

Jesus is Better – Hebrews

Hebrews 5:11-6:3

“Moving on to Maturity” – March 11, 2018



Introduction

Is spiritual growth optional for the Christian life? What's wrong with becoming a Christian and just being okay with where I'm at? In the New Testament, spiritual growth is a sign of health and life. The original readers of Hebrews had stopped growing. Growth seemed to bring persecution, so in an effort to minimize suffering, they minimized their Christianity. Whether they knew it or not, such compromise meant they were at risk of drifting away from Jesus. In our text today, Hebrews provides a wakeup call to spur them (and us) on to maturity – to refuse to settle in where we're at.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. Look into the mirror (5:11-14)
- II. Press on to maturity (6:1-3)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [Hebrews 5:11-14](#)

After introducing the idea of Jesus' priesthood in 4:14-5:10, the writer pauses in 5:11-6:20 to warn and wakeup the reader before returning to Jesus priesthood in chapter 7. The problem being addressed is in v11 – it wasn't that the topic was hard to teach or that they were ignorant, but 'dull of hearing.' What does it mean to become 'dull of hearing'? 5:11-14 serves as a sort of mirror for us to look at and see how we're doing in terms of growing as a Christian. Can you identify areas in your life you've become dull of hearing?

Due to neglecting the 'basic principles' of God's word (what we might call the ABCs of Christianity), the readers had become 'unskilled in the word of righteousness'. They'd regressed so far they'd forgot how to read, how to distinguish good from evil. As a result, the thought of leaving Jesus to go back to Judaism seemed like a 'good' idea, when in reality, it was 'evil'. Here we see that maturity isn't just an intellectual exercise but a moral one. Jesus himself taught in [John 14:21](#), the Christian obeys because they love Him, and the more we trust and obey Him the more He will reveal Himself to us. We'll know more of his love, power, and grace because we're experiencing His help in trusting Him. What are the areas of your relationship with God you've become spiritually lazy in? You know the good you ought to do, the evil you ought to avoid, but have given yourself a 'pass' and made it 'not that big of a deal'? What would it look like for you to not just know what to

do but act on it in trust and obedience today? Take some time to pray and ask God to search your heart ([Psalm 139:24](#)) to reveal what areas you need to grow in. Share that with a friend and ask God to help you grow in obedience.

Additional reading: James 1:22, Hebrews 11:24-26

2) Read [Hebrews 6:1-3](#)

When we recognize the areas of immaturity in the mirror of 5:11-14, we need to press on to maturity. When the writer calls us to leave the elementary doctrine of Christ in v1 he *doesn't* mean leave it as in forgetting it. He means leave it in the sense that you are questioning it or having to relearn it. He's saying know these ABC truths so you can apply them, build on them, and grow in maturity!

The 3 pairs of truths which represent the 'milk' or 'basic principles' form a sort of catechism (summary of the faith used for instruction) for the new believer:

Beginning/Conversion	Repentance	Faith
Middle/Sanctification	Washings	Laying on of hands
End/Salvation	Resurrection of dead	Final Judgment

Such milk is wonderful to know, but we're encouraged to put it into constant practice so we can grow as believers. To grow we must strive, study, pray, repent, run with endurance...it's hard work! But in all our striving, we must also remember that it's God who causes the growth (see [1 Corinthians 3:6](#)). We will grow if 'God permits'. Are you willing and wanting to grow? Pressing on involves our effort, but also praying and relying on and resting in God's good work to grow us and those around us. What's the next step you need to take to grow today? Take some time to pray in response to this that God may help us grow together as a church.

Additional Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:10, Matthew 23:37, Proverbs 2:3-6

Prayer of Response

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

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