

Hebrews: Lesson #66: The Danger of Falling Away

Notes for Parent to Study with Their Children

For Sunday, Jan. 11th

Read Heb. 5:11 – 6:20 (a simplified explanation of the text is supplied at the end of these notes).

Memory Verse: Heb. 6:19 “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...”

When Our Ears Aren't Hearing

- Did your mother or father ever tell you something and you weren't really listening to them? Maybe you were busy playing a video game or watching TV. You may have known that they talked, but you just didn't really pay attention.
- Sometimes we can be that way to God. He tries to teach us from His Word, but we get to busy doing other things we want to do and don't really think about it. It's like our ears are lazy and we don't want to learn anything. But Christians must listen to God.
- In kindergarten we learn the ABCs and 123s, but what if you got to 4th grade and then 8th grade and the 12th grade and all you knew was how to count and say your ABCs? All those years and you didn't ever learn anything else.
- Some people that Hebrews talks about were like that. They learned a few things when they first became Christians, but they never got past the ABCs of God's Word.

Spiritual Babies Need to Grow Up

- We know how babies drink milk. Babies aren't ready for solid food. I'm sure they wouldn't have any idea what to do if you put meat in front of them. Solid food is for older kids and grown ups. But it sure would look strange if a grown up man was still taking a baby bottle.
- It also doesn't look right when people have been Christians for a long time, but all they want is the milk of God's Word. That means they just want the simplest parts of it and don't ever want to have to learn more. Hebrews says they are still babies.
- All this shows us why we need to come to church all the time and come to Bible class and study our Bible class material. We don't want to stay babies forever! We want to grow up in God's Word. What you are learning is helping you grow more and more.
- The more you learn about God's Word the more it will help you understand what is good and bad in life.

What if We Don't Bear Fruit?

- What if you planted a garden that was supposed to grow tomatoes, watermelons, peppers, squashes and other good things to eat, and you did a lot of work getting that garden ready. You pulled the weeds from the garden, you watered it, you put fertilizer on it, but what if it didn't grow any vegetables? Even worse, what if all that ever came up in your garden was thorny plants? You would be pretty disappointed.

- We are like God's garden. We are supposed to live right and grow good things in our lives. God has done so much to help us. He has given us Jesus and the Bible. He made the church. And he has blessed us with families and cars and a nice church building. But what if we don't grow good things in our lives. What if we lie and act mean and don't go to church? Don't you think God is disappointed with that?
- If you had a garden that you worked and worked to grow things in, but it didn't grow hardly anything, would you still keep trying? Sooner or later we would just give up. Let's don't ever make God feel that way about us!
- Don't ever give up serving God. Stay faithful to Him all your life. It would be a terrible thing to have all these blessings from God and then still not live our lives the way we should.

God Keeps His Promises

- One of the reasons studying the Bible is helpful to us is because we can learn about other people who believed in God and can see how their lives turned out. Remember Abraham? God promised him and his wife Sarah that they would have a son. Even though they got real old, God kept His promise and they had Isaac.
- God promised something, and God kept His Word. God does not lie to us. He always keeps His promises. So we know that if God promised heaven to faithful Christians, then God will keep that promise.

Our Hope is Like an Anchor

- A boat has an anchor, a heavy weight attached to a rope that is let down in the water. When the anchor gets to the bottom of the water, it holds the boat in that place and won't let the waves move it away.
- When we keep trusting God and Jesus and the promises they made us, that is like an anchor for our souls that won't let us drift away from God. Of course, Jesus and God are up in heaven, so our anchor is not down in the water, it's up there in heaven with them.

Simplified Explanation of the Text

Spiritual Babies Need to Grow Up

5:11 We have much more to say about Jesus being a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, but it is hard to explain this teaching because your hearing has become slow and lazy.

12 And though by this time it was your duty to be teachers, it has become necessary to teach you all over again the first and most basic truths of all the many truths God has spoken. Instead of our being able to spiritually feed you with solid food, you have come to the point where we can only give you milk.

13 Now if all you ever can partake of is milk, it means you are inexperienced and unskilled in the Word of righteousness because you are still a little baby spiritually.

14 Solid food is for those who've grown up enough to partake of it. Those who have habitually used the solid food of God's Word have been trained to understand things spiritually. They are able to tell the difference between good things and evil things.

6:1-2 So let's get past the first teachings we learned about Christ and then let's move on to the teaching for those who are grown up. Let's not have to start all over again laying the foundational truths – such things as repenting of the dead works of the Law of Moses, and faith in God, or baptisms, or laying on hands, or the resurrection of the dead, or eternal judgment.

3 And if God will permit us to move on from these teachings, that is what we will do.

Why Its Important to Grow in Knowledge

4-6 Keep this in mind about why it is so important to grow in knowledge:

Once someone has been enlightened, and tasted the heavenly gift, and come to share in the Holy Spirit, and has tasted the good things God has said as well as the mighty powers (miracles) of eternity to come, and then after all this they still fall away – they will have no power to start them again back toward repentance. It will be like crucifying Jesus all over again and making Him look shameful before everyone's eyes.

7 When the rain falls time and time again on a piece of land, and that land grows plants that are useful to the those who've been working it, then that land can share in the praise that comes from God.

8 But land that grows thorns and thistles has failed the test and will not be acceptable. It is about to be cursed and will end up being burned.

9 But, beloved, though we've talked in this way, we feel certain that there are better things that can be said about you – the kind of things that are connected to salvation.

10 For God would not be unjust and forget about your work and labor of love you have shown toward His name in your past service to the saints and in how you are serving now.

11 But we do want every one of you to keep showing that same dedication so that you can have full confidence in your hope all the way to the end.

12 Do this so that you won't be a lazy, unmotivated Christian that has nothing pushing them on. Instead copy the example of those who through their faith and endurance inherited the promises.

We Can Be Encouraged By How God Keeps His Promises

13 Abraham was one of those people worth imitating. When God's promise was made to Abraham, the Lord made a solemn oath to him. When God made this promise to Abraham, He swore on Himself since there was nothing greater than Himself to swear on.

14 So God promised Abraham, "I will certainly bless you and multiply your descendents."

15 Now Abraham kept faithfully trusting God and patiently endured all those years when it looked like he would not have children. But finally he received what God had promised.

16 Now back to this matter of God swearing on Himself. We know that people sometimes swear by some one or some thing greater than themselves. When they promise something, they make this oath to confirm that what they are saying is true. This is done to put an end to any controversy over whether this person will keep their word.

17 In a similar way, God had an even greater desire to show those who would inherit His promises that He would not change His decision. So to assure those He was making the

promises to that He would bring them to pass, God pledged His Word with this oath where He swore on Himself.

18 So by making His promise and then backing it up by swearing on Himself, God had done two things to demonstrate that He would not change His promise and was not able to lie.

From examples like that, those of us who have fled for refuge get strong encouragement to take hold of the promises God has set before us which we hope to receive.

Our Hope in God's Promises is Like an Anchor

19-20 This kind of hope is an anchor for the soul – an anchor that will not let us be moved or shifted out of place, but will keep us stable.

This firm anchor goes all the way into the area beyond the veil. The tabernacle had a veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The Holy Place was the area where priests served God daily, but the Holy of Holies was the place where the High Priest went into.

Like the High Priest, Jesus has entered the true Holy of Holies which is Heaven. He went into Heaven first and is preparing the way for us to follow Him there. Our firm hope is anchored in His presence in Heaven.

Jesus is our true High Priest and will be so forever. But His priesthood was not like those from the tribe of Levi. He is a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.