

Heb. 6:1 ¶ 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,

Heb. 6:2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

As we begin this chapter, the writer is challenging these believers to get past drinking milk and dig into the meat of the Word. Going on toward perfection speaks of growing up to full maturity. He is encouraging them to get beyond the basics in their understanding, and he identifies the basics:

- Repentance and faith – These are the foundational acts that establish us as part of the family of God. It is through repentance and faith that we become “babes in Christ.” Repentance is the recognition that you are a sinner in need of a Savior and choosing to change your life to obey God. Faith is accepting God’s gift of salvation as offered in His Son Jesus. Christ taught that we have to become babes, ready and wanting to learn God’s word, in order to position ourselves to receive spiritual revelation. If we proceed to cling to our own wisdom and reasoning in rejection of the word of God, we will never understand spiritual truth.

Matt. 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

- Baptisms – A search of scripture will reveal different baptisms. The first is identified as John’s baptism, the baptism of repentance that is symbolic of cleansing from sin.

Acts 19:4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

Luke 3:2-3 ...the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins....

Next comes the baptism that identifies one as a follower of Christ and pictures His death, burial and resurrection.

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Third is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, often mentioned in connection with fire. This is in reference to the special empowerment of the Spirit to accomplish God’s purposes through us.

Matt. 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

Acts 1:5&8 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye

shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

- Laying on of hands – This is referenced in scripture as the method by which the special empowerment of the Holy Spirit was conferred upon believers after Pentecost.

Acts 6:5-7 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

1Tim. 4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

I think it is important to note that Stephen was already “full” of faith and the Holy Ghost; the laying on of hands was a conferment of empowerment for specific ministry.

- Resurrection of the dead – A study of the gospels reveals that the Jews were divided regarding belief in the resurrection of the dead. I have often heard taught that the Pharisees believed in it and the Sadducees did not; that’s why they were “sad you see.” Jesus taught that there would be two resurrections—the resurrection of life and the resurrection of damnation.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

The resurrection of life for the Christian is specifically connected to the promise of Jesus that we would experience eternal life through faith in Him.

John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

- Eternal judgment – This is teaching concerning the eternal condemnation that will be suffered by those who choose to reject God’s provision for salvation through His Son Jesus.

John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Rev. 20:12&15 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their

works....And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Heb. 6:3 And this will we do, if God permit.

I can look at this in two ways—According to God’s leading,

- I’ll spend the time reinforcing the basic doctrinal truths, or
- I’ll give instruction that builds on these basic doctrines.

Content that follows will support the latter.

Heb. 6:4 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,

Heb. 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Heb. 6:6 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.

On a stand alone basis this is admittedly a very hard section of scripture. We must keep in mind, however, that God’s word will never be contradictory and will always convey truth. The first five chapters have continuously made a contrast between the obedience of the believer and the disobedience of the unbeliever, obedience that accompanies faith and disobedience that shows lack of faith, and profession of faith vs. possession of faith.

Those who were once enlightened would be referencing those who had been given illumination regarding the truth of God’s word. Those who have tasted the heavenly gift and have partaken of the Holy Ghost have experienced the influence of the Holy Spirit around them. Those who have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come have seen its power to affect lives. I can’t help but think of those identified by Jesus in Matthew 7 who are prophesying and doing great works in the name of Jesus.

Matthew 7:21–23 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

I believe that there is much in scripture that refutes the possibility of a true believer losing his salvation. I’ve already referenced some of these scriptures in this study, but I think it is worth listing them again.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father’s hand.

Eph. 1:12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our

inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Phil. 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

1John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

For these professing believers to reject Jesus and His teaching and return to the practices of Judaism would position them as those bearing thorns and briers as described in the following verses. They are choosing to harden their hearts against the truth of God's word. In fact, the writer compares this person to those in the crowd that called for Jesus to be crucified and openly mocked Him as He hung on the cross.

I think the writer's purpose is to provide a serious warning to each person in this assembly who was being tempted to return to Judaism to recognize their danger. If they choose to abandon the truth, it will position them in the camp of the unbeliever, the disobedient, the professor but not possessor of salvation. I liken it to those who were spoken of in the parable of the sower who are pictured by the seed that fell among the thorns. They prove themselves to be caught up in the cares of this world and allow these cares to choke the growth of the seed so that it fails to mature and produce fruit. It's like the apostle is encouraging them to examine themselves as he did the Corinthians.

2Cor. 13:5 **Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.** Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

I couldn't help but think of the Lord's words as He explained to His disciples the purpose for teaching in parables.

Matt. 13:12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: **but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.**

I also couldn't help but think of Judas. He experienced so much intimate fellowship with the Savior and witnessed so many of His miracles first-hand. Still he chose to reject the truth and betray the Lord. He determined to kill himself in recognition of what he had done rather than repent of his sin. And we know he did not repent because the Lord declared that it would be better for that man had he never been born.

Mark 14:21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

I think it is important to note that each person's fate is a direct result of his own choice. It's the condition of his heart that determines that choice.

(10/08) I was reading through 2Peter again and couldn't help but make a connection with chapter 2, verses 20-21.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

This is a clear reference to people who have made changes in their lives based upon their knowledge of Jesus as Savior and Lord and still not be truly saved. The wording "it had been better for them not to have known" ties directly to the wording in this section "impossible for those who were once enlightened... If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance..." I think this is a direct reference to the hardening of the heart that happens in the process, and the next verse in 2Peter seems to affirm this thought process.

2Pet. 2:22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The first half of this verse is a quote from Proverbs.

Prov. 26:11 As a dog returneth to his vomit, *so* a fool returneth to his folly. The second half of the verse is emphasizing the first. You can train a dog and clean a dog up and feed it the best of foods, but you can't change its nature. A dog is a dog; it's going to do the disgusting things that dogs do. You can take a pig and clean it up, but as soon as you turn the pig loose, it's going to search for the mud. A pig likes mud.

Until we are born again and become a new creature in Christ, we are going to continue to be in bondage to to the sin nature that we inherited from our fathers (all the way back to Adam).

2Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

(1/13) Does this mean then that this person can never be saved? Only if something happens to soften his/her heart and bring them to their knees in faith and repentance before God. I do think the hardness of their heart is a huge obstacle to that happening, but we know that with God nothing is impossible.

Heb. 6:7 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:

Heb. 6:8 But that which beareth thorns and briers *is* rejected, and *is* nigh unto cursing; whose end *is* to be burned.

These verses again remind me of the parable of the sower. Those whose hearts provide good soil and receive spiritual nourishment through the water of the word of God will produce fruit as intended by the Sower. These are they who receive blessing from God.

Those whose hearts do not produce fruit as intended by the Sower, but instead produce thorns and briers are identified as rejected (worthless, reprobate). They

are declared to be *ready* (a better choice from the Greek than *nigh*) for cursing to the end that they will be burned. This again brings to mind the verses from Revelation 20 listed above in the comments on verse 2.

Heb. 6:9 ¶ But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

The writer is expressing confidence that those to whom he is writing will prove to be possessors of salvation, not just professors. He is again clarifying that he is drawing a contrast between those who are saved and those who aren't. This has been consistent throughout the epistle.

Heb. 6:10 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.

Evidently, this assembly of believers had done and was continuing to do much work on behalf of the saints in the name of Jesus. The writer is affirming that God is just and will not let this ministry go unrewarded.

Gal. 6:7-9 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

As a whole, they give evidence of salvation and belonging to the true body of believers, just as the disciples as a whole gave evidence to being true followers of Jesus—but one was an unbeliever, a thief and a traitor.

Most of the emphasis you hear from the pulpit today is on ministry to the lost. The word of God declares that it is a priority for the child of God to edify others in the body of Christ and minister to those who are part of the family of God. That is what I believe my main calling to be. It is identified in the next verse from the passage in Galatians quoted above.

Gal. 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Heb. 6:11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

Heb. 6:12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Here again the writer is addressing his desire that those receiving this letter are living so as to give evidence of possession of the truth. The proof of your faith is your diligence or perseverance in the faith. That faith is focused on the confident expectation of the eventual realization of your hope. What is that hope?

Eph. 1:17-18 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what **the riches of the glory of his inheritance** in the saints....

1Th. 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of **salvation**.

Titus 1:2 In hope of **eternal life**, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began...

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and **the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ....**

Titus 3:7 That being justified by his grace, **we should be made heirs** according to the hope of eternal life.

The hope of the true believer is a confident expectation of eternal life with our Savior to enjoy the riches of the glory of His inheritance as joint-heirs in Christ.

I was pretty amazed to see that the root word for *slothful* stated “illegitimate son, bastard.” Again, the writer is making a clear distinction between one who possesses faith and one who just professes it. I couldn’t help but think of those troubling verses in Matthew.

Matt. 7:21-23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

The Lord was clear in teaching that there will be those who have the outward appearance of saving faith, but the Lord will declare them to be workers of iniquity. He goes on in the following verses to describe those who possess saving faith and will inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Matt. 7:24-27 Therefore **whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them**, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

It is popular to preach the free gift of salvation through faith in God. But it is not so popular to preach that the proof of your salvation is testifying to your belief as evidenced by your obedience to the word in application of its truth to your life.

The writer is emphasizing again how important it is to imitate those who prove their faith through patience and endurance.

Heb. 6:13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

Heb. 6:14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

Scripture records that God made a promise or a covenant with Abraham which He affirmed by swearing by Himself as the Supreme Authority of the creation.

Gen. 22:16-18 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Heb. 6:15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

I think it is interesting that Abraham is declared as having obtained the promise after his patient endurance. I still picture him as waiting to see that promise fulfilled. His seed has been the source of blessing to all nations of the earth through the birth of the Messiah. His seed is yet to possess the gates of his enemies from our perspective. But from an eternal perspective Abraham has been rewarded. He persevered in faith until his death, and God's fulfillment of His word is sure.

Heb. 6:16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife.

When men swear an oath to confirm the truth of what they are saying, they always swear by an authority higher than self. By swearing they think to put an end to any question concerning the truth of their declaration.

I think that such acts today, at least in America, are not so respected because our moral compass is so off base. A man's word is no longer the bind it used to be.

Heb. 6:17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath:

The writer is basically saying that God is declaring His word to be true through the use of an oath since that is the method most accepted among men. Scripture often records God expressing Himself in terms that men understand.

For whose benefit does God guarantee His promise with an oath? The heirs of the promise. Who are these heirs? The children of Abraham by faith. And how are these children identified?

Gal. 3:29 And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

You are of Abraham's seed according to the promise if you possess saving faith in Christ Jesus.

Heb. 6:18 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 like the wording of the NLT for this verse.

So God has given us both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can take new courage, for we can hold on to his promise with confidence.

Scripture is clear in declaring God as truth.

Deut. 32:4 *He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*

Psa. 86:15 But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

Is. 25:1 ¶ O LORD, thou *art* my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful *things*; *thy* counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth.

Is. 65:16 That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

The “hope” set before us was identified in the comments on verse 11—our salvation to eternal life in Christ.

Heb. 6:19 Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

Heb. 6:20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

It is the hope of eternal life with the Savior that serves as an anchor to our soul to keep us sure (secure) and stedfast (stable, firm) in our faith when confronted with the trials and testing in life. Why does that make us secure? Because it is the work of God in us through the Holy Spirit.

1Cor. 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but **God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;** but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because **greater is he that is in you,** than he that is in the world.

1John 5:3-4 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. **For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.**

It is because we are “in Christ” that we are allowed to go beyond the veil and enter into direct communication with God the Father.

2Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Eph. 2:4-6 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

That is why the veil of the temple tore from top to bottom when Jesus was on the cross.

Matt. 27:50-51 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom

No longer was an earthly high priest necessary to serve as a mediator between God and His people. Jesus was the forerunner into the Holy of Holies for those of us who would follow Him in faith in His willing sacrifice on the cross to redeem us from sin. Jesus became our High Priest—not after the Levitical order through Aaron, but of the same order as Melchisedec. We noted previously that the position of high priest as inherited through the line of Aaron was temporary. Jesus has been appointed our High Priest forever; no other priest will ever be necessary.

In the next chapter we will learn more about Melchisedec.