

Hebrews 5:11–6:12: FROM IMMATURITY TO MATURITY

I. Introduction

Last study, the focus was on the role of Jesus as our high priest. This week the passage focuses more on our individual responsibility as believers. The passage sends a stern yet encouraging wake-up call for believers stalled in their spiritual growth. For example, the author begins with a sharp rebuke, noting that while the readers should be teachers by now, they have become "dull of hearing", "needing the milk" of basic principles rather than the "solid food" of deeper doctrine.

Chapter six also does a wonderful job of clarifying for us what are the 6 foundations of Christian faith namely: repentance from dead works, faith in God, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. These are often referred to as the ABCs of Christian faith and are a great measure of separating those who eat solid food vs those who still need spiritual milk.

Now even in contemporary times, this message still resonates for believers who may find themselves comfortable with only the basics of faith, neglecting to pursue deeper spiritual maturity. Just as the early audience was challenged, we too are called to move beyond foundational teachings and actively seek growth and application in our daily lives.

This leads into the conclusion of the passage with a sobering warning against apostasy, describing the peril of tasting the heavenly gift and then falling away, likening such a life to a ground that produces only thorns and thistles. Notably, the passage shifts beautifully toward hope and assurance, as the author expresses confidence in "better things" for the readers. He commends their hard work and the love they have shown to other believers, urging them to shed any sluggishness. By imitating those who through faith and patience inherit the promises, they are encouraged to maintain their diligence until the very end to make their hope a reality.

II. Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Hebrews 5:11-6:12

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

III. Think Through the Following Questions:

1. Why does the author of Hebrews refer to "elementary" teachings? Do you think most Christians today have a "firm foundation" in these six things, or are we often trying to build a house on an empty lot?
2. What are some things we do today that might be "dead works"? (e.g., going to church just to look good, or posting Bible verses on social media without living them out). How do we turn those into "live works"?
3. The "laying on of hands" is about being sent out with a purpose. If you were "commissioned" by your church to represent Christ at your school or your summer job, how would that change your attitude on Monday morning?
4. Verse 5:12 says that by this time, they ought to be teachers. Does "teaching" always mean standing behind a pulpit, or are there other ways we "teach" the faith in our daily lives? Who are you currently "feeding" spiritually?
5. Verse 5:14 says maturity comes through "constant practice" to distinguish good from evil. Can you share a time when you had to make a tough "moral call" in your business or school? How did that "practice" make you stronger for the next time?
6. Verses 6:7–8 compares our lives to land. If someone looked at the "crop" your life produced this past month—your attitudes, your words, your work ethic—would they see "useful vegetation" or "thorns and thistles"? What kind of "rain" do you need to start producing better fruit?
7. Verse 6:10 is incredibly encouraging: "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work." When you feel exhausted or unappreciated in your ministry or your job, does it change your perspective to know that God has a perfect memory of your labor of love?
8. The passage ends by telling us not to be "sluggish" but to imitate those who show "faith and patience." What is one practical habit you can start this week to move from being spiritually "sluggish" to being "diligent"?

IV. Lessons Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?

V. Application: How Do You think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?