
  - A Light-filled Life
  - A Love-filled Life
  - A Prayer-filled Life
  - A Spirit-filled Life
  - A Word-filled Life
  - A Worship-filled Life
  - An Opportunity-filled Life

# A Cup Overflowing

- David gives us the imagery of an overflowing cup in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm:

“You, LORD, are my shepherd. I will never be in need. <sup>2</sup>You let me rest in fields of green grass. You lead me to streams of peaceful water, <sup>3</sup>and you refresh my life. You are true to your name, and you lead me along the right paths. <sup>4</sup>I may walk through valleys as dark as death, but I won’t be afraid. You are with me, and your shepherd’s rod makes me feel safe. <sup>5</sup>You treat me to a feast, while my enemies watch. You honor me as your guest, and *you fill my cup until it overflows*. <sup>6</sup>Your kindness and love will always be with me each day of my life, and I will live forever in your house, LORD.”

# A Cup Overflowing

- ...an overflowing cup...
- A “cup” overflowing with what?
- Is there anything we have to do, other than accept the gift of salvation, in order to receive these blessings?
  - I don't mean “what must I do to be saved?”
  - I mean what must I do to truly experience the blessings of *having been* saved?

# **A Cup Overflowing – A study of the Christian life**

Lesson 1:

A Christian Life is... ***A Hope-filled Life***

# Hope

- If we're going to discuss a life filled with hope, we need to first know what hope is.
- How would *you* define hope?
- Dictionary definition:
  - “To look forward to with confidence or expectation.”
  - “To expect and desire.”
  - “A wish or desire accompanied by confident expectation of its fulfillment.”

# Hope

- If we're going to discuss a life filled with hope, we need to first know what hope is.
- How would *you* define hope?
- Dictionary definition – “confident expectation”
  - Is that how we *really* view hope? Is that how we use the word in day-to-day usage?
  - Our secular use of the word tends more toward a meaning of “wishful thinking”, and this carries over into our spiritual use of the word.
  - Biblical hope is *not* “wishful thinking”!

# Hope

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- How would *you* define hope?
- Dictionary definition – “confident expectation”
- “But as for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more.” (Psa 71:14 NIV)
  - Is “wishful thinking” something that would likely cause you to praise God?

# Hope

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- How would *you* define hope?
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- Is “our hope” the same as “our salvation”?

# The Spirit

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope **by the power of the Holy Spirit.**” (Rom 15:13)

“But by faith we eagerly await **through the Spirit** the righteousness for which we hope.” (Gal 5:5)

- What is the role of the Spirit in our hope?

# How is hope reflected in life?

- How should your Christian hope affect your attitude toward your current circumstances or goals?
- Why is it difficult to fix our attention and hope on God?
  - The best answer to this question is one that Paul wrote to the Corinthians – in a chapter that doesn't even use the word hope!

“Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup>Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. <sup>3</sup>And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup>The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup>For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. <sup>6</sup>For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ...

“...<sup>7</sup>But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. <sup>8</sup>We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. <sup>10</sup>We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. <sup>11</sup>For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. <sup>12</sup>So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you...

“... <sup>13</sup>It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, <sup>14</sup>because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. <sup>15</sup>All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. <sup>16</sup>Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup>For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup>So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

2 Corinthians 4

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2 Corinthians 4

# How is hope reflected in life?

- How should your Christian hope affect your attitude toward your current circumstances or goals?
- Why is it difficult to fix our attention and hope on God?
  - It's difficult because it's easier to do the opposite of what Paul said: "...fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen."

# Next week

- A Christian Life Is *A Fruit-filled Life*

## ***Notes to accompany A Christian Life is a Hope-filled Life***

Slide 2:

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- Certainly there are other things we could list that “fill our life” as Christians. Perhaps those other things can be the subject of a future study, but this quarter, we’ll focus on these.

Slide 3:

From the Contemporary English Version.

David employs two different images of the LORD:

- That of a protective shepherd (vs 1-4)
- That of a gracious host (vs 5-6)

It is this latter imagery we’ll focus on this quarter – that of the Lord as a gracious host. Not only does God protect us as a shepherd protects his sheep, but he is the ultimate gracious host, preparing an abundant feast of blessings at his table in the presence of unbelievers, and filling our cup over and over again until it overflows.

Sometimes the things our cup is filled with are exceedingly pleasant – as in the case of love, joy, peace, etc.

But sometimes it requires work and effort on our part to partake of his overflowing cup – as in the case of the opportunities we’re presented with and the responsibility to live as “children of light” (Eph 5:8).

This morning, we focus on the **hope** we have in the Lord.

Slide 4:

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- A cup overflowing with blessings, both spiritual and physical.
- Well, yes.
  - To receive gifts such as the gift of the Spirit, the gift is of no effect if we don’t allow the Spirit to make his home in our heart and do his work. Our stubborn will can easily crowd out the presence of the Spirit.
  - For our cup to be overflowing with opportunity, we must take advantage of the opportunities we’re given.
  - For our cup to be overflowing with love – in order to truly experience the love of God – we must share our love with others. We must show others the same love God has shown to us.
  - In order to truly feel forgiven, we must experience what it means to forgive.
  - And so on...

Slide 5: <none>

Slide 6:

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- Question sheet – question #1.
- These are good definitions of *hope*.

Slide 7:

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- All the definitions had the common idea of “confident expectation”.
  - In practice, we don’t tend to use the word *hope* in this way.
  - Our use of the word tends to carry the idea of something we have no way of knowing whether or not we’ll ever get – basically a wish that may come to pass and it may not. Truly “wishful thinking”.

Slide 8:

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This would be a good time to cover question #2. To what does Paul refer when he mentions “one hope”?

Slide 9:

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- Question sheet – question #3.
  - Our hope and our salvation are not the same. Salvation is something we already *have* – we are not in “confident expectation” of it!
    - “We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.” Acts 15:11
    - “By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you.” 1 Corinthians 15:2

Slide 10:

Question sheet – question #4.

- Our hope is the work of the Holy Spirit, whom we received when we were saved.

Slide 11:

- Question sheet – question #5.
- Question sheet – question #6.

Slide 12, 13, 14: <none>

Slide 15:

And *that*, my friends, is our hope! May we live each day not only to glorify the God who gives us that hope, but so that unbelievers may see the hope we have, and will want the same hope -- 1 Peter 3:15, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

Slide 16 & 17: <none>