

IMPLICATIONS OF IMMATURITY (Hebrews 6:1-8)

1. We tie ourselves to old teaching (Hebrews 6:1-3).

a. As we look at this text, we need to remember that it is tied to the previous chapter.

i. Chapter 5 deals with Jesus being the Great High Priest.

(1) He is the Author of eternal salvation.

(2) He is a high priest in a similar manner to Melchisedec.

ii. But, for their lazy hearing, they were headed back towards Judaism.

b. They did not understand that things in the Old Testament pointed to Jesus, which is why he could not talk to them right then about the comparison of Melchisedec to Jesus.

c. The writer, when we come to chapter 6, challenges them to go towards maturity in Christ.

d. He tells them they need to leave the beginnings of Christ.

i. The word "leaving" means to separate from or send away.

(1) Jesus sent away the multitudes (Matthew 13:36).

(2) This word is used in 1 Corinthians 7:11-13 to talk about the sending away of a spouse.

ii. Very good lexicon writers define it as "abandon".

(1) It is used in Romans 1:27 to describe the homosexuals that abandoned the natural use of the woman.

(2) It is used in Revelation 2:4 of the Ephesians who had left, or abandoned, their first love.

iii. We need to understand that the writer is not telling them to leave, or abandon, the beginnings, which is the meaning of the word translated "principles", the teaching of Jesus.

iv. The beginning of Jesus, or the Christ, is in the many Old Testament passages that point to His coming into this world.

e. What our writer is telling these brethren, is that they need to leave, abandon, the ties they have to the Old Testament.

i. This is something many in the Lord's church battle when it comes to denominational baggage they bring in from their conversion.

ii. Those ties to the denominational teachings need to be abandoned.

iii. When we fail to grow, or mature, we end up going back to those teachings because it is that with which we are most familiar.

f. The writer then tells them to press on to perfection.

i. This word is only used once in the book of Hebrews, but the verb form is used several times.

ii. Hebrews 7:11, 19; 9:9; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:2.

iii. Each of those show either the imperfection of Judaism or the perfection of Christianity.

g. In other words, the writer, by inspiration is challenging them to abandon all ties to Judaism and march towards completion in Christ.

i. We need to sever all ties with denominational teachings or worldliness as we mature in Christ.

ii. If not, we will be tied down and unable to grow.

h. The writer then mentions six doctrines they need to abandon.

- i. Again, he is not telling them to abandon doctrines of Christianity.
 - ii. These six doctrines are doctrines that were found in Judaism, not Christianity.
 - iii. Remember, he is telling them to abandon the beginning of Christ, or the Old Testament.
 - iv. All six of these are found in the Old Testament and need to be viewed as such, and some pertain only to the Old Testament.
- i. Repentance from dead works.
 - i. The writer did not say repentance from sin, which is necessary for conversion to Christ.
 - ii. These refer to practices of the Old Law, while saying one is part of Christ.
 - iii. Romans 7:6 and Hebrews 9:14 refer to the Old Law as dead.
 - iv. Going back to that and laying a foundation of works of Judaism needed to be abandoned.
- j. Faith towards God.
 - i. Jews believed in God and always been taught about God.
 - ii. They needed to believe in Jesus as the Son of God, the Author of eternal salvation, and their Great High Priest.
 - iii. Faith towards God was a characteristic of the Old Law and a foundational element of Judaism.
- k. The doctrine of baptisms.
 - i. The word baptisms is translated in newer versions as washings.
 - ii. There were numerous washings in the Levitical system.
 - iii. The various offerings had to be washed.
 - iv. Sometimes bodies had to be washed.
 - v. One could not enter the tabernacle or temple without washing.
 - vi. In fact, the word translated baptisms is not from the same Greek word commonly translated baptism.
 - vii. In every other instance it is translated washing and should be here as well.
- l. Laying on of hands.
 - i. There is much written about laying on of hands in the New Testament.
 - ii. However, there is also a lot of instances mentioned in the Old Law of laying on of hands.
 - iii. Priests laid hands on sacrifices, those offering sacrifices had to lay their hands on the sacrifice they offered.
 - iv. All the people had to lay their hands on the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement.
 - v. Remember the context of this passage: Jesus as the Great High Priest.
 - vi. Don't lay again the foundation of laying on of hands from the Old Law.
- m. The last two, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, are both found often in the Old Testament.
 - i. Judaism was the only religion to teach these things, up until Christianity.
 - ii. They were foundational elements of Judaism and the teaching of the Old Law was to be abandoned because both of these are fully explained in the New Law.
- n. Verse 3 simply says that this will happen if they depend on doing God's will and not their own.

o. We must mature in Christ so that we are not tied down to old teaching that would hinder our understanding of the gospel.

2. We turn from salvation (Hebrews 6:4-6).

a. There are two words in this section that cause problems for people.

b. The first word is impossible.

i. If you believe in the possibility of falling away, how can you believe it is impossible to renew that one who has fallen away?

ii. Some try to soften it and make it mean just difficult.

iii. Some believe it means God through the Holy Spirit can do it but you and I can't.

iv. Some have said it means after baptism there is no bringing back.

c. The other word is "if" in verse 6.

i. The problem here is "if" is not in the Greek.

ii. The ASV renders it better and accurately with "and then fall away".

iii. The NASV says, "and then have fallen away".

iv. The problem is that all the blessings he mentions match up in the Greek with the falling away.

v. They all read "having".

vi. In other words, you have had all these things and now you have fallen away.

vii. The "if" was put there because of Calvinistic bias.

d. Now, for the text itself.

e. Notice these great blessings:

i. They had been enlightened by the light of the gospel.

ii. They had tasted the sweet taste of salvation.

iii. They were given miraculous gifts from the Holy Spirit.

iv. They were followers of the good word of God.

v. They had been blessed by the powers of God more fully seen in the world to come.

f. One who has done all those things or received those blessings has been saved.

g. The one who falls away from those blessings and goes back into Judaism, which is the context of this passage and book, cannot be saved by such.

i. It was and is impossible for Judaism to save him or her.

ii. There is only salvation in Christ, not Judaism.

h. Those that associated with Judaism could continually crucify the Christ and put Him to an open shame in one of two ways:

i. By offering sacrifices that typified the Christ;

ii. By uniting with a people who were against the Christ.

i. What does that mean for us today?

i. If we have obeyed the gospel and then leave it for something we came out of, we can't find salvation there.

ii. That is why we left it in the first place.

iii. We can't find salvation in worldliness or denominationalism.

3. We face destruction (Hebrews 6:7-8).

a. The writer closes this section with an illustration from gardening or horticulture.

- b. God waters the ground and the earth drinks it in and produces either herbs or thorns and briars.
 - i. The gospel goes out and it produces Christians or it turns people from God, depending on their reception or rejection of it.
 - ii. These are the only two results.
- c. Where the earth produces herbs there is a blessing.
- d. In fields that produce thorns and briars there is a burning.
- e. The illustration is simple:
 - i. Those that follow the Christ, the Great High Priest, will flourish and enjoy salvation for all eternity.
 - ii. Those that reject the Christ, the Great High Priest, will be burned in eternity in hell.

From an outline by Mark Copeland