

## Hebrews 6 Doctrines of Maturity

- 1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,
- 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

- Principles, Greek for foundations
- The writer is telling his audience to leave the ABCs of the faith so they might pursue completion or maturity in their faith
- Notice how the basics are paired
- *Repentance* and *faith* (related to God)
- *Baptisms* and *laying on of hands* (related to church body)
- *Resurrection* and *judgment* (related to future)
- With our Christian viewpoint, it is easy to interpret this list as the basics of our faith, however, there is nothing noted in this list that becomes distinctly Christian
- *Repentance*, Greek *reversal of decision*
- *Faith*, Greek for *moral conviction*
- *Baptisms*, Greek for *washing* (different from the word typically translated baptism in the New Testament) more indicative of ceremonial washings
- The intent of the audience was never to abandon religion, but to make their religious practices less Christian
- A subtle denial of Christ is still denial

- 3 And this will we do, if God permit.

- This phrase does not mean God would not intent them to mature, but our progress is dependent on the will of God
- The *when* and *how far* of maturity steps depend on the will of God in our individual lives

4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,  
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,  
6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

- Context, context, context...if you take the text out of context all you have is a con
- Some scholars have given this passage the title of “Satan’s favorite part of scripture”
- There are several *impossibles* mentioned in Hebrews: it is impossible for God to lie, it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins, and without faith it is impossible to please God
- I believe the only way to reconcile eternal security with the statement above (which should also be viewed in the same light in inspiration by the Holy Spirit) is to consider the *if* of verse 6 as seriously as the *impossible* of verse 4
- We should also consider the difference of *falling down* and *falling away*
- Compare Moses’ striking the rock the second time instead of speaking to the rock

7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

- This illustration is similar to those of Jesus speaking of the different types of ground on which the gospel seeds could fall
- If a farmer has several fields that he cultivates and all fields receive adequate rainfall, plowing, planting, and care, but one field produces only thorns without crops, it would be within his rights as a property owner to burn the field in hopes that the next harvest would yield better results

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

- In verse 9, the writer does, by his own admission, reveal the harshness of the tone by which he has been speaking to his audience
- This does not negate the severity of the message, but does dull the edge of his words

10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

- God has not forgotten you, do not forsake Him
- Taking the passage from verse 4 – 10, it could be assumed the writer to be addressing a question presented to him by his audience
- Possibly, someone in communication with him, had informed him of an exodus of people leaving their fellowship and returning to temple worship and, perhaps this information was accompanied with a question of those “losing their faith”
- The most important thing to remember is we interpret the obscure by the obvious as there are many passages supporting the doctrine of eternal security

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- *Drifting, doubting, denying, and now dulling* the word
- This audience did not begin with the intention of giving up and forsaking their faith, but discouragement and persecution removed their *seriousness* and replaced it with *sluggishness* (slothful)
- The writer will begin an illustration of Abraham’s example of waiting on God
- Be imitators of those who inherit – not earn, the promises of God
- Near the end of 1 Samuel, David has become discouraged and fled Israel for Philistia and, during this time, we have no recorded Psalms
- In discouragement, David had lost his song

13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

- We know from the scriptures that Abraham’s waiting on the Lord was not without some falling down, but he did not fall away
- Turning a page in scripture can be the measure of years, decades, and sometimes, centuries
- Neither Abraham’s faith nor his patience was perfect, but we are still encouraged to have the faith of Abraham

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of **promise** the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an **oath**:

- In verse 18, the two immutable things are the oath and promise of God
- *Immutability*, Greek for *unchangeability*

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, **who have fled for refuge** to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

- i. Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are within easy reach of the needy person; they were of no use unless someone could get to the place of refuge.
- ii. Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are *open to all*, not just the Israelite; no one needs to fear that they would be turned away from their place of refuge in their time of need.
- iii. Both Jesus and the cities of refuge became a place where the one in need would *live*; you didn't come to a city of refuge in time of need just to look around.
- iv. Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are the *only alternative* for the one in need; without this specific protection, they will be destroyed.
- v. Both Jesus and the cities of refuge provide protection *only within their boundaries*; to go outside meant death.
- vi. With both Jesus and the cities of refuge, full freedom comes with the *death of the High Priest*.
- vii. However, there is *a crucial distinction* between Jesus and the cities of refuge. The cities of refuge only helped the *innocent*; the *guilty* can come to Jesus and find refuge.

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

- We are anchored above and not below
- We are anchored to move on, not to remain still

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

- *Forerunner*, Greek word for the *reconnaissance man in the military* – he led knowing others would follow