



Sunday, April 7, 2013

## Perseverance Toward Maturity

**Speaker:** Joe Boot      **Scripture:** Heb. 6:1-8, Matt. 13:1-9

### Sermon Notes:

1. This passage in Hebrews deals, in part, with the issue of apostasy.
2. The letter began as a sermon, and became a letter (probably from the apostolic council) addressed to a church that was backsliding and falling away.
3. The author is continuing with the theme from chapter 5.
4. At a time when the church should have been ready for "solid food," they still needed "milk."
5. The continuing exhortation is: move from infancy to maturity.
6. Christian maturation is seen in one's ability to discern good from evil, truth from falsehood, and right from wrong.
7. Spiritual infants are at risk where under-shepherds are delinquent.
8. We need to leave the elementary teaching for mature teaching so we can become useful.
9. The foundational teachings are important, but we need to advance, to move forward in our understanding.
10. The Spirit of God leads us on into understanding.
11. If we are not moving forward, we are becoming stagnant and slipping backward.
12. Spiritual toddlers cannot form an army or march into battle.
13. Contemporary evangelicalism muddles the Gospel and builds on a poor foundation. The result is ineffectiveness and collapse.
14. We must not mistake the existence of para-church organizations seeking to defend the gospel as a sign of maturity; they are a sign of the church's immaturity.
15. Jesus is the Gate and the Door. Don't stand there staring at the Door. Go through into maturity!
16. If we do not build on the basics, we truncate the Gospel and inadvertently make it man-centered.
17. We stand at risk of becoming idolatrous, worshipping doctrines – *my* justification, *my* sanctification – and not recognizing the centrality of God's kingdom, glory, power, and reign.
18. Verses 4-6 offer a warning about rejecting the Messiah-King, which can be manifest in a failure to make any progress.
19. There are those who claim to love Christ on their own terms. Christ is merely a "buddy" with "life-skill suggestions."
20. When we are convicted and rebuked by teaching and the Word, it is for our progress.
21. The apostasy spoken of in verse 6 is a complete falling away, from which it is impossible to repent.
22. Repentance is not in our hands; God brings us to it.
23. The passage is not, however, talking about falling into various grievous sin, nor does it allow us to stand in judgment over others, so as to spend our time trying to identify reprobates or apostates.
24. This passage is not just a hypothetical. It is a warning, and a serious reminder to us to persevere in the faith.
25. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. His mercy changes our hearts and leads us to repentance.

### **Application Questions:**

1. What is Christian maturity? Provide Scripture references to support your answer.
2. How can we grow in Christian maturity and how can we help others to grow?
3. What is the mature response to being convicted of sin?
4. Can a person be incapable of repentance? What does this entail?
5. Am I advancing in my understanding of the things of God, or becoming stagnant?