

GROW UP! (PART 1)



Today we begin a passage that many struggle with and find it extremely difficult to understand. I thought I'd show why, even those we will actually deal with it next time.

That part is:

Hebrews 6:4-6 (NIV)⁴ *It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit,⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.*

For those like me, who are convinced that the Bible AND the writer of Hebrews teaches the Perseverance of the Saints (Eternal Security) – say “how can this be? “Sounds” like they CAN lose their Salvation.

But also, for those who, unlike me, believe it is possible to lose salvation – this passage is really not any kinder, because it also says that “*if they fall away*” it would be “*impossible to be brought back to repentance.*” Thus “one strike and your out” for good. “THAT CAN’T BE!” They would say.

So no one is happy. This passage is a difficulty for everyone!

Well, I’m so glad we have been carefully studying this book from the beginning, because next week I’ll show you that this is really not a problem at all. But first we need to get to it, and that we shall do today.

(Back to Chapter 5, vv. 11ff.)

I. THESE BELIEVERS HAD A DANGEROUS DISEASE VV. 11-14

v. 11 - THE DISEASE

Up to this point in book of Hebrews, the author has not stated the disease (problem) that he has been dealing with, but you can hear it, between the lines, when he says things like,

- 2:1 “Pay close attention”
- 3:1 “Consider Jesus”
- 3:8 “Don’t harden you hearts”

- 3:12 “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God”

He hasn’t named the disease, but there’s a lot of therapy going on here! There’s a lot of medicine to fix something. But its name has not been told, and now it’s named in v.11 in our text:

Hebrews 5:11 *We have much to say about this (Malchizedek, Jesus, his High Priesthood, the glories of Salvation), but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn (dull to hear).*

There’s the disease. They have become *dull of hearing* or *slow to learn*.

So today ask yourself, “Do I have the disease?” Today you may come if you think you have the disease.

WHAT IS THE DISEASE?

It is a failure to have the heart embrace, to receive, to delight in, to treasure, to rest in the Word of Truth such that faith is nurtured and fruit is born.

It’s like traffic....Don’t hear it anymore.

Musak... “I love that song!” (Who says that?)

Dullness of hearing – comes in our ears and does nothing.

Warning: **Luke 8:18** (NIV) ⁻¹⁸ *Therefore consider carefully how you listen (hear). Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken from him.”*

Hebrews 5:12 (NIV)¹² *In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!*

They were not growing! Every Christian needs to grow! We all ought to be “*teachers*.”

Everyone who matures ought to be teacher of the things of God. Doesn’t mean all ought to have a teaching gift. But we all teach something. Our lives are either teaching others about the reality and power of God or it’s teaching them a false picture of God.

Hebrews 5:13-14 (NIV) ⁻¹³ *Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.¹⁴ But solid food is for*

the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

At this point you may say, “Wait, why do you keep calling this a disease? Since when is being a baby a disease?” It says in *v. 13* it’s *babylike* in the text, not a disease?

Sometimes it’s OK to be “babyish.” There is nothing wrong with being babyish when you’re a baby.

A 15 year old baby is diseased! If you’re 1, it’s not a disease, but if your 15, you are very, very sick.

He’s talking of course about spiritual things. If you have just become a Christian, it’s perfectly normal to be a Spiritual Baby.

But if you 20 and your still carrying a rattle and dribbling all over yourself, that’s a problem.

II. So, GROW UP! - HEB.6:1-3

He said they need “milk” but he’s not going to give them milk. Why? Because these are not new believers. They need to go forward. He is not going to spoon feed them but challenge them to grow up.

They need to give up some of what they valued as Jews because they were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Like ceremonial washings. Laying on of hands was a largely Jewish issue.

HOW CAN YOU GROW UP?

Step 1 - Take in (Crave) the Milk of the Word.

Don’t mistake what is being said here. The milk of the word is not bad. It’s not the milk it’s our “dullness of hearing” that’s the problem.

Snatch at every opportunity to take in the milk of the Word of God.

1 Peter 2:2 (NIV) -² *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,*

Don’t be resistant, distracted, “dull of hearing” slow of learning.

Vera in her first year. When gets thirsty, gets very focused. She say, “I will make everybody in this house totally miserable until I get what I want.”

Be like Vera...”I gotta have it!”

Don’t be dull and distracted and passive in your life, just coasting along... radio puts in one thing, tv,

movies puts in another thing. And you are not pursuing the Milk.

Step 2 - Use the Word you take in to Discern Good and Evil. (obey it) – v. 14

We have not “heard” the word until we obey what it says.

The “solid food” will not be digested properly until we have a heart that seeks to obey God.

Hebrews 5:14 (NIV) -¹⁴ *But solid food is for the mature, (for those) who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

Hebrews 5:14 (ESV) -¹⁴ *But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*

A lot goes on before we can handle solid food, like Malchizedek or election or atonement. But what goes on is not intellectual but MORAL.

IF YOU STUMBLE OVER MALCHEZEDECK, (ELECTION,) it might be that

- you are practicing shakey business practices
- Watch bad television and movies
- Love money (spend too much on yourself and give too little)
- You lie, you’re dishonest. You gossip.

A heart that is not resting in, depending on the word and the god of the word (faith) is a heart that’s not going to obey God.

HOW DOES THAT HAPPEN?

- First, when we crave the word and take it in, rest in it, depend on it, it begins to make us different inside.
- And then, we can begin to “smell” the good. And distinguish it from the evil.

95% of the decisions you make each day are not spelled out in the Bible.

(murder, adultery, steal – no discernment necessary)

But, what tv shows to watch, investment strategies, choice of where to live, how to use your money. There’s a thousand a day and they are not explicitly in the Bible. What do you do.

Become a certain type of person that has drunk in the Word *who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

CLOSING

Are we at a point where we are “dull of hearing”?

Do we need to crave the Word, long for it, cherish it again?

Are you willing to take steps to put you in the place where the word will inspire you?

