

## Desiring to Grow

Hebrews 5:11- 6:1

12/03/06

### Intro

The Jewish believers were struggling with their faith. They were tempted to go back to their Jewish roots because living in Jerusalem; it would have been difficult to be a believer in Jesus Christ.

Here in these verses he challenges them to grow in their faith, to move beyond the basic ABC's of faith to desire to become spiritually mature.

We are also challenged by these words as the writer gives them insight into growing spiritually; we also gain insight into what it means and how important it is that we become spiritually mature.

**These are principles and insights into leaving behind the elementary things of God and becoming spiritually mature.**

### **I. Move Beyond Milk**

- He says in verse 12 that they have come to need milk rather than solid food, but by this time, they should have been teachers.

#### A. Growth is expected

- Milk is a great place to start. We certainly would never criticize the milk of God's word, because it is essential to young believers.
- We would never discourage a new believer.

**I Peter 2:1-2, Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,**

**Illus – When are kids are young we expect them to find joy in the simplest things, like when my daughters loved to be thrown in the air as far as I could throw them.**

**We expect a five-year-old to say silly things and we think it's cute. However, if we say those same things when we are adults, it's not cute at all.**

- In the same way, God expects Christians to grow in their faith and in their maturity as a believer.

**II Peter 3:18, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.**

#### B. Age alone does not produce maturity

- When we think of maturity, we commonly think of age.
- But in reality, age alone does not produce maturity.

**Illus – Once there was a principal of a school who needed to promote someone into a position and selected someone who had been a teacher for ten years. Later, another teacher was offended that he was not selected. "I have 25 years of experience," he said.**

**“No,” the principal replied, “you have one year of experience that you have repeated 25 times.”**

**App – Time alone does not heal a person of: a hot temper, a catty tongue, an unforgiving heart, a bossy attitude, or a bitter spirit.**

- **However, it’s very possible to be young and quite mature in your faith. Timothy was a very young man, and yet Paul entrusted with great responsibility.**

**I Timothy 4:11-12, Prescribe and teach these things. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.**

- So then, what does produce maturity?

## **II. Press on to Maturity**

- The writer tells them to “press on to maturity” in 6:1 and leave the elementary things.
- Here are some insights into how that happens.

### A. Invest your heart in the things of God

- Too many people are spiritually disengaged.

**Illus – In many churches, they have to give 20 minute sermonettes or they lose their focus.**

- Don’t lay again the same foundation over and over, says the writer.

**Illus – 200 years ago, if you wanted to be accepted to college in this country, you had to first prove that you had advanced in Greek and Latin.**

**The standards have definitely slipped.**

- Invest your heart and your life into spiritual things and you will see spiritual results.

**Ephesians 1:17-19, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.**

### B. Become accustomed to the Word

- Verse 5:13 – Those who drink milk only are not accustomed to the word of righteousness.

**II Timothy 3:16-17, All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

- The Greek word for “not accustomed” means unskilled or inexperienced.

**Illus – For Father’s Day a couple years ago, my wife gave me a book called, The Compleat Gentleman which described the history of the being a gentleman.**

**One of the things it said was that a gentleman was skilled at whatever he did and in particular would be skilled in the use of the sword. You never know when you will have to defend your family.**

- The sword we need to be skilled in today is the Word of God.

**Hebrews 4:12, For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

- Another scripture tells us to “rightly divide” or accurately handle the word.

**II Timothy 2:15, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.**

- The more we know of the truth, the more we will be able to discern the false.

**Illus – I was at the Singing Christmas tree with Jordi and decided to put my arm around her. But her arm felt too muscular...**

### C. Train your senses to discern

- 5:14 - Solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern.
- In other words, because of the solid food of God’s word and putting it into practice, they

have trained their senses to discern good and evil.

**Job 34:3, For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.**

- This is the opposite of becoming “dull of hearing” that the writer mentions in verse 5:11.
- Instead of being dull of hearing, the listen carefully to discern if a biblical word applies to life.

### **III. Signs of Maturity**

- It would helpful if we knew the signs of maturity so we could seek these things in our lives as well.

#### A. They seek to apply what they learn

- This is what the writer means when he says, “because of practice.”
- They want to apply what they are learning knowing that is the key to being changed.

**Illus – You can study how well a medicine works all day, but until you take it out and apply it, then there is no help in it.**

**I Timothy 4:7-9, On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all**

**things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.**

B. They can help others

- Verse 5:12 helps us see that a sign of maturity is the ability to help others.
- In order to help others, we of course, need to first be helped.

**Illus – When you fly they tell you that in case of emergency place the oxygen mask on yourself before you try to help someone else. There is a good reason for that...**

- **If you've been through a storm and know that God is with you, then you can encourage someone else who is also going through a storm themselves.**

**Illus – Believers who have been in alcohol and drugs are often asked to help with those who are struggling right now. There are lessons learned that others need to hear.**

C. They have godly desires

- When someone is young, we expect them to have the desires of youth. They're focused on self, they're focused in things.
- But we also expect that our desires will grow as we grow.

- Those who are spiritually mature have spiritual desires.

**Psalm 37:4, Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.**

Conclusion

**God wants us to move beyond the elementary things and grow in spiritual maturity. While immaturity is costly; there is great treasure in the wisdom and knowledge of godly things.**