

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS: ARE YOU GROWING SPIRITUALLY?
HEBREWS 5:11-14

INTRODUCTION:

1. Are you a tree or a fence post? Hebrews 5.11-14 give us five pieces of evidence to know if we are growing spiritually.
2. How do you know what to believe and do in the difference circumstances of life? (Heb. 5.14)
 - a) The spiritually mature apply the Bible to their lives.
 - b) The spiritually mature can *“discern both good and evil.”*
3. To grow, there are six subjects which we must understand and apply that serve as foundational knowledge. [Read Heb. 6.1-6]

I. REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

- A. If I want to grow spiritually, I must understand and constantly apply the Bible concept of repentance.
 1. **HEBREWS 6.1:** *“repentance from dead works”*
 2. Repentance is part of the plan of salvation. (Acts 3.19)
 3. However, this is addressed to Christians. (Heb. 3.1)
- B. What is the definition of “repentance?”
 1. Repentance (metanoia): Literally, it carries the idea of changing the way you think.
 2. Changing the way you think results in changing the way that you live. (Prov. 23.7)
 3. **ACTS 2.38:** *“Repent...”* Literally, change the way you think about Jesus. (cf. Acts 2.36)
- C. **2 CORINTHIANS 7.10:** *“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation”*

II. FAITH IN GOD

- A. If I want to grow spiritually, I must understand and constantly apply the Bible concept of faith.
 1. **HEBREWS 6.1:** *“faith toward God.”*
 2. Faith is essential to become Christians and for those who are already Christians. (Acts 10.43; 2 Cor. 5.7)
- B. What is the definition of “faith?”
 1. Faith (pistos): The Bible concept is one of accepting what God says and doing what God says.
 2. Abraham is an example of faith. (Rom. 4.3,19-22)
- C. **ROMANS 1.17:** *“The just shall live by faith.”*

CONCLUSION: Where does it all start? (Heb. 6.11,12)

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“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”
-Mark 16.15

January 17, 2021

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

TRUSTING THAT GOD KNOWS BEST

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego refused to bow down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar had made. As a result, the king became furious and threatened to throw them into the fiery furnace. Notice how they answered the king’s threat. They said that God will deliver them, *“but if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up”* (Dan. 3.17,18).

It is of not surprising that they believed God would deliver them. But it is of great interest to me that even if God chose not to deliver them, they would still be loyal to God. These three young men trusted in God. They trusted that whether God delivered them or let them die in the fire, God would do what was best. The possibility of God allowing them to perish did not cause them to question their faith.

It reminds me of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Three times Jesus prayed *“to Him who was able to save Him from death”* (Heb. 5.7). But Jesus was also willing to yield to the will of God, even if the will of God resulted in His suffering and death (Matt. 26.39).

Do you trust in God? Have you prayed to God for relief, and relief never came? Have you asked God to spare your loved ones, but they were taken anyway? God know what is best for our lives and the lives of those we love. Often God has blessed us by giving us the things we have asked. But when the burdens remain unmoved, that is the time to strengthen our faith and trust that God knows best. CLP

A PASSION FOR GOOD WORKS

1 THESSALONIANS 1:3

INTRODUCTION:

1. In 1 Thessalonians 1.2-4, Paul writes to a congregation commending them for their *“labor of love”*.
2. A careful examination of the context helps us to understand how we can be passionate about the work that we do in Christ.

I. UNFOLDING THE CONTEXT

- A. The book of Thessalonians is in that section of the New Testament that is prescriptive.
- B. Three questions that we need to answer.
 1. Who wrote the book? (1 Thess. 1.1)
 2. To whom was the book written? (1 Thess. 1.1)
 3. Why was the book written? (1 Thess. 1.2; 2.3; 3.9)
- C. In the immediate context, there are three things that Paul remembers about these brethren.
 1. **1 THESSALONIANS 1.3:** *“work of faith.”* Their works were driven by their faith. (cf. Heb. 5.9)
 2. **1 THESSALONIANS 1.3:** *“labor of love.”* They worked to the point of exhaustion driven by their love.
 3. **1 THESSALONIANS 1.3:** *“patience of hope.”* They remained faithful in spite of their hardships.

II. MAKING PERSONAL APPLICATION

- A. We need to have a passion that drives us to be productive in good works. (Eph. 5.8-14)
 1. **EPHESIANS 5.14:** *“Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.”*
 2. **TITUS 2.14:** *“special people, zealous for good works.”*
- B. How can we regain our passion and drive for good works?
 1. Decision. (Eph. 5.8). Decide to be passionate.
 2. Separation. (Eph. 5.11). We cannot walk in the light and also walk in darkness.
 3. Transformation. (Eph. 5.14). Wake up! Rise up!
 4. Concentration. (Eph. 5.15-17). Pay attention to the way you walk, so you can walk according to the will of God.
 5. Saturation. (Eph. 5.18-21). Be filled with the Spirit.

CONCLUSION: What would the Holy Spirit write about us?

“YOU DO YOU”

Have you ever heard the expression, “You do you?” Has anyone said that to you? I am not by any means in the know when it comes to the latest vernacular of our younger generation. But the way that I understand it, the idea of you being you is to be yourself. Do what is consistent with who you are. If you are always making jokes, and you try to be funny at an inappropriate time, someone might say, “that’s okay, you’re just doing you.” Let’s borrow that expression and apply it to our spiritual lives.

Let’s take the “Y” and use it to represent the word “Yield.” In James 3.13-18, we will find the definition of godly wisdom. The Holy Spirit is describing the characteristics of wisdom. Verse 17 says that those who are wise are *“willing to yield.”* The word translated as “yield” carries the idea of being open minded. The one who is willing to yield is willing to listen to the thoughts and ideas of others. Are you willing to hear thoughts and opinions that are different than what you think and believe? It is okay if we do not always agree. But we ought to be open to discuss the issues without getting angry. That’s what it means to be willing to yield.

Let’s take the “O” and use it to represent the word “Optimistic.” Are you like the ten spies who discouraged the hearts of the Israelites and said, *“We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we”* (Num. 13.31)? Or are you like Joshua and Caleb who said, *“Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it”* (Num. 13.30)? Faith naturally results in optimism. We know we can overcome because God is working in our lives (Phil. 2.13). We know things will work out because God is involved. (Rom. 8.28).

Let’s take the “U” and use it to represent the word “Understanding.” We can be understanding in two ways that will radically change the way we treat others. First, be understanding to those who hurt. Understanding their pain will make you much gentler and kinder. Second, be understanding to those who hurt you. Maybe there is a reason why they acted the way they did. Perhaps they had a bad day. Being understanding toward those who hurt you will go a long way in avoiding feelings of anger and resentment. If his sinning against you hurt your relationship, an understanding heart may even help you restore your relationship (Matt. 18.16).

When it comes to being more willing to yield, optimistic, and understanding, you do “you.”