

**Riverview Baptist Church Wednesday Night Class:
A Study in the Book of Hebrews – Lesson 6**

E. Christ is Better than Aaron – 4:14-10:18

1. A Better Position – 4:14-16

2. A Better Priest – 5:1-7:28

a. Two Prerequisites for Priesthood – 5:1-4

b. Perfection of the Son – 5:5-10

c. Third Warning Section – 5:11-6:20

d. Priesthood of Melchizedek – 7:1-28

Chapter 6 is a continuation of the third warning section. At the end of chapter 5, the author encourages his readers of the _____ of spiritual growth.

What was the basic warning? _____

The author used the illustration of food that was appropriate to the level of _____ maturity. Immature babies consume milk and mature adults consume solid food.

Those who are spiritually mature, through repeated practices (see 1-5 on page 39) are able to distinguish between good and evil.

Why is this so important?

The need to progress to maturity – 6:1-8

In verses 1-3, we have the _____ to the problem and in verses 4-8, we have the alternative to going on to maturity.

In 6:1-2, the author gives six descriptive phrases. There are two main views on these phrases.

The first being that these are _____ doctrines considered as foundational truths. Homer Kent in his commentary on Hebrews holds this view.¹

He views these six as three pairs of two each – two for _____, two for _____, and two for eschatology.

The second view sees these as _____ doctrines that are foundational to Christianity. Pentecost and Gromacki hold this view. These would be principles that point to the _____.

1. "...repentance from dead works" – works of the Mosaic system that could not bring life.
2. "...of faith toward God" – Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4 – The object of saving faith in the Old Testament was God.
3. "...of the teachings of baptisms" – Washings – Mark 7:8; Heb. 9:10.
4. "...of the laying on of hands" – Lev. 1:4; 16:21.
5. "...of the resurrections of the dead" – Job 19:25; Dan. 12:2.
6. "...of eternal judgment" – Compare Psalm 1:5-6

¹ Kent, Homer. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary*. Winona Lake: BMH Publishers: 106.

The Solution – 6:1-3

The “therefore” in 6:1 goes back to the immaturity in 5:11-14. The word “perfection” (KJV) and “maturity” (NASB). The noun form of this word is used in Col. 3:14 to mean maturity.

The verb form of the word is used nine times in Hebrews (2:10; 5:9; 7:19, 28; 9:9; 10:1, 4; 11:40; 12:23). This mature state is the opposite of being a _____ infant in 5:13.

Notice the admonition here. In 6:1, we are told to “press on to maturity.” This should be our goal! Since we are told to do, then it can be done. In 6:3, the author states that this will happen for himself and his readers, indicated by the “we,” if God permits.

Is it God’s will that Christians grow into spiritual maturity? _____

The alternative to spiritual maturity – 6:4-8.

Hebrews 6:4-8 is a heavily disputed passage. There are some who claim that this is supporting the idea that a Christian can _____ salvation.

There are some who believe that salvation can be gained and lost over and over again. This view runs counter to the many references to _____ life, especially in the New Testament.

If salvation could be lost, then it would necessitate the _____ of many salvation truths: the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit – placement into the Body of Christ, the resurrection type life now, etc.

There are some who view these in 6:4-8 as professors of salvation, but not possessors of salvation. While this is a reality for some people, it does not fit with the encouragement of the author in this context.

The author encourages the readers “to press on to maturity.” An unsaved person cannot spiritually mature. Neither can an unsaved person be renewed (6:6).

Also, there are five aorist participles in the text (we will list those in a moment). If these aorist participles are used outside of this context, there would be no question concerning the reality of salvation.

The most popular view among conservative scholars is that this is a hypothetical case, a “what if” view. This is also indicated in the way this Greek passage is translated in the KJV, NKJV, NIV using the conditional “if.” The NASB and ESV versions use the conjunction “and.”

The idea behind this view is this: if it were even possible to lose salvation (which it is not), then it would be impossible for someone who did lose salvation to be restored to salvation, again. Why?

If that were even possible, which it is not, then the person would need for Jesus to be crucified again and again and again, each time salvation would be lost.

There is a fourth view that some hold to and that is a “no return to maturity” view. This view indicates that it is possible for a Christian to become so _____ in their spiritual level that they will not become spiritually mature at all.

The consideration that is needed to understand this meaning is found in the five aorist participles in the text.

In verse 4, there is one plural article that ties all five participles together as one unit. Therefore, all five participles describe the same group, “those who have...”

1. “...once been enlightened” – The verb form of this word appears 9 times in the New Testament (Luke 11:36; John 1:9; 1 Cor. 4:5; Eph. 1:18; 3:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; Rev. 18:1; 21:23; 22:5). A participial form is also used in Heb. 10:32. All of which refer to being saved.

2. “...have tasted the heavenly gift” – either Christ or salvation – tasted means to have appropriated or experienced something. See Heb 2:9; Acts 10:10; 1 Pet. 2:3; Psalm 34:8).

3. “...have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit” – these have received the Holy Spirit. Only saved people receive the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9).

4. “...have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come (Millennium) – Again, the same word used here as in number 2 above. These have been tasted – appropriated or experienced.

5. “...and *then* have fallen away” – This specific form of this word is found only here in the New Testament (Heb. 6:6). The Greek word παραπεσόντας (parapesontas) means “to fall away, to forsake, to turn away.”

These five aorist participles refer to the same people (real or hypothetical). The use of the aorist participle refers to a _____ action. With this in mind, it certainly seems that the author is referring to saved people.

Furthermore, the word “for” in 6:4 ties 6:4-6 back to the previously mentioned in 5:11-14 and 6:1-3. These are all believers (real or hypothetical).

There is an interesting change in 6:6. The author used five aorist participles to describe the people as having been saved. This is a completed action. In the second part of the verse, the author uses present participles (crucifying and making an open shame) which are _____ actions.

This indicates that for those who either believe you can lose salvation or those who, in reality, turn away from God and refuse to grow spiritually, are continually mocking Christ and His work on the Cross.

This is especially true if a believing Christian reverts back to following the system of the Mosaic Law. This certainly seems to be the issue the author addresses throughout the book of Hebrews.

The author then uses two illustrations to show the difference between spiritually mature Christians and spiritually immature Christians. In 6:7-8, there is the depiction of a field or more precisely, a _____.

God sends rain, necessary for anything to grow. The garden that is has been _____ brings forth useful food. The garden that has not been worked brings forth thorns and thistles, useless for food.

What is the principle? All Christians are given the same blessings of time, opportunity, and provision (the rain). God blesses the believer who does the work necessary for growth. The one who does not do the work, does not reap the blessings that come from spiritual growth (1 Cor. 3:5-10).

What is the lesson we see from 1 Cor. 3:5-10?

The author's certainty of his readers salvation – Hebrews 6:9-20

The author clearly indicates his belief that his readers are saved in the use of the word _____ in 6:9. He is convinced of “better things” in their lives. The evidence of salvation can be seen in their lives (6:10).

The author desires three things for these Christians.

1. 6:11 – Be diligent in the Christian life!
2. 6:12 – Don't be lazy in the Christian life!
3. 6:12 – Imitate others who are good example of the Christian life!

The author uses Abraham and God's promises to him as an example of faith that endured over time.

God's promise – 6:13-15 – God made a promise or a covenant with Abraham. Abraham could trust God, because He swore on the basis of Himself! There is nothing higher than Him! Abraham waited _____ years for an offspring (Gen. 12:4; 21:5).

God's oath – 6:16-18 – God strengthened the promise with a recurring oath! He reminded Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (and their generations to follow) that His promises would come to pass. The author also states that “it is impossible for God to lie” (Num. 23:19).

Our Hope – 6:19-20 – Since Jesus has already gone on before us (as a forerunner), then we can also have the same confidence that Abraham had. We have a sure _____ of hope in Christ. See Heb. 2:1; 3:6, 14; 10:23, 38 for other nautical terms used by the author.

Remember: Growth takes time! God is faithful to us! We can trust in Him!