

Time to Grow Up
Hebrews 5:11-6:3

Getting Started

- ❖ What is a skill, hobby, or instrument you've tried to learn where you realized the 'practice and training' phase was just too much work, and you ended up throwing in the towel?

Key Ideas for Discussion

1. The Problem of Spiritual Stagnation (5:11-14)
2. The Urgent Call to Advance (v.6:1-3)

Pair	Doctrine	Theological Focus
First Pair: Conversion	Repentance from dead works & Faith toward God	The internal turning away from self-righteousness and turning toward Christ alone for salvation.
Second Pair: Membership/Community	Instruction about washings & Laying on of hands	The external identification with the covenant community and the setting apart for service.
Third Pair: Eschatology	Resurrection of the dead & Eternal judgment	The future-oriented realities of the final consummation and cosmic justice.

TT: Discipleship is not a static state of theological data storage; it is a dynamic, lifelong pursuit of following Jesus Christ in both *understanding* and *practice*.

Digging Deeper (Read the sermon text again and discuss the following questions.)

- ❖ The Trap of Arrested Development: The sermon opened with the illustration of Michelangelo's *I Prigioni* (The Prisoners)—statues left half-formed and trapped in raw marble. How does this artistic metaphor contrast with the statue of David, and how does it illustrate the spiritual state of the believers addressed in Hebrews?
- ❖ The Strategic Speedbump: In Hebrews 5:11, the author abruptly halts a deep theological discussion about Jesus as a priest in the order of Melchizedek. Why did the author feel it was necessary to pull this "theological emergency brake"? What does this teach us about the relationship between our spiritual condition and our ability to understand God's Word?
- ❖ Understanding Nōthros: The Greek word used for "dull" in verse 11 is *nōthros*, meaning sluggish, lazy, or dimwitted. The sermon points out that these believers became dull and "dimwitted" over time. What are some subtle, everyday things that cause a Christian to drift from initial zeal into a state of spiritual numbness?
- ❖ Evaluating the Author's Tone: Is the author of Hebrews simply angry and trying to shame his audience, or is there a different pastoral motive behind his sharp language? How does understanding this as a "rhetorical device born of holy jealousy" change the way we receive hard truths or rebukes from Scripture?

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- ❖ **Milk vs. Solid Food:** Scripture contrasts the *nepios* (infant/child) with the *teleios* (mature/full-grown). While milk is healthy for a newborn, why is a permanent diet of spiritual milk dangerous for an adult believer? According to Hebrews 5:14, how is biblical discernment actually developed?
- ❖ **The Architectural Metaphor:** In Hebrews 6:1, the author tells us to leave the "elementary doctrine" and press on to maturity, using the analogy of a building foundation. Based on the sermon, what does it mean to "leave" the foundation without abandoning it? How does the superstructure of a Christian life depend on that foundation?
- ❖ **The Six Foundations & Covenantal Faithfulness:** The text lists six foundational doctrines (divided into pairs: conversion, community rituals, and eschatology). Looking at the first pair—repentance from dead works and faith toward God—how does a Reformed understanding of Christ's imputed righteousness protect us from relying on "dead works"?
- ❖ **Cultural Resilience:** The sermon states that "an immature faith cannot survive a mature trial." The original audience faced intense social and political pressure to compromise and slip back into old, comfortable habits. How does a deeper, mature understanding of theology supply us with the anchor we need to stand firm against modern cultural pressures?

Apply It!

- ❖ **Diagnosing Your Spiritual Diet:** Reflecting on the sermon's challenge to evaluate what you feed your soul: What does your current spiritual intake look like? Are you primarily consuming superficial, feel-good "spiritual milk" (such as quick social media devotionals or consumer-driven media), or are you actively carving out time to digest the "solid food" of deep Scripture study and robust theology?
- ❖ **Training in the Spiritual Gymnazō:** The Greek word for "trained" in verse 5:14 is *gymnazō*, implying an athletic workout. Spiritual maturity requires intentional discipline. Which spiritual discipline (e.g., consistent private prayer, Scripture meditation, family worship, or financial stewardship) do you find most difficult to practice consistently, and what is one practical step you can take this week to start "lifting that weight"?
- ❖ **Trusting the Foundation:** Do you ever find yourself stuck in a spiritual loop—constantly questioning your salvation, God's love, or His basic goodness every time a difficult trial hits your life (essentially "digging up the foundation" to see if it's still there)? How does resting in the sovereign, finished work of Christ on the cross free you to stop renegotiating the foundation and start building a life of active, resilient obedience?