

SCRIPTURE READING: Hebrews 5:11-6:9

INTRODUCTION:

1. The author of the book of Hebrews had been writing about the high priesthood of Christ and was about to discuss how Jesus was a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. He stopped, however, because he didn't want to waste his time. He knew that before his words could really be heard, his readers would really need to listen – something they weren't really doing. Hebrews 5:11.
2. His readers had been Christians long enough that they ought to have been teachers. Instead, they once again needed to be taught the ABC's of Christianity. Hebrews 5:12A.
3. His readers were like infants who, having once been weaned, needed to return to nursing. Hebrews 5:12B-14.
4. The author wanted his readers to spiritually grow up. To that end, he wanted to teach them more than the ABC's of Christianity. Hebrews 6:1-2.
5. This was something he was going to do if it was possible for him to do it. Hebrews 6:3.
6. Some people can't be taught. Hebrews 6:4-6.
7. Some people are like ground that drinks in rain but only produces worthless weeds. Hebrews 6:7-8.
8. Though the author has been talking hard to his readers, he believes they will positively respond to his words of exhortation. Hebrews 6:9.



APPLICATIONS:

1. **We must study.**
 - A. If we don't study, we won't grow. Learning disability analogy.
 - B. If we don't study, we will regress. Alzheimer's analogy.
 - C. Study requires more than just reading or hearing words. Isaiah 6:9-10. The Hebrew Christians were beginning to follow in their ancestors' footsteps. "Dull" in the phrase "dull of hearing" in Hebrews 5:11 means "sluggish" or "slothful" and is translated this way in Hebrews 6:12.
 - D. Study demands desire, effort, application, and consistency. 1 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:14. Brethren, we can't be lazy listeners!
 - E. The Hebrew Christians hadn't always been this way. Hebrews 5:11. They'd quit doing what they'd been doing when they'd been growing.
 - F. Take responsibility! Pete walked up to his teacher's desk, holding a report card with a big red F. He said, "If I were you I would change this while you still can." "Why is that?" asked the teacher. "Because my daddy told me that if I brought home one more failing report card, someone was going to get a beating."
2. **How mature are we?**
 - A. Are we prepared to be teachers? Hebrews 5:12A.
 - B. How well do we know these fundamental things? Hebrews 6:1B-2.
 - C. How well do we know the weightier matters of the law? Hebrews 5:11A, 14A; 6:1A; 1 Corinth. 3:1-3A, 3B.
3. **God does not permit.** Hebrews 6:3. We often want, and sometimes even expect, spiritual blessings in ways God does not permit. Some examples: inherited righteousness, knowledge by osmosis, just attending Bible class and worship, just daily Bible reading, good intentions, prayer alone, force feeding, a form of righteousness, once saved always saved, etc.
4. **We need tough love and we need to love tough.** Hebrews 5:11-6:9; 3:12-14. We need to be more concerned about people's souls than we do their feelings, reactions, or anything else.
5. **We need to take this lesson very, very seriously.**
 - A. Backsliding is incredibly risky. Not simply because we might die or the Lord might return when we are heading in the wrong direction, but also because we can get to a point where we'll never turn things around. Hebrews 6:4-6.
 - B. We can get to this point without entirely abandoning Christianity. James 2:10.
 - C. We can get there by denial, justification, stubbornness, laziness, etc.
 - D. The time to change is whenever we know we need to change. Otherwise, we may never do it no matter how long we live. The point is not that we can't, but that we won't.
 - E. The consequence? Hebrews 6:7-8.