

A STUDY IN HEBREWS

week 7: Hebrews 5:11-6:20

Can you imagine walking into a cafe and seeing full-grown adults order baby bottles full of milk? As we get back into our Hebrews series, the author challenges us with the idea of being spiritual infants versus being growing believers.

READ: HEBREWS 5:11-14

What sticks out the most?

When the author refers to "milk," or "elementary teachings," what do you think the author is talking about?

READ: HEBREWS 6:1-8.

As you read verses 4-6, what do you think the author is saying here?

Theologians have debated these verses for nearly two millennia. Joel helped us see that the most widely accepted view is that these people the author is referring to are those who never actually put their faith in Jesus. Others might have a different take. One thing is for sure- the author is warning us that if you are not growing in your faith, if you are not maturing in Christ, you are in real spiritual danger.

How have you personally grown in the last year? What fruit do you see in your life?

Where are you at spiritually right now in your life? Would you say you feel like you are doing well overall? Has your spiritual life come to a standstill?

Remember that the point of our faith is to be in loving relationship with our Heavenly Father. So how is your relationship with God going right now?

It may seem that these questions are redundant, but one idea we want to grab ahold of is that justification (being made righteous) always leads to sanctification (being made holy). God is always interested in transforming us into a new creation that bears much fruit for the Kingdom. He is always wanting to pull us into closer relationship with Himself.

The author then encourages the Hebrews in the next part of the chapter. **Read verses 9-12.**

What do verses 11&12 seem to be encouraging us to do? What are the implications?

There seems to be a direct correlation with our spiritual perseverance and the fruit that comes with the Spirit-filled life. **Read verses 13-20 to see how the author helps the people understand the goal of this perseverance.**

Verses 18-20 specifically are written to encourage the reader. How does this change the way we approach our spirituality?

The truth is, without Christ, we have no hope. Due to His work on the cross, we need only to depend on Him for our salvation, our perseverance and our sanctification. May we all see Jesus as the anchor of our souls, in which we have a secure and eternal hope.

Personal exercise:

This week, ask a few loved ones around you to help you see where you are spiritually. You can simply ask them the questions "Can you tell me where you have seen me growing spiritually in the last year?" This gives them an opportunity to tell you where they have observed that things have been going well.

Then, if you are so bold, ask them "Can you tell me areas where I could grow? I really want to grab ahold of everything God has for me." This gives them an opportunity to give you feedback on where God might be calling you to grow and mature. Only do this with spiritually mature people that you trust and love.

Also, check out the questions below to do a self-assessment on where you might be in your journey of growing in your faith:

How do you know if you're a spiritual infant?

Infants are often handed off from person to person...spiritual infants hand themselves off and are tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.

Are you often confused by different teachings you come across?

Do your beliefs change often according to different teachers you listen to?

Infants are focused on one particular person, typically their mother. Until infants mature a bit, they adore only her. Spiritual infants get star struck by other believers, sometimes Christian celebrities, or others they may know.

Do you focus too much on another believer, instead of Jesus himself, who is accessible to us all?

Infants are often cranky and fussy over the smallest of things. Spiritual infants can get tripped up by small inconveniences, sometimes even blaming God for not making sure everything "goes right" for them.

Are you becoming temperate and patient, or do you fuss over things that really don't matter?

How do you know if you are a mature believer?

Mature believers are strong in discernment and will not accept just any kind of spiritual food.

Do you judge everything you hear against the word of God?

Mature believers are skilled in the word of righteousness.

How much time do you spend in God's word, in prayer, in quiet time and communication with Him? Weekly? Daily? Constantly?

Mature believers have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

Have you trained your senses to tune to God, by practice, which will eventually become habit?

Now, some of us will definitely find we have a lot of growing to do, some of us will recognize a pattern of progressive growth in our life that God has had us on for many years, but most of us will likely fall somewhere in the middle. Walking with God is always a journey. However, it's important to know where on the journey you are currently so you can chart a course of action to where you want to end up.

As we continue the Hebrews series, we will all collectively find ways to mature and grow together as a body of believers. You are not alone! May the Spirit bless you with a fresh sense of His presence as we continue this journey together.