**Greater Than All - wk 6 – Spiritual Adulting**

**Kids – growing pains - adulting young adults – it can be hard.**

**Hebrews is a challenge and a warning to grow up – Hebrew believers struggling in their faith.**

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

**7 Signs of Maturity (Spiritual Adulting)**

**1. You obey what you already know**

**12 …by this time (been a Christian a while) you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles (truths) of God.**

**Disciples who make disciples – the mission from Jesus!**

**“by this time you ought to be teachers” – btw - every Christian.**

**Are you living out what you already know to be true?**

**Can you explain your faith? Can you lead another to Jesus? Do you understand and have confidence in the basics?**

**There comes a time when you need to grow up! So many are baby believers their whole life. Many stop growing after a year or two.**

**You start off hearing and growing but become “dull of hearing.”**

**So again – “You need milk, not solid food” (meat)**

**The comparison to an adult who drinks mother’s milk their whole life Imagine - odd and offensive - something terribly wrong. This was the image they would have thought.**

* **Milk is (mother to a child) - learning only by others, easy to digest**

**An infant can’t chew or digest solid food. Nothing hard to chew**

**Christian infants are not just new Christians.**

* **Food is (fixing meals for yourself) – learning deeper things of God and learning to feed self.**

**Milk is not bad, but you are to add solid food to diet.**

**Heb 5:13 …for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. (infant) 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.**

**2. You know how to read your Bible (…everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child…)**

**You are to grow in your skill in the word of God.**

**Adulting - You have mad meal prep skills in the word of God.**

**Christian infants don’t read or know how to use their bible, as your grow you learn you become skilled in the word.**

**\*\* Reading it through – not bible air drops (unhealthy)**

**\*\* Understanding the context study tools (important)**

**But I don’t like all that study… that is why you are immature.**

**3. You practice discernment – it’s “…those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”**

**This means you don’t just read it – you live it, do it, practice it.**

**\*\* Realize this - there is “good and evil” – there is right and wrong.**

**We are to have spiritual judgment and discernment between them.**

**\*\* Realize - You can grow in discernment - “trained by constant practice”**

**We are to grow and learn discernment. How? Read the Bible.**

**Greatest remedy (prescription) for false teaching is reading the Bible**

**We need to constantly test what we hear & see with the Word.**

**We spend a lot of time teaching through the Bible. Jesus and the apostles. Commenting on unhealthy beliefs and practices.**

**(1 Cor 13:11, Eph 4:14-15, 1 Cor 3:1-3, 14:20, 2 Pet 3:17-18, Phil 2:12-13)**

**Someone stopped coming to Livingway – they told another person. We focus, “Too much on theology and the bible” They questioned what they believed too much. Don’t be afraid of solid food. Lack of healthy theology is a clear sign of immaturity and spiritual infancy.**

**(Chap 6 follows up on this) Hebrews 6:1 Therefore (since you need to grow up) let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits.**

**4. You have the basics settled in your heart**

**They had been believer for a while - instead of growing up, they kept circling back - this is not discouraging getting back to basics – that can be great, this is about one who still struggles to believe the basics**

**The writer highlights the fundamentals – we must settle inside. These things are milk – important for our foundation and start.**

**The Fundamentals (of Hebrews 6)**

**\*Repentance – turning to Christ (new life) “repentance from dead works”**

**\*Salvation – to God (He exist and saves by faith alone) “faith toward God”**

**\*Baptism – “instruction about washings” (doctrine of “baptismos”)**

**\*Spiritual gifts and leadership – “the laying on of hands”**

**\*Heaven - Eternal life – “the resurrection of the dead”**

**\*Hell - Eternal judgment – “and eternal judgment”**

**Are you still struggling w/ these? (Comment on each) There comes a time when these things are settled in your heart and grow! As a new believer, there is a milk season… just the start.**

**6:3 And this we will do if God permits. (All growth is God working in us – we constantly see the sovereignty of God in Hebrews)**

**\*\* Spiritual growth is us working out what God is working in**

**Phil 2:12 …work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.**

**Next part is one of the most controversial passages in the Bible. Church splits, denominations, theological fights. Something deeper, a meaty discussion. Great example of growing in faith & understanding.**

**Hebrews 6:4 For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. (Hotly debated passage)**

**Interpretation: Once saved, you can lose your salvation**

**Jacob Arminian – if you lose it your lost forever!**

**John Wesley – if you lose it, you can get it back.**

**Interpretation: Those who fall away were never saved at all**

**Many of the early church reformers.**

**We can only do our best to understand obscure passage like this.**

**We just don’t know for sure. Using the Bible to interpret the Bible. I will give my perspective; this is not essential to agree on.**

**The issue is - v4-6 - For it is impossible… to restore them again to repentance**

**Who is the “THEM”-?**

**4 …in the case of those who have once been enlightened, (Know God is good) who have tasted the heavenly gift (tasted salvation and found it to be good), and have shared in the Holy Spirit, (experienced the HS) 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of God (understood goodness of God’s truth) and the powers of the age to come… (experienced supernatural power (dunameis) of God = Signs & wonders) 6 and then have fallen away… (another athletic reference – they still quit the race – they still retreat – they fail to finish)**

**These are impressive spiritual experiences – they know God is good, believe the word is true, understand the great gift of salvation, experience the supernatural - and still walk away.**

**Hebrews 6:4-6 - For it is impossible… to restore them again to repentance**

**The question that is debated is, are these people who have tasted, been enlightened, and experienced the power of God- truly Christians?**

**\*I don’t think they were, they tasted but never fully embraced it**

**Tasting something off another’s place vs. ordering it yourself.**

**\*\* Experience does not equal salvation.**

**Much like Pharisees (Hebrews very familiar) that Jesus spoke of often Pharisees enthusiastically evangelized, prayed and fasted often, made religious commitments, faithfully tithed, honored God, kept religious traditions, had many spiritual experiences – yet Jesus called them “sons of hell” (Mt 23) and white-washed tombs (Mt 23) The outside they looked spiritual but empty inside.**

**And - he said to some of them (Mt 12) There is no hope for some of to ever be saved – impossible. (Unpardonable sin) The HS was done with them.**

**Why? They had everything they needed to know true salvation, but they saw Jesus and saw demons – they chose religion over repentance. Hard hearts! Like the people in Heb 6 – they had it and tasted it all… yet walked away. Hard hearts!**

**It is clarified in the next part of Hebrews – an illustration**

**Heb 6:7 For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. 8 But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.**

**The ground (people) receives the word and water of the Spirit. But what came from some was thorns - the soil was worthless. It never really took root and instead it produced poison. Their hearts (soil) are corrupted – therefore it is impossible for them.**

**Parable of the soils- 2 received it but never took root (thorny, rock)**

**Parable of the talents- 1 received it, buried it, complained of the master**

**Parable of the Vine- I am the vine, you are branches, you will bear fruit, if not, you are cut off and burned.**

**To know the truth - see the truth - taste the truth – even believe that it is truth and yet still walk away… (echoes of Pharisees and Jesus parables).**

**Those who turn from the true faith and embrace a false view of Jesus and actively tell others are considered, called apostates.**

**H6:6 (impossible) to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. (It is impossible for they are holding God in contempt = to shame God).**

**To see the amazing love, mercy, and grace of Jesus on the cross and say, “aww, no thanks.” That is to hold contempt towards God. Jesus your just not enough for me to repent… Really? Then nothing will be enough for you.**

**Remember the focus of Hebrews is to not give up on your faith!**

**(Heb 3) Perseverance in your faith proves that we are truly Christs.**

**(Heb 4) You can have knowledge – but unless it is united w/ faith it is nothing.**

**This is a recurring theme – it all fits together.**

**He is saying if you turn back to Judaism, (To retreat!) you are walking all over the cross – and is impossible for you to know repentance.**

**Hebrews 6:9 Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things - things that belong to salvation. (I am confident this is not the case for you - you will not walk away) 10 For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. (Don’t get discouraged we see you / God sees you serving sacrificially and faithfully – evidence of a selfless faith) 11 And we (speaking for the apostles) desire each one of you to show the same earnestness (same diligence that you serve others, have diligence) to have the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you may not be sluggish, (Another athletic reference- spiritually lazy, slack)**

**I don’t feel like growing up – I don’t want to come to church, read, my Bible, serve, be generous - Time to be intentional, time to adult – don’t be a spiritual slug!**

**…but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**

**7 Signs of Maturity (Spiritual Adulting)**

**5. You lovingly and faithfully serve the body of Christ**

**10 For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. (Believers are saints)**

**Your love for God results in a love for the body and for others.**

**God sees your work – selfless sacrifice for his name!**

**6. You are not constantly doubting your salvation**

**11 …to have the full assurance of hope until the end…**

**You can know that you know all through your life.**

**You are not getting saved every week, you know faith in Jesus**

**You don’t keep going back to the fundamentals of am I saved.**

**7. You are teachable and open to correction**

**12 …but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**

**Imitators – of those who remain faithful to the end.**

**Leaders, parents, pastors, mentors, Christian teachers, friends – they lived it – never gave up – and endure.**

**And as one who is growing, they can call you out if needed – without being too defensive. “Hey man, you’re being sluggish”. Using God’s word to speak into your life.**

**1 Corinthians 13:11 (NLT) When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things.**

**When I was a child… as a child (how do children think?)**

**I spoke - said things loud, harsh, and without thinking**

**I thought – thought short term, selfishly,**

**I reasoned - without care to consequences for me or effects on others.**

**But when I grew up, I put away (abolish) childish things.**

**Intentionally giving up immature talk, thoughts, and actions.**

* **Are you Spiritually Adulting? Growing pains can be hard.**

**It must be intentional as God works in you.**

**Heb 6:11 - “to have the full assurance of hope until the end”**

* **Do you have full assurance of hope? You can.**