

Spiritual Growth Questions for July 12, 2020

(take one question each day and grow deeper in Bible study)

Opener: Talk about a difficult lesson you learned and how you learned it.

1. **Read Hebrews 5:11-14 two times.** What stands out to you? These verses are a remarkable rebuke that bursts upon us and must have burst upon its first hearers, like a sudden cold shower. The writer wants to wake up the readers with a double challenge. Of what is the writer accusing the believers?
2. What is the nature of “maturity” that the writer has in mind?
3. **Read Heb. 5:11, Proverbs 1:5, 4:10, Mark 4:3-9, Rom 10:17.** Why is hearing so vital to us growing as believers? What are the enemies of hearing? What excuses do you often hear regarding one’s ignorance of biblical knowledge or spiritual understanding?
4. **Read Hebrews 5:12.** The author rebukes the congregation for needing teachers when they should be teaching others. Does this rebuke help you think differently about your responsibility to teach other Christians? If so, how? How is an individual Christian’s responsibility different from an elder or pastor’s responsibility to teach the church?
5. **Read Hebrews 5:13.** Consider the phrase “the word of righteousness.” **Read Romans 1:17, 3:22, Philippians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21.** From these verses what does the word of righteousness mean? What does it mean to live righteously?
6. **Read Hebrews 5:14, 4:12.** Focus on the phrase “powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.” How can you sharpen your spiritual intuition? How can knowledge of the Bible help us discern good from evil?
7. Who is ultimately responsible for the spiritual maturity of a Christian—the individual or the church?

Prayer: Grant me to hear your voice assuring me; that by your stripes I am healed, that you were bruised for my iniquities, that you have been made sin for me that I might be righteous in thee, that my grievous sins, my manifold sins are all forgiven, buried in the ocean of your concealing blood. I am guilty but pardoned, lost, but saved, wandering, but found, sinning, but cleansed. Give me perpetual broken heartedness, keep me always clinging to your cross, flood me every moment with descending grace. Open to me the springs of divine knowledge, sparkling like crystal, flowing clear and unsullied through my wilderness life. (The Valley of Vision p.83)

Better with Jesus: A Study of the Book of Hebrews

Jesus: Our Path to Spiritual Maturity and Growth

Hebrews 5:11-14. July 12, 2020

Pastor John Lloyd

The book of Hebrews presents the greatness of Christ like no other New Testament writing. The author knew that by remembering and lifting up Jesus, he would help the readers endure their difficult circumstances. As this book is read, it demands a response. Today, we look at the great need we all have to grow in faith and our relationship with God. Spiritual growth is not automatic. It comes through diligent reception, study and application of God’s Word. The Hebrew church was stunted in its growth. The writer desires for them to grow stronger spiritually because without this strength they will not be able to navigate the trials ahead.

Hebrews 5:11 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, 13 for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. 14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Key Idea: Commit to grow closer to Jesus during these times. Commit to helping others grow closer to Jesus!

Key questions: Am I growing spiritually? Am I spiritually mature or immature? What can I do to encourage spiritual growth in my life?

Passionate Welcome, **Passionate Word**, Passionate Worship, Passionate Witness and Passionate Way of Life.

A new section: Hebrews 5:11-14 lack of maturity. 6:1-3 list of what they should already know. 6:4-8 dangers of falling away from their faith. 6:9-10 he still has confidence in them. 6:11-12 encouraging them to persevere.

I. Spiritual growth is not _____.

Hebrews 5:11 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

Dull of hearing implies they were once eager and zealous. Dull has a word picture of numbed limbs of a sick lion.

Luke 8:12 The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Luke 22:31 Satan hath desired to sift you...

2 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.

Ephesians 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ. (Philippians 3:10)

Truth heard and not internalized will be lost to the hearer. (See Matthew 13:12,14,15). Am I growing spiritually?

My spiritual growth is my responsibility.

II. Spiritual growth requires regular _____.

Hebrews 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food. **(Am I spiritually mature or immature?)**

You ought to be teachers- (Matthew 28:19, Colossians 3:16)

You need someone to teach you again- (Hebrews 6:1-3)

Basic principles of the oracles of God- Seeing Christ as fulfillment of the Old Testament Scripture.

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. (Psalm 139:23-24 examination prayer)

Hebrews 5:13 for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child.

Word of righteousness- “ the message about righteousness essentially means the message that leads to salvation.” Moehler
(for further study: Read Romans 1:17, 3:22, Phil. 3:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

In the second century, it was used of Christian suffering under persecution. Lane “To obey fully the word of righteousness one must endure the severest mistreatment.” Polycarp (early church father)

Reflective questions: Evaluate your own life. Can you think of any areas in which you are spiritually immature and are thus still an infant in the faith? Name them. Consider the areas where you are growing? Build on those!

Make it your work with diligence to apply the word as you are hearing it... Cast not all upon the minister, as those that will go no further than they are carried as by force.... You have work to do as well as the preacher, and should all the time be as busy as he... you must open your mouths, and digest it, for another cannot digest it for you... therefore be all the while at work, and abhor an idle heart in hearing, as well as an idle minister.
Richard Baxter Puritan Preacher

Show me where I need to grow. Hunger, study and application will bring the fruit of endurance and changed lives. I commit to grow closer to Jesus during these days!

III. Spiritual _____ is our greatest need.

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

The plain things are the main things. The main things are the plain things.
Alistair Begg

I suspect that if someone had asked the apostle Paul or the apostle John about his spiritual life, his first question would have been, “Am I growing in love for God and people?” The real issue is what kind of people we are becoming. – John Ortberg

Powers of discernment- they know how to make the right choices when confronted by critical decisions.

Trained by constant practice- habit of the mind or body. It speaks of the spiritual habits to discern between good and evil teaching.

One of the great scandals of today’s church is Christians without Christian minds.
Kent Hughes

Hebrews 5:14 NLT Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

What can I do to encourage spiritual growth in my life?

“We have to continually reminded of what we believe.” C.S. Lewis

Hebrews 6:1-3. Repentance, faith toward God, washings, laying on of hands, resurrection, eternal judgment

How can we grow in our walk with God?

- By listening with all we have. (1 Peter 2:2, James 1:19)
- By becoming acquainted with teachings about righteousness and living it out. (2 Timothy 2:15)
- By constantly applying God’s Word to the decisions of life. James 1:22
- By actively participating in church and small groups. Heb.10:24-25

Prayer: Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness or the exceeding wonder of grace.
There is no treasure so wonderful as that continuous experience of your grace toward me which alone can subdue the risings of sin within: Give me more of it.
(Taken from the Valley of the Vision p.76)

I am committed to growing closer to Jesus during these days. I am committed to helping others grow closer to Jesus during these days!