

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS



6. An Encouragement & a Warning

(Leader's Notes)

Introduction

Do you find that you need to remind your children about the same things again and again? We are often like that in our Christian life, and God has to remind us many times. In the passage from the Book of Hebrews that we are going to study, there are more warnings about the danger of falling away. However there is also an encouragement to keep moving on. Let's look at these.

1. An Encouragement to Move on Hebrews 5:11 – 6:3

- ❖ From these verses make a comparison between an immature Christian and one who is mature. How do we know if a person is really mature?
*(An immature Christian is slow to learn. V11
He still needs to be taught elementary truths. V12
He still needs the milk of the Word.
However a mature Christian can share God's Word with others. V12
He is able to take solid food and is acquainted with teaching about righteousness.)*
- ❖ In v14 it says that mature Christians have trained themselves 'by constant use'. What does this mean?
(It means that this Christian not only understands the teaching about righteousness, but he is putting it into practice in his life and so is becoming skilled at knowing what is right and wrong.)
- ❖ What were the basic doctrines taught in the early church? Hebrews 6:1-2
(The teaching about repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.)
- ❖ Look through the list of these doctrines – are there any that you feel you do not know enough about? Share. (Perhaps you can study those next.)
- ❖ What is God's purpose for every believer, including yourself? Hebrews 6:1, James 1:4, Ephesians 4:13
(That we all grow to maturity.)

Reality Check

After studying these verses, how would you grade yourself? Are you still a baby Christian, or are you maturing?

2. A Warning not to Backslide Hebrews 6:4-8

One reason why it is important that we grow to maturity is so we won't backslide. The writer has already warned us several times, and now he cautions us again.

- ❖ How would you describe the kind of Christian it speaks about in Hebrews 6:4-5, 8?
(This person has obviously received light from God and experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in his life. He has also tasted the goodness of God, and yet there is no fruit in his life.)

- ❖ Why is it difficult for such a person to be brought back to repentance? V6 c.f. Hebrews 10:26-27
(This is referring to the person who keeps on sinning and falls away. It is difficult for such a person to repent as they have hardened their hearts to the Holy Spirit. It says in verse 6 that it is like crucifying the Son of God again.)
- ❖ How can we guard ourselves from the danger of backsliding? Discuss.

3. An Encouragement to be Patient

Hebrews 6:9-20

- ❖ If a person is genuinely saved there will be evidence in his life. What will 'accompany salvation'? V7-11
(There will be fruit in these peoples' lives, they will help God's people and continue to the end.)
- ❖ What quality did Abraham demonstrate that we are to follow? V12, 15. What can we learn from him?
(He had faith and patience to inherit the promises of God.)
- ❖ What is another reason given to encourage us to press on till the end? See v18-20
(We have a hope that is secure because Jesus has gone back to heaven and is our High Priest.)
- ❖ Has there been a time in your life when your faith in Jesus has been like an 'anchor' that has held you? Share with one another.

Conclusion

God has provided everything we need to live a godly life through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have forgiveness of sin, grace in times of need and the Word of God. His desire for each one of us is that we grow to maturity and produce fruit. Sadly there are some who have turned back from walking with the Lord, while others remain infants, needing to be taught the same things again and again. Let's take heed to the warning in the Book of Hebrews, and press on to become mature Christians, following the example of men like Abraham. It is worthwhile and we have a wonderful hope before us. Press on!