

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 23RD, 2025 // HEBREWS

ELEMENTARY (HEBREWS 6:1-3) LEAVE THE ELEMENTARY TEACHING

This does not mean leaving Christ behind. These Christians needed to go and grow in their understanding of salvation.

- **The elementary things are the foundation that we build on. We don't forget, ignore, or minimize them. We see them every day because we work to build on them.**

REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS (SIN)

An essential step in following Jesus is repentance. The writer reminds them that they had repented of their sins and trusted God for their salvation.

- **Repentance is a change of thought, feeling, and action. It is turning away from a life of sin and toward Christ. But, repentance alone does not save.**

FAITH IN GOD

Many times in the OT we see the phrase, "he believed God." The original audience knew the value of faith and who they should put their faith in.

- **The modern church culture has a love of repentance and misplaced faith. Faith in repentance is faith in self. We must place our faith in His ability to save us and keep us.**

RITUAL WASHINGS

There seems to be some trouble with the audience still washing under the law. In the OT, ritual washing represented the purification of God's people. In the NT, baptism symbolizes unity with Christ and identification with Him in His life, death, and resurrection.

- **Baptism is a step of obedience, a statement of faith, and a sign of growth.**

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Looking at the OT, we see the laying on of hands for several occasions: people being devoted to service, during a blessing, on animals about to be sacrificed, or on criminals involving the death penalty. It's hard to find an accurate reference.

- **Laying on of hands is in the NT and in our lives today. But we can't get distracted; our focus is still what Christ has secured for us.**

RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT

Both of these are strong OT teachings that the writer expected any knowledgeable Hebrew to understand and believe.

- **We must remember that there is a judgment day for everyone. What we do now will determine what is judged at that resurrection. We will be judged by our sins or our surrender to Christ.**

IF GOD PERMITS

Some will see this as a statement of doubt, like the writer is covering his bases, just in case things don't work out. The opposite is true. The writer believes that they WILL build on the foundations of their faith.

- **This statement drives us to always pray to God as He leads our growth. We can know things, but we will not grow from them without His direction.**

WORTHLESS (HEBREWS 6:4-8)

IMPOSSIBLE?

This section has been called the riddle of the NT and is considered by many as one of the most difficult to understand. Who are these people and what is impossible?

- **To understand, we must see this passage in the context of this letter, the NT, and the entire Bible. Difficult text requires looking at clearer text.**

ONCE ENLIGHTENED

Are these people Believers? Not necessarily. It seems they joined the movement and enjoyed the blessing that comes from living in the light with Believers.

- **What we know isn't always what we do. We may find some peace knowing that God cares and sends light, but it is not the same as living confidently in His plan and presence through a personal relationship.**

THE HEAVENLY GIFT

This is the gift of God (Romans 5:15) that we call the gospel. Notice that they had tasted the gospel but that doesn't mean they consumed it.

- **We are invited to taste (Psalm 34:8) but also instructed to consume (Revelation 10:9) it. There are many who understand and appreciate the gospel but their joy is temporary because they see the light and walk next to Believers, but do not follow Christ.**

SHARED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The work of the Holy Spirit is massive. There is conviction that leads to confession and repentance, guidance to truth, empowering to share truth, transforming to live in truth, gifting to glorify God, protection, comfort and more.

- **Believers don't just participate, receiving only some of His presence. We walk "in the Spirit" as heirs with Christ (Romans 8:9).**

GOD'S GOOD WORD AND THE COMING AGE

These people had not just heard of Jesus as the sacrifice for sins, they had seen Jesus in all of God's word fulfilling prophecies and promises. They even knew that Christ would return in power.

- **Is it possible to know everything about Christ, believe that He lived, died, rose again and is coming back, but still not follow Him?**

FALLEN AWAY

This is beyond resisting the truths they had been exposed to. This is a complete, deliberate, willful, intelligent refusal and rejection of the gospel. They would never follow Christ.

- **This is not us! We are here. Even if you are not following Christ, there is hope and opportunity to start today.**

TO THEIR OWN HARM

The writer finishes this section with a familiar story of seeds, soil, and growth (Matthew 13:1-23).

- **Starting with the correct foundation (Christ), and trusting in that foundation (faith), assures us that we will see growth (fruit), and not destruction. What does our soil look like?**

CONFIDENCE (HEBREWS 6:9-12) IN YOUR CASE

Since Chapter 5, verse 11, the writer has been warning his audience with some of the most severe and sobering text in Scripture. Now, he offers assurance and comfort to the readers (and us).

- **We can be confident of "things that are better." Our hearts are here and are ready to produce a good crop.**

GOD WILL NOT FORGET

This group of Believers had been "serving the saints" and continued to serve. Because of their connection to Christ, they experienced an authentic connection to one another that only God could create.

- **It is not just that we serve, it is our desire and joy in serving that God turns into fruit that can be seen by Him, other Believers, and the world.**

ASSURANCE

God saw their service and love. He saw that they were motivated by their love for Him to passionately share His gospel. Now, they could live with knowing that God would forever love them and bless them with His presence.

- **Just realizing what God is doing in our lives will make us desire even more to love, glorify, and serve Him.**

LAZY?

The writer reminds them again that some had been lazy when it comes to growth. Although he didn't see it in them, he knows that diligence requires discipline. Later in the letter, he will give some names of people who were rewarded for their faithfulness (Ch. 11).

- **Involved and connected is God's plan for us to stay close to Him and confident in our salvation.**

FOUNDATION

- There is good ground and poor ground.
- **Building on good ground should never be taken for granted.**
- **We are not called to leave the basic truths of the gospel. We must always start there and be ready to build and grow as God wills for us to.**

UNDERSTANDING

- We want to understand what God says.
- **Some Scripture can be difficult if we remove it from context or do not take the time to read connected texts.**
- **We need to grow up and realize that many Scriptures that "feel" like an accusation are actually our loving God encouraging us to stay close to Him.**

LEARNING

- We do not know everything.
- **God has revealed what we NEED to know.**
- **We NEED to know Him! From foundations to fruit, He is working to draw us close to Him. If we want to know Him or know Him more, we must surrender to His plan for our lives. Are we resisting the gospel? Are we resisting growth? He has work for us to do, in His name, and for His glory. Let's go!**