

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR THRIVING LIFE

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FULLNESS OF SALVATION

What is your idea of what it is to inherit the Kingdom of heaven?

Examine the life of Jesus. What does it reveal about being heir to the Kingdom?

What is one thing you would do differently if your idea of inheritance was defined only by the life of Jesus?

How would you specifically pray if you choose to be changed in that way?

Hebrews 6:9-12 – ⁹Even though we speak in this way, beloved, we are confident of better things in your case, things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do. ¹¹And we want each one of you to show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope to the very end, ¹²so that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

1) Fullness of Salvation...

We are taught to give up on our dreams. The exceptional prove the rule. Most of us settle. We do not have the confidence to persist in the sacrifices a life of excellence requires. Many expect instant gratification and quit when it isn't received. The rest of us consider ourselves patient while waiting for a seemingly normal duration. Dreams escape by waiting us out. We find the idea of salvation attractive in part because it is presented as instant gratification. Accept Jesus and the work is complete. Or is it? Yes, we believe in the certainty of salvation upon confession of belief. But not a life in its fullness. The fullness of salvation is a life, which requires a lifetime. A lifetime of unwavering faith in the constant swirl of reasons to doubt. Accepting Jesus is the beginning.

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◆ **Inhabit salvation:** The constant tension in following Jesus is the need to know we have been changed without any signs to prove it. We appear the same, and the world around us treats us the same. Those who expected salvation to alter our circumstances—a form of spiritual self-help—are likely to move on to the next fad, wishing it will work better. It takes a commitment to the Truth that Jesus lived and died for us to choose to persist in the faith. We need to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit convincing us of this Truth and that He is “confident of better things in your case, things that belong to salvation (Hebrews 6:9).”

◆ **Wait on the Lord:** *Things that belong to salvation.* Take inventory of what it is you expect to receive as part of salvation. Eternal life, resurrection... what else? The Bible lingers on the change that occurs within us as a principal attribute of salvation. Those who wait actively on the Lord engage their faith in prayer to Him and as they take inventory of what He has done. Our faith is belief that “God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work... (v10).” His justice is found in *things that belong to salvation*, the things we ought to expect to be provided for “the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do (v10).” We serve in love because that is who He is. We do this without evidence but on faith that He has done it.

II) Fullness of Hope...

Waiting on the Lord is an act of present faith interwoven with future hope. Prayerful reflection reveals first those ways in which we better express Jesus now than before. It provokes us, too, as we now desire to fully express Him, yet fall short. This exposes us to the dangers of discontentment, shame, and impatience. Lives of faith break down without hope. Hope turns our attention from ourselves to Him, our source of every good thing in our being. Our persistence for His sake is and will continue to be rewarded.

◆ **Pursue your heart:** Many begin pursuits unequipped to achieve their aim. Their flesh lusts for the delights certain to be discovered at the end but wants nothing to do with the pursuit itself. These fade away, pursuing some other fancy that may be obtained faster and easier. This is a symptom of the condition of wanting to remain what one is while possessing the benefits of something else. Jesus wants us to be His followers, which includes rejoicing in the pursuit. Those who persist will “show the same diligence (v11),” because it is the continual act of being what our heart chooses to be and become. When we serve all the saints in love, we live the life of Jesus.

◆ **Be assured:** Hope is the antidote to the doubts that arise from a want of external affirmation. It begins with actualized faith through which we see inner evidence of what we are. This suggests we are in part who our heart chooses to be. Our unfulfilled condition presents two possibilities: we are pretending and can go no further or are immature and growing into our fullness. This is the universal condition of humanity throughout the Bible. We choose which possibility is true and make it so. Either we accept the judgment and condemnation of the world or “realize the full assurance of hope to the very end (v11).” The choice is ours and will be clear in our lives of diligence or wander.

III) Fullness of His Promises...

Faith and hope are motions of the spirit. Moves toward God. Motions drawn by the Holy Spirit’s magnetism. This magnetic field emanates from God’s promises. Applying the terms faith and hope to any other quality or desire is false. The greater the clarity with which we perceive the promises of God, the stronger the attraction to them. The faster and straighter we will be moved in faith and hope. The diligent application of oneself to the life of Jesus both delivers the promises and clarifies them. It is the miraculous act of becoming.

◆ **Strength of attraction:** The strength of our attraction to Jesus is proportional to our proximity. Faith and hope move us toward Him, strengthening our attraction. We accelerate in response, becoming ever more certain to arrive in the fullness of salvation. When, however, we choose doubt, we stall. The external evidence our doubt demands fail to materialize because we are no longer moving further into the revelation of our true being. We are urged to be diligent in faith and hope “so that you may not become sluggish (v12).” We know from experience that sluggishness is not a state of constancy. Being sluggish is to slide away from Jesus and our true being. It is also an expression of disbelief in the power and love of God.

◆ **Inheriting the Kingdom:** Royalty is the union of power and moral responsibility to use it for the benefit of all. The promises of God are that we are His royal co-heirs of the Kingdom of heaven with Jesus. Each act of sacrificial loving service we perform exhibits our royal nature—the change into His image. Our diligence to this lifestyle makes us “imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (v12).” Imitators in the sense of actual likeness, not pretense. We receive our inheritance of the fullness of the kingdom by living as if we are already royal children. The fullness of salvation is a life full of hope in the richness of His promise.