



Session 8: Basic Christianity in the early church:

Hebrews 6:1-3, “Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ² instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And God permitting, we will do so.”

❑ ***There is repentance from dead works***

Repentance = change of mind and habits (a Godly sorrow)...a new attitude toward God, to other people, to life, to self.

Dead works??

- ***Deeds which bring death (immoral, selfish, godless, loveless and filthy acts that lead to death).***
- ***Works which has no connection with character. To the Jew, life was a ritual and/or ceremonies which helped them feel that they were clean. The only thing that cleanses the soul is a good dose of confession and repentance.***

❑ ***There is faith that looks to God.***

A Godward look...with actions that are not based on what the verdict is from others...but by the verdict of God. Not looking to their own achievements for salvation but to the grace of God.

❑ ***There is the teaching or instructions about baptisms...***

No infant baptism at the time of this writing. The Didache: The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (about 100 A.D.).

Lays down the regulations for Christian baptism. People were coming straight from paganism and baptism was reception into the Church and confession of faith.

Baptism was by total immersion, if possible. It was understood that all who were baptized had been fully instructed in the faith

The writer to the Hebrews says: ‘At your baptism, you were instructed in the basis of the Christian faith.

❑ ***There is the laying on of hands.***

Significant to the Jew in 3 ways:

- 1. Sign of the transference of guilt.***
- 2. Sign of the transference of blessing***
- 3. Sign of setting apart to some special office.***

❑ ***There is the resurrection from the dead.***

From the beginning, Christianity was a religion of immortality. Christianity gave the Christian two worlds which to live:

- 1. It taught them that the best was yet to be...the better of the best.***

2. *It made this world, for the Christian, the training school for eternity.*
- *There is...the sentence which lasts to all eternity.*
- Christianity was from the beginning a religion of judgment. Christians were never allowed to forget that in the end they must face God...and that what God thought of them was infinitely more important than what other people thought of them.*

“And God permitting, we will do so.”

Is like us saying, “If the Lord doesn’t return quickly, we will teach on these things!”

- *We would rather that the Lord returns to take us home.*
- *However, we will work ‘til Jesus comes!*
- *Our mission is to study to show ourselves approved and prove it to the end of our life. We are to hold on, press on, and pass it on!*

Hebrews 6:4-12, “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age ⁶ and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace. ⁷ Land that drinks in the rain often falling on it and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is farmed receives the blessing of God. ⁸ But land that produces thorns and thistles is worthless and is in danger of being cursed. In the end it will be burned. ⁹ Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case—the things that have to do with salvation. ¹⁰ God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. ¹¹ We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. ¹² We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.”

A Call to Sincere Belief in Jesus and His Works.

Works that produce salvation for yourself and others (family, friends—even casual acquaintances).

An interpretation of this Scripture:

- (1) This interpretation sees the “falling away” (Hebrews 6:6) as a reference to those who have tasted the truth but, not having come all the way to faith, fall away from even the revelation they have been given (The Holy Spirit has convicted, convinced a person of the truth of man’s sin and God’s redemptive plan, but rejects and rebuffs the Holy Spirit’s prompting). The tasting of truth is not enough to keep them from falling away from it. They must come all the way to Christ in complete repentance and faith; otherwise, they in effect re-crucify Christ and treat Him contemptuously. Those who sin against Christ in such a

way seem to have no hope of restoration or forgiveness because they reject Him with full knowledge and conscious experience. Note: They have concluded that Jesus should have been crucified, and they stand with His enemies. It is impossible to renew such to repentance. *Such a person has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit!*

- (2) The word “impossible” has a catchy meaning! The question is, who's doing the renewing? It may be impossible for you or me to bring them back, but that doesn't mean that God cannot. This idea of what is "impossible" shows up in the Gospels, when Jesus is talking. Matthew 19:26, Mark 10:27 and Luke 18:27. The Luke verse tells us: "Jesus replied, 'What is impossible with men is possible with God.' "

Don't let the word 'impossible' fool you into thinking that this passage in Hebrews means that there is no way a saved person can leave God and come back. It happens all the time... It is God, working through His Holy Spirit, who brings His lost sheep back.

So...Don't give up on that one that has lost his way and you think he has blasphemed the Holy Spirit. ***GOD CAN DO ANYTHING.***

Remember, Christ died once and for all. *He cannot die again...He cannot be crucified over and over. His redemption plan is one you can bank on to save you, once and for all.*

God will not tolerate a “lazy” Christian.

The promises of God are two fold:

- (1) *The promises are Sure...but we have to do our part. (6:11)*
- (2) *The promises are Secure...but we must be His and know that He expects us to “imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what God has promised.” (6:12b).*

The writer of Hebrews is basically saying, “Leave the elementary teachings and mature to the next level or next goal for which God expects us to set for ourselves by reading God’s Word and doing it.

The 7 characteristics.....of Spiritual Maturity

1. Accountable before God and Man...
Matthew 12:36; Romans 14:12; Genesis 39:6b-10
2. Abandoned (Yielded) to God’s desires.
3. Acceptable (Approved)...to the truth of God’s standards.
4. Attitude of Self Denial...no covetousness; no envy of others works.
5. Amicable, Admirable and Appreciative...
6. Assured: With assurance of destination
7. Authentic...Genuine; True...and yielded to the truth!

The Spiritually Mature Christian is an Anointed Christian!

Hebrews 6:13-20, “When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.” ¹⁵ And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. ¹⁶ People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. ¹⁷ Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. ¹⁸ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. ¹⁹ We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰ where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

God takes an oath...a promise. An oath taken by God confirms what is said concerning the heirs to the promise. You and I have been redeemed; no lie can enter the mind and heart of our Lord. We can be encouraged by the fact that Jesus died “once and for all.” His death brought to us the possibility of being like him. It is a promise...no unsure or doubtful premise. We are His, and He is ours!

Jesus, High Priest in the Order of Melchizedek...

Who in the world is Melchizedek? And..How does he compare to Jesus?

One...He is like one not of this world, but in the world

Two...He had no history or heritage to become priest.

Three...He has no history of being anointed by another man

God anointed Melchizedek and God anointed Jesus, His Son.

His priesthood had no beginning and no end...as far as being proved by man or records.

“Jesus...High Priest.”

Did He inherit the position or did he gain it by receiving it through the power of God’s anointing?

Neither...as stated.

Jesus became the High Priest because He was obedient unto death and therefore God anointed Him for Priesthood!

Jesus became the sacrifice and became the priest only when He sacrificed Himself on the altar.

HE WAS THE GIFT AND THE GIVER!

He was the priest (pontifex, bridge builder) and the bridge itself.

He was the atonement and the atoner.

All for us and all for the glory of God the Father.