

You Can't Remain Spiritual Sluggards

Lesson Fifteen • Hebrews 6:1-3

Are You Ready for More Rhetorical Whiplash in Hebrews 6:1-3?

Third Warning Passage • Hebrews 5:11–6:20				
5:11-14	6:1-3	6:4-8	6:9-12	6:13-20
SHAME	EXHORTATION	FEAR	CONFIDENCE	SECURITY
IRONY!	IRONY!	IRONY!	IRONY!	HOLD FAST!
Let's <i>learn about</i> Melchizedek (5:1-10)! NO! You're <i>sluggards who are hard of hearing!</i> You need the <i>basics again!</i>	Therefore, <i>progress beyond</i> the basics! Don't relay the foundation of Christian fundamentals, instead <i>build on them!</i>	Why? Because those who remain sluggards are <i>apostates who fall away</i> and <i>can't be restored to repentance!</i>	But <i>you're beloved</i> and <i>we're confident</i> of your salvation despite the sharp tone and talk! So <i>be diligent not full-blown sluggards!</i>	Why? Because God's <i>unchangeable character, unbreakable promise, unalterable oath secures His unshakeable purpose</i> as the anchor we <i>hold fast!</i>
REGRESS Leads to Apostasy • PROGRESS Leads to Maturity • PAST TIME to DIGRESS as a Spiritual Sluggard!				

You Can't Remain Spiritual Sluggards: Grow Up to Be Led Forward!

1. PROGRESS BEYOND the Fundamentals of Immaturity.

"Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ," (v. 1a)

NET "Therefore we **must progress beyond** the elementary instructions about Christ

NIV11 "Therefore **let us move beyond** the elementary teachings about Christ"

What Are the Fundamentals?

- Some say the fundamentals are **PRE-CHRISTIAN** truths common to their former Judaism.
- Others say the fundamentals are **BASICS** for Christian living in the context of Judaism.

Parallel Phrases in the Passage Support the Interpretation of Christian Fundamentals	
5:12 "the elementary principles of the oracles of God"	OT passages fulfilled in the exalted Son of God and Son of David
5:13 "milk" for an "infant"	Immature believers who can't "digest" the passages for themselves
5:14 "unskilled in the word of righteousness"	Inexperienced believers who can't discern right thinking and living
6:1a "leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ"	"The Christ" is the exalted Son of God and Son of David
6:1b-2 "foundation" and "instruction" in these basics	Foundational fundamentals of Christian conversion and living
6:4-6 "those who have once been enlightened...tasted"	Viewed as born again believers

"What is being left behind is not 'the word of Christ' as such, but the 'word' of Christian initiation. Christian initiation is similarly linked in 2:3, and by implication in 3:14; 5:12, with the announcement of a message." – Paul Ellingworth

Progress Beyond the Fundamentals of the Christians Life

- A **PERMANENT** state of immaturity or carnality is not taught in the New Testament. (See HANDOUT.)
- The believer who is **STILL INFANT** after sufficient time is an abnormality – *they have the deadly virus!*

2. **BE LED** Forward to a State of Maturity.

"let us press on to maturity" (v. 1b)

"Let Us Press On" or "Be Led Forward"?

NIV11 "Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and **be taken forward** to maturity,

*"for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, **but men moved** (or "carried along") **by** the Holy Spirit spoke from God." 2 Peter 21*

"Let's press on being led by our exalted Trailblazer into God's eternal rest!"

Press On Being Led into Maturity

A state of **COMPLETENESS** where you are functioning like a mature believer who is moving forward to final perfection with an obedient faith!

NRSV 6:1 "Therefore **let us go on toward perfection**,"

3. **BUILD ON** the Foundation Without Relaying It or Delaying It.

"not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment." (vv. 1c-2)

Observations: Structure of 3 pairs of 6 foundational fundamentals.

Have *already been laid* individually and congregationally.

Just *some* of the foundational Christian truths covering the entire scope of the Christian life.

Likely *contextualized* for Jewish converts to Christianity in the first century.

Trio of Foundational Truths

1. **CONVERSION** to the Christian Life (Initiation): *Repentance from dead works and faith toward God*

Dead Works flow from a dead heart and lead to death: *physically, spiritually, and eternally.* Hebrews 9:14; 10:28

Living Faith results in works that flow from a living heart and an obedient faith. Hebrews 5:9; 10:28; "by faith" (19x) in Hebrews 11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

2. **CONSECRATION** for the Christian Life (Identification): *Instructions about baptisms and laying on of hands*

3. **CONSUMMATION** of the Christian Life (Incentive): *Resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment*

These foundational fundamentals about "the Christ" (6:1a) will be **further applied** in relation to His eternal priesthood in the rest of the letter!

4. **DEPEND ON** God's Ability to Enable Our Responsibility to Be Led Forward.

"And this we will do, if God permits. (v. 3)

"This we will do!" Our responsibility is to respond to this "word of righteousness" with an obedient faith.

"If God permits!" God's sovereign ability will provide us with the grace to do what He requires.

"Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation...

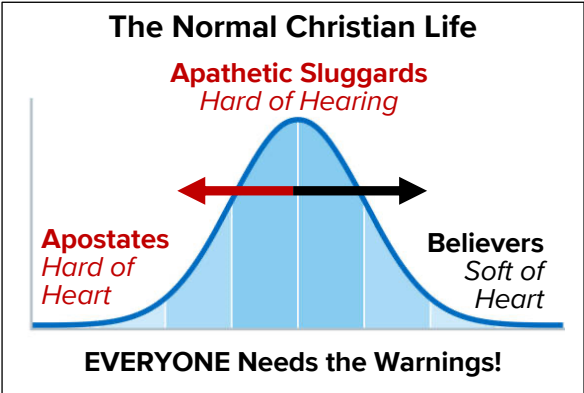
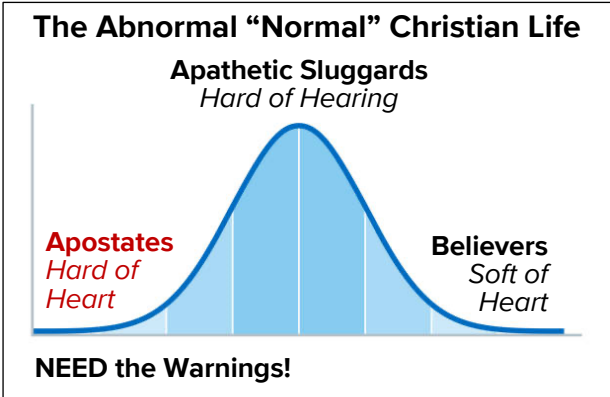
Wake Up! Respond to His Ability to Grow You and Lead You Forward!

Build on the foundation of Christ and depend on Him to enable you to progress beyond immaturity and be led forward into maturity until your perfected in the end!

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<i>You're NOT ready for Melchizedek!</i>	The Persuasive Argument Is Rhetorical: <i>Logical (Logos) + Emotional (Pathos) + Ethical (Ethos)</i>			<i>NOW You're ready for Melchizedek!</i>
ASSESSES THEM <i>Spiritual Apathy!</i> Are you ready to learn about Melchizedek? NO! You've the virus of being spiritual sluggards who are hard of hearing and in danger of becoming hard of heart!	ADMONISHES THEM <i>Spiritual Advancement!</i> You can't remain spiritual sluggards! Be led forward by God into a state of maturity by building on the foundation of the fundamental ABCs.	ALERTS THEM <i>Spiritual Apostasy!</i> Only two options: Keep growing in maturity or fall away in apostasy! It's impossible for apostates to be renewed again to repentance! True believers don't look back and fall away.	ASSURES THEM <i>Spiritual Application!</i> Be diligent in mature application to the end and don't be apostate sluggards! Despite our sharp tone and talk, we're confident you will bear fruit consistent with salvation. Diligently apply like mature believers: <i>Stay fixated, hold fast, and move forward!</i>	ANCHORS THEM <i>Spiritual Appetite!</i> Because God's unchanging character and oath are eternally secure, so are we! Our hope is secure in God's unchanging promise and presence of His Son inside the veil as our <i>Trailblazing High Priest</i> according to the order of Melchizedek! → → → Ch 7-10
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A Permanent State of Immaturity or Carnality Is Not Taught in the New Testament.



The believer who is still an immature infant after sufficient time is an abnormality – He or she has the deadly virus of being hard of hearing and is in danger of becoming hard of heart!