

Hebrews Study

The Race to Maturity Hebrews 5:11-6:20

What does it take to be a “gold metal” athlete? What kinds of work, discipline, mindset, and anything else do you have to have? What’s the difference between a middle school trumpet player and a professional symphony trumpet player? What about the difference between a mature Christian and brand new follower of Christ? What kinds of work, disciplines, attitudes, and practices does it take to be a “gold metal” follower of Christ? This is what we will discuss here.

A Warning Against Falling Away vv. 5:11-6:12

How would you describe the failures of the Hebrews?

They had not matured spiritually, “because you are slow to learn” v. 11 “you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again.” v. 12

Think about the resources they had in the first century to grow in their spiritual maturity, what might have kept them from doing so? What about us today?

They did not have as many OT copies of Scripture or NT, but they did have the eye witnesses of Jesus and their testimony. Today we have a vast collection of Bibles and resources to use.

How does the illustration of an infant describe their spiritual maturity? How do we train ourselves with solid foods?

The food that babies eat compared to what adults eat. Milk vs. Steak. Solid food being constantly use train to ourselves. Our stomachs must be trained to digest certain foods first.

What is righteousness? What sense should we understand this word in verse 13 with still being on milk?

The quality of being morally right, just, in accordance with God’s standard of goodness and truth. It can refer to a state of being or a way of living.

We should probably see righteousness used here as a way to live out our faith, our conduct or actions. The application of our knowledge.

What are some teachings about righteousness that are not for infants you have recently learned?

“Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God,” – Hebrews 6:1

Elementary Teachings About Christ (Hebrews 6:1-2):

- Repentance
- Faith in God
- Baptism
- Laying on of Hands (Prayer)
- Resurrection of Dead
- Eternal Judgment

On Hebrews 6:4-6

“This warning passage is one of the most controversial in Hebrews, and ‘has occasioned considerable discomfort in the history of interpretation’. It has often troubled earnest Christians, apparently raising doubts about their assurance of salvation, an assurance that appears to be so clearly affirmed in Romans 5, the ‘golden chain’ of 8:29–30, and the unqualified promises of John 6:39–40, 44.” - Peter O’Brien

How should we read Heb. 6:4-6

Is this referring to losing salvation? Is this a hyperbolic warning to scare the believers to stay faithful? Are the people fakers who do not really know the Lord?

“Righteousness... it refers to the ethical side, living rightly before God. This refers to deep Christian principles for mature Christians who are able to discern right from wrong and forge a life that is pleasing to God. Such people are never lethargic but deeply care for theological and ethical truth and want to live by it.”

— Grant Osborne, George Guthrie

According to verses 4-6, what is it impossible to do? Who is the author of Hebrews talking about in these verses?

It is impossible for those that fall away to be brought back to repentance.

“once been enlightened”, “who have tasted the heavenly gift,”
“shared in the Holy Spirit,”

“tasted the goodness of the word of God”

It seems to be discussing Christians - “shared in the Holy Spirit”

What is the illustration about the two types of lands and the rain saying about people in verses 7-8?

Good land will produce good crops for the farmer,
the bad land will also produce thorns from the same rains.

According to 6:12, how can God’s people endure to the end?

Not being lazy, through faith and patience.

The Certainty of God’s Promise vv. 13-20

What part of God’s nature or character is an encouragement to the believers here in verse 13?

His faithfulness and ability to keep a promise v. 13

His power and fact that He is the greatest. God Almighty v. 13

His unchanging nature v.17

What two things are impossible for God here?

Impossible to change v. 17

Impossible to lie v. 18

“The verb ‘to fall away’ can mean ‘to sin’ in general or ‘go astray’, but the severity of the descriptions that follow (crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace) require that it be understood of the specific sin of apostasy.”

- Peter T. O’Brien

The Blessings Christians throw away in the act of apostasy. (Hebrews 4-5)

- “Once been enlightened”
- “Tasted the heavenly gift”
- “Shared in the Holy Spirit”
- “Tasted the goodness of the Word of God”
- “Tasted... the powers of the coming age.”

“The Christian hope is secure and unwavering because God does not lie, and he has given a sure promise and an oath to his people” — Peter T. O’Brien

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest for ever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

- Hebrews 6:19-20

Hebrews Study

For the Road

Preparation for Next Week:

Read: *Hebrews 7:1-28*

Be Ready to Discuss:

Jesus and Melchizedek,
The Levitical Priesthood,
The idea of a New Covenant.

Further Study...

Much of how you interpret Hebrews 6:4-6 likely depends on your understanding of the nature of salvation and the doctrine of eternal security. Do you know where you stand on that topic? What other Scriptures throughout the whole Bible convince you to think that way.

Use the space below to record passages that discuss this and begin to formulate your thoughts.