

Making much of Jesus

present-day lessons from the letter to the Hebrews

Although written to Jews who had trusted in Jesus, and although drawing regularly on Old Testament references, the letter to the Hebrews has a very pressing contemporary significance.

This series of studies is intended to stir in our hearts both a deepening delight and a growing confidence in all that Jesus is and has done, imparting to us the fortitude and strength we need to serve Him faithfully in today's world.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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7. The perils of laziness (Heb.5.11-6.12)

[w/b Sunday 13th October 2019]

“.. let us move .. forward to maturity ..”

These verses are a ‘pastoral pause’ in the flow of the letter. It’s never enough simply to know the truth - we must be careful to apply it to our lives as well. *“Be doers of the word, and not hearers only,”* as James puts it (Ja.1.22)

In this passage, therefore, the writer is taking time out to ask his readers what they are doing with the Word which has been preached to them, and warning them of the dangers in failing to apply it consistently to their lives. [Be warned - this passage is one of the ‘hardest’ (in every sense) parts of all Scripture!]

[Before attending your Community Group try to consider all 7 questions - even though your Group may not have time for them all. Have a look at Q4! Key questions in this study are probably 2, 6 and 7. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]

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1. **Read Hebrews 5.11-6.12.** This passage sees the writer expounding and applying the quote from Psalm 95.7 which he has referred to repeatedly (see Heb.3.7ff; 3.15; 4.7).

How would you sum up the thrust of these verses?

What do you find most challenging about them?

2. Read Hebrews 5.11-14. The writer explains the concern he has in regard to at least some of them, by highlighting what he discerns as a lack of spiritual growth or 'maturity' in them.

What are the 'symptoms' of their 'immaturity'?

According to what the writer says in v.14, by what means have 'the mature' grown in their faith - and thus, how will *you* grow in your faith?

3. Read Hebrews 6.1-3. Having outlined his concern, the writer now encourages his readers to ensure their faith is growing and not stuck at 'first base'.

In your own words, what does the writer regard as '*the elementary teachings about Christ*'?

What do you think the writer means by exhorting them to 'move beyond' these 'elementary teachings' and not to keep on 'laying .. the foundation' of repentance and faith?

4. Read Hebrews 6.4-6. These verses have caused a lot of ink to be spilled over the years! In understanding them, it helps to see that you can experience spiritual things and yet not be saved.

How would you describe in your own words the five types of spiritual experience to which the writer refers in vv.4f?

Why is it impossible for those who've had such experience and fallen away 'to be brought back to repentance'?

5. Read Hebrews 6.7-8. The writer uses an illustration, very similar in many ways to the parable of the seed and the sower told by Jesus, to explain the point he's been making.

What point does the illustration make?

How does the fact that here there are just *two* types of land mentioned, as compared to the four types of soil in Jesus' parable, sharpen the writer's message?

6. Read Hebrews 6.9-10. After the solemn and sobering warning of the previous verses the writer 'backtracks' a bit here, confident that his readers aren't themselves going to fall away.

What does he see in his readers which makes the writer confident that it'll be "*better things in your case*"?

What would be "*the things that have to do with salvation*" which the writer might observe in *your* life?

7. Read Hebrews 6.11-12. The passage is rounded off with a further exhortation, stated first positively (v.11) and then negatively (v.12).

What will showing 'this same diligence to the very end' mean for you?

What practical action does the study of this whole passage prompt you to take?