



Maturity, Spiritual Growth

The people mentioned in Hebrews 5:11-14 were dull of hearing, ignorant of Bible doctrine, lacked skill in the Word of God, and needed to grow up spiritually. Some selected basic Bible doctrines.

“Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:11-14, NASB)

In Hebrews 6:1-3, “leaving” is ἀφίημι (aphiēmi) and means to keep on moving. “Press on” is the present passive subjunctive of φέρω (pherō) and means to keep on moving to maturity. The subject receives the action from the main verb. You receive maturity as you get more doctrine. It is volitional, potential only as you stay positive.

“Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, 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. And this we will do, if God permits.” (Hebrews 6:1-3, NASB)

“Maturity” is τελειότης (teleiotēs) and means fully grown, mature, adult, completed. “Not laying again a foundation” is θεμέλιος (themelios) and means elementary teaching. The doctrines mentioned had to do with the problems that Jewish Christians faced just before the Fifth Cycle of Discipline to Israel that occurred in 70 AD.

“Repentance” is μετάνοια (metanoia) and means change of thinking. They could not distinguish the shadow from the substance, between Old Testament Christology and the historical New Testament Christology. At salvation, the believer changes their attitude toward the person and work of Christ. The ministry of the Holy Spirit causes a change or renovation of thinking. 1 Cor. 2:14-15; John 16:8-11.

“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.” (1 Corinthians 2:14-15, NASB)

“And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.” (John 16:8-11, NASB)

Finally the believer’s repentance from dead work in this context. Dead works refers to human good. This is human good produced from the area of strength from the old sin nature. The old sin nature produces only dead works! Human good is anything you do as a believer out of fellowship. This can include activities that are normally associated with spirituality such as giving, teaching a Sunday school class, worship, witnessing, etc. Anything done while out of fellowship is human good.