

Hebrews 6:1-3 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- Hebrews 6:1
- Hebrews 6:2
- Hebrews 6:3
- Hebrews 6:4
- Hebrews 6:5
- Hebrews 6:6
- Hebrews 6:7
- Hebrews 6:8
- Hebrews 6:9
- Hebrews 6:10
- Hebrews 6:11
- Hebrews 6:12
- Hebrews 6:13
- Hebrews 6:14
- Hebrews 6:15
- Hebrews 6:16
- Hebrews 6:17
- Hebrews 6:18
- Hebrews 6:19
- Hebrews 6:20

CONSIDER JESUS OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST
Click chart to enlarge
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Swindoll's Chart](#), [Interesting Pictorial Chart of Hebrews](#), [Another Chart](#)

The Epistle to the Hebrews				
INSTRUCTION Hebrews 1-10:18				EXHORTATION Hebrews 10:19-13:25
Superior Person of Christ Hebrews 1:1-4:13	Superior Priest in Christ Hebrews 4:14-10:18			Superior Life In Christ Hebrews 10:19-13:25
BETTER THAN PERSON Hebrews 1:1-4:13	BETTER PRIESTHOOD Heb 4:14-7:28	BETTER COVENANT Heb 8:1-13	BETTER SACRIFICE Heb 9:1-10:18	BETTER LIFE
MAJESTY OF CHRIST	MINISTRY OF CHRIST			MINISTERS FOR CHRIST
DOCTRINE				DUTY
DATE WRITTEN: ca. 64-68AD				

See [ESV Study Bible "Introduction to Hebrews"](#)
(See also [MacArthur's Introduction to Hebrews](#))

Hebrews 6:1 [Therefore leaving](#) the [elementary teaching](#) about the [Christ](#), let us [press](#) on to [maturity](#), not [laying again](#) a [foundation](#) of [repentance](#) from [dead works](#) and of [faith toward God](#), (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [Dio aphentes](#) (AAPMPN) [ton tes arches tou Christou logon epi ten teleioteia pherometha](#), (1PPPS) [me palin themelion kataballomenoi](#) (PMPMPN) [metanoias apo nekron ergon, kai pisteos epi theon](#)

Amplified: THEREFORE LET us go on and get past the elementary stage in the teachings and doctrine of Christ (the Messiah), advancing steadily toward the completeness and perfection that belong to spiritual maturity. Let us not again be laying the foundation of repentance and abandonment of dead works (dead formalism) and of the faith [by which you turned] to God, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: So, then, let us leave elementary teaching about Christ behind us and let us be borne onwards to full maturity; for we cannot go on laying the foundations all the time and teaching about repentance from dead works ([Westminster Press](#))

NLT: So let us stop going over the basics of Christianity again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding. Surely we don't need to start all over again with the importance of turning away from evil deeds and placing our faith in God. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: - Let us leave behind the elementary teaching about Christ and go forward to adult understanding. Let us not lay over and over again the foundation truths - repentance from the deeds which led to death, believing in God ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Therefore, having put away once for all the beginning word of the Messiah [the first testament in animal blood, i.e., the Mosaic economy], let us be carried along to that which is complete [the new testament in Jesus' blood], not again laying down a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God

Young's Literal: Wherefore, having left the word of the beginning of the Christ, unto the perfection we may advance, not again a foundation laying of reformation from dead works, and of faith on God,

THEREFORE LEAVING THE ELEMENTARY TEACHING ABOUT THE CHRIST: dio aphentes (AAPMPN) ton tes arches tou Christou logon tou Christou:

- **Therefore leaving** - Heb 5:12-14
- **the elementary teaching** - Mark 1:1; John 1:1-3; 1 Timothy 3:16
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

IT'S TIME TO GROW UP GO ON TO MATURITY!

You will encounter some disagreement in the commentaries on who the audience represents. Many conservative writers (Charles Swindoll, John Phillips, P E Phillips, et al) feel this is addressed to immature believers. John MacArthur on the other hand sees Hebrews 6:1-8 as a "parenthetical statement to unbelievers."

J Vernon McGee - In the previous chapter the danger signal was the peril of dull hearing. Now as the Hebrew Christians can already see persecution coming, there is a danger of their turning from their confession of Christ and going back to Judaism (ED: THE IMPLICATION IS SOME WHO HAD CONFESSED CHRIST HAD NOT TRULY PROFESSED CHRIST). He mentions the baby things of Judaism which had to do with ritual. He encourages them to grow up, to go on to maturity. (BORROW [Hebrews 1-7](#))

Charles Swindoll - the author transitions in Hebrews 6 to the third (and probably the most well-known) warning passage in the book. You may recall that the first warning sign said, "Pay attention lest you drift!" (Heb 2:1-4). The second read, "Beware of a hard heart!" (Heb 3:7-4:13). This third warning declares, "Don't stray from the path of spiritual growth!" As we'll see, this warning already began in 5:11 and actually continues through most of Hebrews 6. Not only is it one of the hardest warnings to hear, but it also contains some of the most difficult, disputed, and controversial verses in all of Scripture. One of my mentors, Ray Stedman, called it "the knottiest problem passage in Hebrews, if not the whole Bible." [56] Raymond Brown observes, "There have been innumerable attempts to provide an adequate explanation of these verses." [57] Similarly, Guthrie writes, "This passage has led to extensive debate and has resulted in much misunderstanding." [58] Barclay, meanwhile, pulls no punches when he writes, "This is one of the most terrible passages in Scripture." [59] (See [Insights on Hebrews - Page 86](#))

Therefore As discussed below this is not the best chapter division (the divisions and versification are not inspired.) **Therefore** (1352) (dio) is a **term of conclusion** (always ask "What's it 'there for?"). So why is it there for? Because of the argument he has just mentioned about the difficulty of subject (of the priesthood of Melchizedek) the dullness of the readers ("by this time you ought to be teachers!" - Heb 5:12+). Now the writer talks about moving on to maturity which contrasts to their immature condition as "spiritual infants" who were still partaking only of "milk." It is time to get out of the crib and off the bottle and to grow up, to move on, to become mature believers. And to help them understand the goal God desires for His children, the writer has just presented a clear contrast between the mature Christians and the immature Christian. (Heb 5:12-14+)

P E Hughes on **therefore** - The conjunction **Therefore** indicates that there is a close link in thought and logic with the preceding passage: the author has rebuked his readers for their arrested growth as Christians (ED: SO HE THINKS WRITER IS SPEAKING TO BELIEVERS), of which their spiritual immaturity and dullness of comprehension and discernment are symptomatic; now he exhorts them to do something about it, to shake themselves out of their torpor and to grow up into intelligent and energetic adulthood, lest the curse of God, instead of his blessing, should rest on them. (See [A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews](#))

Spurgeon observes that "In the previous chapter, Paul was writing to some who ought to have been teachers, but who needed still to be taught the first principles of the gospel; they were such babes in grace that they needed the milk of the Word, — the very simplest elements of gospel truth, — and not the strong meat of solid doctrine. The apostle, however, desires that the Hebrew believers should understand the sublimer doctrines of the gospel, and so be like men of full age who can eat strong meat. In this chapter he exhorts them to seek to attain to this standard.

Swindoll - Let me illustrate the situation behind the warning in Hebrews 6. Instead of moving up through grade school, passing into junior high, completing high school, and heading off to college, the Hebrew Christians (ED: SO HE THINKS WRITER IS SPEAKING TO BELIEVERS) were returning to kindergarten year after year. They should have been memorizing Shakespeare and doing calculus. Instead, they were singing the "ABC" song and stumbling over "2 + 2." They failed to grow out of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and life, instead repeating over and over again the subjects of Christianity 101. (See [Insights on Hebrews - Page 86](#))

Leaving ([aphiemi](#)) **the elementary** ([arche](#) - literally "beginning") **teaching** ([logos](#) - literally "word") **about the Christ** ([Christos](#))- **HCSB** = "Therefore, leaving the elementary message about the Messiah", **NET** = "Therefore we must progress beyond the elementary instructions about Christ" **The Christ** or as the HCSB renders it the Messiah. This is reasonable when we remember they are predominantly Jewish group, a mixture of believers and professors but not yet believers.

Warren Wiersbe comments that "When I was in kindergarten, the teacher taught us our ABCs. (We didn't have television to teach us in those days.) You learn your ABCs so that you might read words, sentences, books—in fact, anything in literature. But you do not keep learning the basics. You use the basics to go on to better things." ([Bible Exposition Commentary - New Testament](#))

The elementary teaching - "the rudiments of the beginning" (cf "oracles of God"). The writer has just addressed this topic (which is why this is such a poor chapter division) chiding them that...

though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the **oracles of God**, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. (See **notes** Hebrews 5:12; 5:13;14)

F F Bruce observes that "Practically every item (in the writers list that follows) could have its place in a fairly orthodox Jewish community."

The writer may have felt that to concentrate on this area would be of no help to those slipping back into Judaism. Therefore he went on to "**solid food**."

Kenneth Wuest asks "Now what does the writer exhort these Hebrews to abandon, and to what does he urge them to allow themselves to be borne along? Well, what does a mariner do when he is at a loss as to exactly where he is? He checks his position by his instruments. The aviator in a similar situation checks his course by the radio beam. An exegete in a similar situation will consult the historical background and analysis of the book. And that is exactly what we will do. We found that the writer proves twice over that the New Testament in Jesus' Blood is superior to and takes the place of the First Testament in animal blood. After proving this, he shows that faith is the only way of appropriating the salvation which the High Priest procured for sinners at the Cross. In the light of this demonstration, he warns them against falling away. He exhorts them to go on to faith in the New Testament Sacrifice (ED: SO WUEST IS LIKE MACARTHUR AND SEES THE AUDIENCE AS THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET BECOME BELIEVERS). Having left the temple sacrifices, and having identified themselves with the visible Church, from what could they fall away but from their profession (ED: AND NOT "POSSESSION") of Messiah as High Priest, and to what could they fall back to but First Testament sacrifices? Thus the words, "**the principles of the doctrine of Christ**" must refer to the First Testament sacrifices, for these Jews

are exhorted to abandon them. Likewise, the word "perfection" must speak of the New Testament Sacrifice to which they are exhorted to allow themselves to be borne along. Our analysis has guided us to the correct interpretation. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

Elementary teachings...do not represent anything but the barest beginnings of Christian faith

-- Ray Stedman

Ray Stedman introduces this section of the letter noting that

"Life presents a thousand examples of the need to act on knowledge before any benefit is received. It is not enough to know a telephone number; if you want to talk to someone, you must dial the number. It is not enough to know the price of an object; if you want it, you must pay that price. It is not enough to know where India is; if you want to see it, you must go there. So it should not seem strange that the writer of Hebrews insists that to know Jesus you must receive Him by faith and obey His teaching. The unfortunate chapter division at this point tends to minimize the opening **Therefore** of chapter 6. Our author does not propose to teach his readers again the elementary truths of God's word though he has told them their dullness seems to require it. They already know the teaching; what they need now is personal commitment to it. This can only be achieved by going on to those actions of faith that produce maturity. For this reason he urges them to leave the **elementary teachings** about Christ and go on from words to applications. **Elementary teachings** is not a reference to regeneration, but means introductory information that could lead to regeneration... These transitional truths lead from Jewish beliefs and practices to a full sharing in Christ. Though Bruce takes them as a Jewish list and others as Christian, the truth is they are both, as Bruce concedes that each "*acquires a new significance in a Christian context*" (1964:112). The point is that they do not represent anything but the barest beginnings of Christian faith. It is necessary to go from the knowledge of these initial truths to experiences which actually draw upon the priestly ministry of Jesus for this is what would lead them from head knowledge to heart response. ([Hebrews 6:1-20 Repentance Can Be Impossible!](#))

Leaving the elementary ([arche](#) - literally "beginning") **teaching** ([logos](#) - literally "word")- The verb **Leaving** (as discussed more below) is in a tense (aorist) that calls for definite, effective action by the individual. Further, the active voice signifies that this change of direction requires a definite choice of one's will. Progress in the Christian life is not just "let go and let God" as some falsely teach (e.g., [Keswick "higher life" movement](#)), but entails personal responsibility and personal initiative to seek to progress in the Christian life. Although the analogy is not perfect, spiritual progress is a bit like riding a bicycle -- stop pedaling and sooner or later you fall over. The writer of course is not implying that one can press on to spiritual maturity in his or her own strength apart from the grace of God and the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit, but he does place a responsibility for growth upon those who would seek to walk worthy of their Lord. Paul gives a similar exhortation in [Romans 12:1+](#), calling for each believer to present himself or herself as a living sacrifice, for he knows that unless this act of consecration occurs and includes a presentation of one's members to God as instruments of holiness and righteousness, there will be no progress in spiritual maturity. We don't just naturally "drift" toward Christlikeness.

Elementary ([arche](#) - literally "beginning") **teaching** ([logos](#) - literally "word") - **Elementary** ([arche](#)) can mean supreme in rank but clearly that is not the meaning in this verse. In relation to time, arche refers to the beginning of anything, the first. Think about a baby who begins playing with blocks but moves on to tricycles, etc. The writer is telling his readers to leave the **elementary teaching** concerning the doctrines upon which their prior religious life had been based. Leave the milk! These **elementary** doctrines were those teachings that Christianity had in common with Judaism, the teaching they had received from the Old Testament. They had to move past those teachings that Judaism had in common with Christianity, or otherwise they would never move on to maturity.

John MacArthur on **elementary teaching about Christ** - **The elementary teaching about the Christ** (Messiah) that the unbelieving Jews were to leave was the foggy realm of types and shadows (**ED: REMEMBER IN CONTRAST TO OTHER WRITERS, MACARTHUR FEELS THE WRITER IS ADDRESSING UNBELIEVERS IN THIS SECTION**). He wasn't telling them to cast the Old Testament or its doctrine aside. He was urging them to move into the light and liberty of the New Covenant and let go of the types, symbols, and ceremonies of the Old. Remember, the issue here is not that of growing in spiritual maturity as a Christian, but of coming into the first stage of spiritual maturity by becoming a Christian. It is a matter of dropping, leaving, putting away, that which we have been holding onto and taking up something entirely new. Therefore it can only be a reference to unbelievers, because at no time does the Word of God suggest that a Christian drop the basics of Christianity and go on to something else. (See [Hebrews Commentary](#))

The idea for Jewish believers (WHICH MANY WRITERS FAVOR) and those who profess to believe (WHICH MACARTHUR FAVORS) is to abandon shadows, types, pictures, and sacrifices of the old economy and come to the reality of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ. It is very likely that the audience consists of a mixed group of professors and possessors of Christ, and persecution

would put pressure on both groups to go back to the OT rituals, etc. Of course if a true believer went back to Judaism to escape persecution, he would not lose his salvation, but clearly he would stunt his growth as a believer. To paraphrase it the writer is saying "Leave the pictures of the Messiah and go on to the Messiah Himself." The Old Testament was like a coloring book with outlines children color with crayons, but the New Testament is the reality, the full picture, all colored in!

Leaving (863) (**aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix implies separation + **hiemi** = put in motion, send) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and means to send from one's self, to forsake, to hurl away, to put away, let alone, disregard, put off. It conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and refers to total detachment, total separation, from a previous location or condition. It means to send forth or away from one's self. It refers to the act of putting something away or of laying it aside. In secular Greek **aphiemi** initially conveyed the sense of to throw and in one secular writing we read "let the pot drop" (**aphiemi**). From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go.

Wuest an an interesting note on the verb **leaving** writing that it "The preposition (**apo**) implies separation and is used with a case in Greek which implies separation. The case speaks not only of the literal removal of one object from the vicinity of another, but also of the departure from antecedent relations such as derivation, cause, origin, and the like. It contemplates an alteration in state from the viewpoint of the original situation. It comprehends an original situation from which the idea expressed is in some way removed. **Thus, the basic idea in the verb is that of an action which causes a separation.** The various meanings of the word are as follows: "to send away, to bid go away or depart, to let go, to send from one's self, to let alone, to let be, to disregard." It is used of teachers, writers, and speakers when presenting a topic, in the sense of "to leave, not to discuss." In manuscripts of the Koine period, we have as reported in Moulton and Milligan's Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, the sentence, "Let the pot drop," and the clause, "Not to leave me to be neglected in a strange land;" also an appeal from a forsaken girl to her lover, "Oh, Lord, do not leave me." In Matthew 13:36 and Mark 4:36, this word is used of the sending away of the multitudes. Expositor's Greek Testament translates it here, "**Let us abandon.**" **Alford** explains it in the words, "Leaving as behind and done with in order to go on to another thing." To use the word "leaving" in the sense that a superstructure of a house leaves the foundation and yet builds on it, as is done by some expositors, is a case of English eisegesis (reading into the text what is not there). But such a usage will not stand the scrutiny of the Greek exegesis of this word (taking out of the text what is there), nor is it in accord with the historical background and the analysis of the book. The word is an **aorist** participle. Greek grammar tells us that the action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the leading verb in the sentence, which in this case is "let us go on." The aorist tense speaks of a once for all action. We could translate, "Therefore, having abandoned once for all the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection." The act of abandoning is the pre-requisite to that of going on. One cannot go on without first separating one's self from that to which one is attached. The word translated "let us go on" is first person plural subjunctive, which is used for hortatory purposes in Greek. That is, we have an exhortation here. Another way of exhorting one in Greek is to use the imperative mode. There is a classification of the participle in Greek which is designated, "the participle used as an imperative." Our word "abandoning" is an imperative participle. It gives a command. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

Aphiemi refers to the act of putting something away or of laying it aside and as used in the present context means that God lets go of the obligation we "owe" Him because of sin against His holiness. It means to **remit** (to release from the guilt or penalty of) as one would a financial debt (e.g., on the Rosetta stone it refers to the "total remission" of certain taxes). Unfortunately the English word "forgive" does not adequately picture the meaning of the Greek.

In secular Greek literature, **aphiemi** was a fundamental word used to indicate the sending away of an object or a person. **Aphiemi** was used to describe the voluntary release of a person or thing over which one has legal or actual control. The related noun **aphesis** meant described a setting free. .Later it came to include the release of someone from the obligation of marriage, or debt, or even a religious vow. In its final form it came to embrace the principle of release from punishment for some wrongdoing.

Colin Brown adds that **aphiemi** means "With a personal object, to send forth, send away (of a woman, to divorce; of a meeting, to dissolve, end), to let go, to leave, dispatch; with an impersonal object, to loose (e.g. a ship into the sea), to discharge (e.g. arrows), to give up. In the figurative sense the verb (**aphiemi**) means to let alone, permit, let pass, neglect, give up (taking trouble, etc.); in Josephus, Ant., 1, 12, 3, to lose one's life, die. The **legal use is important:** to release from a legal bond (office, guilt, etc. and also, a woman from marriage, e.g. Hdt., 5, 39), to acquit (e.g. cancellation of criminal proceedings, Plato, Laws, 9, 86, 9d), to exempt (from guilt, obligation, punishment, etc.; e.g. Hdt., 6, 30). Similarly the noun **aphesis** (e.g. Demosthenes, 24, 45) means release, pardon, or remission, etc ([Brown, Colin: New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986.](#)

[Zondervan](#))

Aphiemi was also used of teachers, writers, and speakers when presenting a topic, in the sense of "to leave, let alone, disregard, not to discuss now. It means "to abandon, to leave as behind and done with in order to go on to another thing."

Leaving off or let go from one's further notice does not imply ceasing to believe in **elementary teaching** or to regard them as unimportant, but leaving them "as a builder leaves his foundation in erecting his building". The writer's point is that the beginning is not a stopping place but is the door to further progress in the spiritual life.

Vincent - Leaving or dismissing does not imply ceasing to believe in elementary truths or to regard them as important, but leaving them "as a builder leaves his foundation in erecting his building" (Bruce).

Elementary (746) (**arche**) means the first, the beginning (the things that occurred prior in time). It can mean supreme in rank but clearly that is not the meaning in this verse. In relation to time, arche refers to the beginning of anything, the first. Think about a baby who begins playing with blocks but moves on to tricycles, etc. The writer is telling his readers to leave the elementary teaching concerning the doctrines upon which their prior religious life had been based. Leave the milk! These elementary doctrines were those teaching that Christianity had in common with Judaism, the teaching they had received from the Old Testament. They had to move past those teachings that Judaism had in common with Christianity, or otherwise they would never move on to maturity.

Arche in Hebrews - Heb. 1:10; Heb. 2:3; Heb. 3:14; Heb. 5:12; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 7:3;

Teaching (3056) (**logos** from **lego** = to speak intelligently source of English "logic, logical") means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words. Although **Lógos** is most often translated **word** which Webster defines as "something that is said, a statement, an utterance", the Greek understanding of **lógos** is somewhat more complex. In the Greek mind and as used by the secular and philosophical Greek writers, **lógos** did not mean merely the name of an object but was an expression of the thought behind that object's name.

Logos in Hebrews - Heb. 2:2; Heb. 4:2; Heb. 4:12; Heb. 4:13; Heb. 5:11; Heb. 5:13; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 7:28; Heb. 12:19; Heb. 13:7; Heb. 13:17; Heb. 13:22

Lógos then is a general term for speaking, but always used for speaking with rational content. **Lógos** is a word uttered by the human voice which embodies an underlying concept or idea. When one has spoken the sum total of their thoughts concerning something, they have given to their hearer a total concept of that thing. Thus the word **lógos** conveys the idea of "a total concept" of anything. **Lógos** means the word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed and made known. It can also refer to the inward thought or reason itself. Note then that **lógos** does not refer merely to a part of speech but to a concept or idea. In other words, in classical Greek, **lógos** never meant just a **word** in the grammatical sense as the mere name of a thing, but rather the thing referred to, the material, not the formal part. In fact, the Greek language has 3 other words (rhema, onoma, epos) which designate a **word** in its grammatical sense. **Lógos** refers to the total expression whereas **rhema** for example is used of a part of speech in a sentence. In other words **rhema** , emphasizes the parts rather than the whole.

Dave Branon Devotional - Few of us look in the mirror and come to the conclusion of Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath. During his heyday as a player, Namath wrote a book titled I Can't Wait Until Tomorrow ... 'Cause I Get Better-Looking Every Day. As egotistical as that title sounds, it can help us see how we as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ should view ourselves in the lifelong process of becoming like Him. Scripture tells us that to become more like Christ, we need to keep getting better every day. The development of Christlikeness is called sanctification. It begins the moment we put our faith in Christ for forgiveness of our sins. In God's eyes we are sanctified, or "set apart" from the ungodly, and placed in God's family. But sanctification is also the ongoing process in which we become more and more like our Savior as we allow the Holy Spirit to develop in us His characteristics. Our part is to "press on," striving to reach spiritual maturity (Php 3:12+).

Ask yourself this question: Am I better-looking spiritually than I was yesterday? It's a good test of whether you are becoming more like Jesus. —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Every day more like my Savior,
Every day my will resign,
Till at last Christ reigns supremely
In this grateful heart of mine.
--Brandt

The new birth takes only a moment; the growth of a saint takes a lifetime.

LET US PRESS ON TO MATURITY: epi ten teleioteia pherometha (1PPPS):

- **let us press on to maturity** - Heb 7:11+; Heb 12:13+; Pr 4:18; Mt 5:48+; 1Cor 13:10; 2Cor 7:1⁺; Eph 4:12+; Phil 3:12-15+; Col 1:28+; Col 4:12+; Jas 1:4+; 1 Pet 5:10+; 1 Jn 4:12⁺
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

LET US BE CARRIED ALONG

Let us press on to maturity - Or more literally "Let us be carried forward" where the use of the **passive voice** emphasizes the exertion of power on the individual from an outside source. **passive voice** also conveys the thought of the need of the recipient to willingly surrender to this outside influence (see comments below on the Holy Spirit - this is probably an example of the divine passive). A baby does not grow himself, but he must take in nourishment (cf the "solid food") and he grows by processes God has put in place in the human body. The **present tense** emphasizes the continual need for this activity. Note the writer lumps himself in this group needing to be continually borne along. The idea is "Let us be carried along (by God's Spirit)." The picture is somewhat like a ship being carried forward by the wind (cf Spirit - pneuma - breath, wind)

Let us - 12x in Hebrews - Heb. 4:1; Heb. 4:11; Heb. 4:14; Heb. 4:16; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 10:22; Heb. 10:23; Heb. 10:24; Heb. 12:1; Heb. 12:28; Heb. 13:13; Heb. 13:15

*It is normal for Christians to grow;
it is abnormal for them to have arrested growth.*

--Warren Wiersbe

Spurgeon - Let us go from the school to the university. Let us have done with our first spelling books and advance into the higher classics of the kingdom. Children are to learn their letters in order that they may go on to higher branches of education, and believers are to know the elements of the faith, but are then to advance to the higher attainments and endeavor to understand the deeper mysteries.

Press on (KJV = go on) ([5342](#)) (**phero**) be borne along like a ship by the wind (see below). T

And so the writer alludes to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, that process of growing in Christlikeness, learning more and more to say "yes" to the impulse of the Spirit's control and then being enabled to say "no" to the desires of the evil flesh. Spiritual maturity does not come by our striving in self-effort but by our cooperating with God as we do His will depending on His help. It comes as we follow the Holy Spirit who leads us. (1 Peter 1:2, Galatians 5:16, Philippians 3:12; Romans 8:13 - See **notes** 1 Peter 1:2, Galatians 5:16, Philippians 3:12; Romans 8:13)

The Pythagorean Schools used the Greek verb for **press on** in the sense of being borne on to a higher stage of instruction, this being the counterfeit for the Christian's "higher state" of increasing conformity to the image of God's Son.

In Acts 27:17+acts-27-commentary#27:17 **phero** in the **passive voice** refers to a ship which helps illustrate the meaning of the verb. The idea then would be "so let themselves be driven along". We too like "ships" in the night of this present evil age must keep our sails trimmed (Philippians 2:12 see note) that we might be borne along toward our better country by His Spirit (Philippians 2:13 see note)!

In his outline of Hebrews 6 entitled "The Peril of Defection", **Melvin Worthington** alliterates these first 3 verses "The Desired Perfection (Heb 6:1-3). The perfection desired includes, the exhortation to develop (v1), the elementary doctrines (vv. 1-2) and the enabling Deity (v3)... (he concludes) The writer of Hebrews was not interested in arguing doctrine, but with warning those who claim to be the people of God. The truth is simple, despite where you fall on a doctrinal scale, if you turn your back on faith in God, you will face the same wrath and punishment of an unbeliever: hell. ([ref](#))

Wuest - The verb means "to carry or bear," (**phero**). Moulton and Milligan report its use as "bring" and "carry," in such sentences from early Greek manuscripts as: "Her tunic, the white one which you have, bring when you come, but the turquoise one do not bring," and "Return from where you are before someone fetches you," the words "bring" and "fetch" being the translations of this word. The word is in the **passive voice**, which means that the subject is passive or inactive itself and is being acted upon by some outside agent. Thus we could translate, "*abandoning once for all...let us be carried along.*" Now what does the writer exhort these Hebrews

to abandon, and to what does he urge them to allow themselves to be borne along? Well, what does a mariner do when he is at a loss as to exactly where he is? He checks his position by his instruments. The aviator in a similar situation checks his course by the radio beam. An exegete in a similar situation will consult the historical background and analysis of the book. And that is exactly what we will do. We found that the writer proves twice over that the New Testament in Jesus' Blood is superior to and takes the place of the First Testament in animal blood. After proving this, he shows that faith is the only way of appropriating the salvation which the High Priest procured for sinners at the Cross. In the light of this demonstration, he warns them against falling away. He exhorts them to go on to faith in the New Testament Sacrifice. Having left the temple sacrifices, and having identified themselves with the visible Church, from what could they fall away but from their profession of Messiah as High Priest, and to what could they fall back to but First Testament sacrifices? Thus the words, "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," must refer to the First Testament sacrifices, for these Jews are exhorted to abandon them. Likewise, the word "perfection" must speak of the New Testament Sacrifice to which they are exhorted to allow themselves to be borne along. Our analysis has guided us to the correct interpretation. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

Spurgeon phrased it memorably...

Let us go from the school to the university, let us have done with our first spelling-books, and advance into the higher classics of the kingdom.

Let us make sure that the foundation is laid, but let us not have continually to lay it again. Let us go on believing and repenting, as we have done; but let us not have to begin believing and begin repenting, let us go on to something beyond that stage of experience.

Maturity (5047) ([teleiotes](#) related to **teleios** from **telos** = an end, a purpose, an aim, a goal) describes one as being in a state of completion or perfection in the sense of maturity (and in contrast to the stage of elementary, ABC, knowledge). The related word **teleios** means complete, mature, fully developed, full grown, brought to its end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness, in good working order. **Teleios** signifies consummate soundness, includes the idea of being whole. Interestingly the Gnostics used **teleios** of the one fully initiated into their mysteries and that may have been why Paul used **teleios** in this epistle.

The only other NT use of **teleiotes** is in Colossians where Paul writes...

And beyond all these things put on love, which is the **perfect** bond of unity. (see **note** Colossians 3:14)

Teleiotes (5047) is related to the similar word in **Hebrews 12:2** with Strong's number (5051) this latter word referring to Jesus as our Model or Goal to press onward toward writing that we need to run...

fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Author and **Perfector** ([teleiotes](#)) of faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (see note Hebrews 12:2)

Christlikeness is our goal. Conformity to the image of the Son is the Father's will for every one of His children.

Wuest - Our Lord in His life of faith on earth, became the **perfect** or **complete** example of the life of faith. Thayer speaks of our Lord as "one who has in his own person **raised faith to its perfection** and so set before us the highest example of faith." ([Hebrews Commentary online](#)) (Bolding added)

Larry Richards - As we run we can look back and see how Jesus ran His race ("Author"). When we look ahead we can see His exaltation ("Finisher"). He is our example as starter and finisher. (Richards, L: The Bible reader's companion. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

What does **Perfector** mean pragmatically? It means that if you want to look for a perfect example of faith, you look to our Lord Jesus Christ. If you look at Abraham, you see failure. If you look to Abel, you see failure. If you look to Moses, you will see failure. And in Gideon, Samson, Jephtha, and all the rest of the runners in the race of faith in Hebrews 11, you will see failure. There is one person, and only One, Who never failed and that Person is our Lord Jesus Christ. And He will never fail you beloved.

S Lewis Johnson - I am sure, if you feel as I do at times, to look at our Lord as an example which we are to follow, is a very frustrating thing. Joseph Parker, a great London preacher, had gone to hear the great pianist Paderiski play. He was so filled with the consummate beauty of the playing that he went home and asked his wife for an ax to chop his piano into pieces. That was the power of a great example. When I look at the example of our Lord Jesus, that is the way I feel. But in the Word of God, we are told that not only is Jesus our example, but He also offers us the utmost of enablement. A German woman in World War II had been rationing for years and finally got to the place where she did not have enough food to feed her family. One day she made a trip to the ocean which she had never seen before. When she saw the water, she exclaimed, "Well there is after all something that they cannot ration." Likewise, the power of God through Jesus Christ is something we cannot ration. It is available to us, and as we run the race, keeping

the weight down, keeping our limbs free, and keeping our eyes upon Him, the power of our Lord Jesus Christ flows through us and we are enabled to do what we could not do otherwise!

The writer repeatedly alludes to the idea of **perfecting** (in sense of accomplishing or reaching the intended goal) See **notes** Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 5:9; 6:1; 7:11, 7:19, 7:28; 9:9; 10:1, 10:14; 11:40.

The Bible says that Jesus is before us. He is behind us. He is by our side. He is below us. He is above us. He is around about us and He is in us. There was a man who looked to Jesus once, and he did an impossible thing. Do you remember? Jesus came walking on the water and when Peter first saw Him he said "It is a ghost." Then he said, "If it be Thee Lord, bid me come unto Thee. And Peter climbed out of that boat in the midst of the raging storm with the lightening and thunder, and he walked on the water. Impossible! But as long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, the power of Jesus Christ was in Peter!

S Lewis Johnson writes about a certain king in western Europe who "was about to visit a small town. A mother took her little boy and found her way to the front of the crowd. Finally the king arrived she held him up and said, "Now look at him and never forget it all the days of your life." That is the kind of look that we should have as we look unto Jesus. As you run the race, look to Jesus and never forget Who He is and what He has done, and what He can do for you. May you reach the crown at the end of the race."

THOU ART ENOUGH FOR ME

Thou art enough for me,
Thou art enough for me,
Thou living, loving, mighty God
Thou art enough for me!

To God our father above,
We glory in Thy love,
Thou living, loving, mighty God,
Thou art enough for me.

Lord Jesus, Savior king,
All glory now we sing,
Thou living, loving, mighty God,
Thou art enough for me!

The Holy Spirit's power
Shall keep me every hour,
Thou living, loving, mighty God.

Let us go on to the stage of adults, not babes, able to chew solid spiritual food. The writer will assume that the readers are adults in his discussion of the topic.

F B Hole ([Biographical Note](#)) comments...

"LET US GO ON," is the opening exhortation of our chapter. Movement in the right direction is to mark us. We are to leave "the word of the beginning of Christ," as the marginal reading is, and go on unto "perfection." If we glance back over the last four verses of Hebrews 5 we shall see that the point here is that we ought to grow in our understanding of the faith of Christ. We ought not to be like children staying year after year in the kindergarten, but advance until we assimilate the instruction provided for the scholars in the sixth form.

John the Baptist had brought "the word of the beginning of Christ." He laid the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God." He put baptism in the forefront of His preaching, and spoke plainly as to eternal judgement. But things had moved on since his day. Great light shone when Jesus came forth in His ministry; and then, just as His earthly service closed, in His discourse in the upper chamber He promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. He told His disciples that He had "yet many things to say" unto them, but that they could not bear them then. He added, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13). By the time the Epistle to the Hebrews was written ALL truth had been revealed, for it was given to Paul by his ministry to "fulfil the Word of God." (Colossians 1:25 see note). To "fulfil" in that verse means to "fill out full," or to "complete."

The whole circle of revealed truth then had been completed. Yet here were these Hebrews still inclined to dwell in their minds amongst these preliminary things, quite ignoring the fuller light which was now shining. Are we at all like them in this? In their case it is not difficult to see where the trouble lay. The special place of

privilege, which belonged to the Jew nationally under the Old Covenant, had disappeared under the New. True, it only disappeared because a higher order of blessing had been introduced, so that, when converted, both Jew and Gentile are brought into privileges quite unknown before. Yet their hearts clung to the old and exclusive national position, and consequently they became dull of hearing as regards the fuller truth of Christianity. In our case we have no national position to maintain, but there is many a thing which we naturally love and cling to, which is dispossessed by the light of full and proper Christianity; and there is very real danger that we may close our eyes against that light in order to retain the things we love.

Oh, then may we heed this exhortation! May we allow it to repeat itself over and over again in our hearts —

Let us go on!
Let us go on!
LET US GO ON!

And then let us join the writer of the Epistle in saying, "This will we do, if God permit." ([Hebrews Commentary Notes](#))

Marvin Vincent - The completeness is viewed as pertaining to both the writer and the readers. He proposes to fully develop his theme: they are exhorted to strive for that full Christian manhood which will fit them to receive the fully-developed discussion.

A B Simpson - Having entered in, become established and found the source of all-sufficient grace, let us now advance, let us make progress, let us grow in grace, let us not be easily satisfied with present attainments, for, unless we go on we shall surely go back. It is not safe to lose an inch of ground. "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition." The faintest drawing back may land us in perdition. There is no portion of the Holy Scriptures so filled with impressive warnings against backsliding as this. In two of its leading chapters, the sixth and tenth, we are told of the peril of the soul that falls away, and the only remedy against falling away is to go forward. **Are we going on? And are we going unto perfection? Is our goal the very highest? Are we aiming at nothing less than the highest possibilities of a life of faith and service for God?** Nothing less is safe, and nothing less is worthy of our high calling and our exceeding great and precious promises. (A. B. Simpson. Christ in the Bible - Hebrews) (Bolding added)

J. D. Branon writes that...

When autumn comes and the leaves drop from my neighbor's trees, I can look out of my back window and see a forlorn sight—a weather-beaten building surrounded by weeds. In the mind of the designer, this structure was to have been a health club complete with swimming pool, handball courts, and sauna. But somewhere along the way the planners and builders encountered difficulty—perhaps lack of funds—and they abandoned the project. So instead of being a center of activity, the structure is an unfinished and useless eyesore.

In a sense this is what the writer to the Hebrew Christians was warning them about in Hebrews 5—a warning we must heed. We are not to stop when we have laid the foundations of repentance and salvation; we are to go on to the maturity that God, the architect of our faith, has planned for us. He knows what the result of the building of our faith should be: a center of activity that glorifies Him. So when obstacles arise, when the needed resources of time, study, and energy run out, when we encounter opposition, we are not to let the project come to a screeching halt. We must continue construction.

God chose us to "be holy and without blame before Him" (see note Ephesians 1:4), and He provides us with the resources—the indwelling Holy Spirit and His Word—for the process of sanctification to be completed.—J. D. Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

**So often we try to alter circumstances to suit ourselves,
instead of letting them alter us.**

John Angell James in his book **Christian Progress** ([see table of contents](#)) has a chapter entitled **Motives to Christian Progress** and the following are his major "bullet points" with brief explanatory excerpts. The interested reader (and we should all be interested in spiritual progress) is referred to the full article for expansion on each point...

1. The first motive to Christian progress is the DANGER OF DECLENSION.

... It is not only possible—but probable, that some who shall read this work, will be found by it in various stages of declension already. Some who have consciousness enough of their situation, and even occasional regret enough to borrow the poet's lament—

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord;

Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his Word?

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still;
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill."...

2. It should be most impressively felt that spiritual progress is COMMANDED and EXPECTED by God.

... The verb, "be perfect," and the noun, "perfection," are of such frequent occurrence in the New Testament, that the subject to which they refer ought to engage the close and serious attention of every professing Christian. There can be no doubt that these terms are sometimes employed by the sacred writers in a comparative sense, as signifying high degrees, eminence, or completeness of parts. In Hebrews 6:1, perfection signifies the more sublime, enlarged, spiritual, and complete views of Christian doctrine, as opposed to first principles...

... Young converts see no perfection in others; they hear it said by Christians there is no perfection; they feel none in themselves; and therefore never dream that it is their duty to seek after it; and thus conciliating themselves to all kinds and degrees of imperfections, begin and continue with a very low state of piety...

3. Christian Progress is a bright evidence of sincerity.

Growth, as we have already remarked, is the proof of life. Dead things do not grow...

... Grace never finds in nature a subject for which there is need of little to be done...

4. Christian Progress is its own reward

... Viewed in its true nature, it unites the highest dignity with the purest pleasure. The ways of godliness are ways, not only of pleasure and paths of peace—but of honor and renown. Can anything be loftier, nobler, sublimer, than a growing conformity to the image of God? To see a stronger and a stronger resemblance to God in our soul?...

... And is not growth in HOLINESS equally delightful? Holiness is our spiritual health, as sin is our disease...

5. Christian progress adds to the credit and redounds to the honor of true religion generally

6. And is it not a powerful motive to grow in grace—to consider that our present attainments in true religion, have a connection with, and will have an influence upon, our heavenly and eternal state.

After reading these pages, are you at all excited to desire to advance? Say, does the fire kindle, does the glow diffuse throughout your soul at the idea of what is here presented? If not, let me try again, not by new motives—but by recalling those which are here enumerated.

Does not the dread of declension, backsliding, apostasy, terrify you?

Shall not the command of God impel you?

Will not the hope of gaining a sweet and blessed evidence of salvation, lead you to seek after progress?

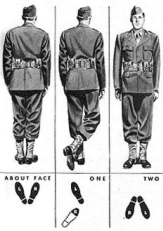
Does not the experience you have already had, though it may be in a small degree, of the reward which advancement yields—induce you to go forward?

And then what shall be said of the fact that our degrees of grace will regulate our degrees of glory? Has this no motive power for your soul? What! are you so dull, so earthly, so insensible to the felicities, honors, and distinctions of heaven—as to feel little holy ambition to have some high place there?

NOT LAYING AGAIN A FOUNDATION OF REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS AND OF FAITH TOWARD GOD: me palin themelion kataballomenoi (PMPMPN) metanoias apo nekron ergon kai pisteos epi theon:

- **not laying again** - Matthew 7:25; Luke 6:48; 1Corinthians 3:10-12; 1Timothy 6:19; 2Timothy 2:19
- **repentance** - Isaiah 55:6,7; Ezekiel 18:30-32; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 21:29,32; Mark 6:12; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; 2Corinthians 7:10; 2Timothy 2:25,26

- **from dead works** - Hebrews 9:14; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 2:1,5) (Heb 11:6; John 5:24; 12:44; 14:1; 1Peter 1:21; 1John 5:10-13
- **faith toward God** - Heb 11:6 Joh 5:24 Jn 12:44 14:1 1Pe 1:21 1Jn 5:10-13
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



REPENT ABOUT FACE! FROM DEAD WORKS!

The command "[About Face](#)" describes the act of pivoting 180 degrees, especially in a military formation. Another English definition says it is "a reversal of direction, of attitude, behavior, or point of view." This is a good picture of repentance that Jesus commands. Jesus continues the call to repentance made by John in Mark 1:4⁺.

Not laying ([kataballo](#)) again a foundation ([themelios](#)) of repentance ([metanoia](#)) from dead works ([ergon](#)) and of faith ([#pistis](#)) toward God - The writer desired to proceed to the exposition of the doctrine of Christ's priesthood, but he takes a "short detour" explaining to them that Christian maturity is not to be attained by going back to subjects which belong to the ABC's, and which in context seem to favor primarily teachings of the Old covenant.

Dead works could refer to either non-believers or believers as **Swindoll** explains - The ambiguous phrase "dead works" could mean our deeds of the flesh that characterize those who are spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1–2), or they could refer to the useless, dead works of self-righteousness that can never bring salvation (Matt. 5:20)—that is, "man's futile attempt at self-salvation." We are called to repent from both of these and instead be saved by faith alone (Eph. 2:8–9). This teaching is an essential foundation for the Christian life. But it's just the beginning. Those who continue to focus only on what they have been saved from and neglect the life of holiness they were saved for are like those who read Ephesians 2:8–9 and forget Ephesians 2:10 (See [Insights on Hebrews - Page 87](#))

Spurgeon - Let us make sure that the foundation is laid, but let us not have continually to lay it again. Let us go on believing and repenting, as we have done; but let us not have to begin believing and begin repenting. Let us go on to something beyond that stage of experience.

Laying (2598) (**kataballo** from **katá** = down + **bállo** = throw cast) means to cast down, to throw to the ground, and here figuratively of a spiritual foundation to be put or laid down. The idea was to lay something down with the implication of permanence. The **present tense** speaks of this as what should characterize one's lifestyle.

Again (3825) (**palin**) means to return to a position or state, and as here denoting a falling back into a previous state or a return to a previous activity.

Foundation (2310) (**themelios** from **théma** = that which is laid down) means something laid or put down, that on which a structure is built or a stone used in the construction of a foundation. It was used literally of buildings foundation (foundation stone Rev 21:14). **Thayer** adds "metaphorically, the foundations, beginnings, first principles, of an institution or system of truth (as what is necessary for belief or practice): 1Co 3:11, 12; the rudiments, first principles, of Christian life and knowledge, He 6:1; a course of instruction begun by a teacher, Ro 15:20... the Septuagint several times also for a palace (Isa 25:2, Je 6:5, Amos 1:4, etc)."

Repentance and **faith** are foundational in beginning the Christian life but they are only the beginning. Compare Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian elders in which he explained that he was "solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of **repentance** toward God and **faith** in our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21+)

Foundation of repentance - what does this elementary foundation refer to?

Stedman explains that...This rudimentary foundation is easily recognizable as the same one which Jesus and the apostles preached, namely, "repent and believe." Repentance is a permanent change of mind which results in right behavior ("Produce fruit in keeping with repentance"—Mt 3:8). ([Ibid](#))

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Repentance (3341) (metanoia from **meta** = after + **noéo** = to understand) literally means "afterthought" or "to think after" and implies a change of mind. From the NT uses, it is clear that **metanoia** means however much more than merely a change of one's mind but also includes a complete change of heart, attitude, interest, and direction. It is a conversion in every sense of the word. Jesus' teaching would support this conclusion for our Lord declared...

"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who **repents (metanoëo)**, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no **repentance (metanoia)**." (Luke 15:7+)

It should be stated at the outset that there are some in evangelical circles who teach that all repentance involves is a **change of mind**. The problem with this definition is that has nothing to do with one's attitude toward sin and does not necessarily result in any change in lifestyle. Keeping this definition in mind now read the first NT use of **metanoia** by John the Baptist who is addressing the religious leaders who sought to flee from the wrath to come...

Therefore **bring forth (aorist imperative** = do it and do it now! Even conveys a sense of urgency) **fruit** (karpos - fruit is what people produce that other people see that indicates their true spiritual condition) in **keeping** (axios= the idea is that of having equal weight or worth, and therefore of being appropriate) with **repentance**. (Matthew 3:8+) (Note Jesus began His ministry with exactly the same call in Matthew 4:16+)

J. R. Miller wrote that genuine repentance "amounts to nothing whatever if it produces only a few tears, a spasm of regret, a little fright. We must leave the sins we repent of and walk in the new, clean ways of holiness."

Marvin Vincent in his note on the verb form (**metanoëo**) writes that this is...A word compounded of the preposition **meta**, after, with; and the verb **noëo**, to perceive, and to think, as the result of perceiving or observing. In this compound the preposition combines the two meanings of time and change, which may be denoted by after and different; so that the whole compound means to think differently after. Metanoia (repentance) is therefore, primarily, an after-thought, different from the former thought; then, a change of mind which issues in regret and in change of conduct. These latter ideas, however, have been imported into the word by scriptural usage, and do not lie in it etymologically nor by primary usage. Repentance, then, has been rightly defined as "Such a virtuous alteration of the mind and purpose as begets a like virtuous change in the life and practice." Sorrow is not, as is popularly conceived, the primary nor the prominent notion of the word. Paul distinguishes between sorrow and repentance (metanoia), and puts the one as the outcome of the other. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance" (2Cor 7:10). (Vincent, M. R. Word Studies in the New Testament. Vol. 1, Page 3-23) (Bolding added)

Kenneth Wuest - Repent is the translation of **metanoëo** which in classical Greek meant "to change one's mind or purpose, to change one's opinion." The noun **metanoia** meant "a change of mind on reflection." These two words used in classical Greek signified a change of mind regarding anything, but when brought over into the New Testament, their usage is limited to a change of mind in the religious sphere. They refer there to a change of moral thought and reflection which follows moral delinquency. **This includes not only the act of changing one's attitude towards and opinion of sin but also that of forsaking it.** Sorrow and contrition with respect to sin, are included in the Bible idea of repentance, but these follow and are consequent upon the sinner's change of mind with respect to it." ([Hebrews Commentary online](#)) (Bolding added)

Thayer writes that **metanoia** refers "especially (to) the change of mind of those who have begun to abhor their errors and misdeeds, and have determined to enter upon a better course of life, so that it embraces both a recognition of sin and sorrow for it and hearty amendment, the tokens and effects of which are good deeds.

Friberg, et al, define **metanoia** as "(1) religiously and morally, a change of mind leading to change of behavior repentance, conversion, turning about ; (2) as a change of opinion in respect to one's acts regret, remorse (a popular Greek usage **not found** in the NT)" ([Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament. Baker's Greek New Testament library. Baker Academic](#)) (Bolding added)

Louw and Nida define **metanoia** as a "to change one's way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness... Though in English a focal component of repent is the sorrow or contrition that a person experiences because of sin, the emphasis in **metanoeo** (verb form) and **metanoia** seems to be more specifically **the total change**, both in thought and behavior, with respect to how one should both **think and act**. Whether the focus is upon attitude or behavior varies somewhat in different contexts." ([Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains. United Bible societies](#)) (Bolding added)

Repentance as used by is a change of mind that results in a change of will. It means "a turn about" or deliberate change of mind resulting in a change of direction in thought and behavior. There is a new attitude to God, to men, to life, to self.

One might thus say that **repentance** is a change of attitude toward sin which leads to a desire to change our behavior accordingly. If the sinner honestly changes his mind about sin, he will turn from it. If he sincerely changes his mind about Jesus Christ, he will turn to Him, trust Him, and be saved. In **Paul's** parting words to the Ephesian elders he declared...

"how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of **repentance** (metanoia) toward God and **faith** in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 20:21+)

True **repentance** is a godly sorrow for sin, an internal repugnance to the ugliness of sin followed by the actual forsaking of it as Paul explained to the Corinthians...

"I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of **repentance** (i.e., their sorrow led them to a change of mind resulting in a change of life); for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God (godly sorrow is a grief which comes into a one's life after he or she has committed a sin and which leads to repentance) produces a **repentance without regret**, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death." (2 Corinthians 7:9-10+)

In his respected commentary on this verse Charles Hodge writes that **'Repentance** is not merely a change of purpose, but includes a change of heart which leads to a turning from sin with grief and hatred thereof unto God."

Jamieson, et al, commenting on the previous passage write that..."**Repentance**" (metanoia) implies a **coming to a right mind**; "**regret**" implies merely uneasiness of feeling at the past or present, and is applied even to the remorse of Judas (Mt 27:3); so that, though always accompanying repentance, it is not always accompanied by repentance. "Repentance" removes the impediments in the way of "salvation" (to which "death," namely, of the soul, is opposed).

Do not confuse **remorse** with **repentance**. For example "when Judas, who had betrayed (Jesus), saw that He had been condemned, he felt **remorse** and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders" (Matthew 27:3) What is the distinction? **Repentance** involves sorrow for the act of sin, **remorse** sorrow for its consequences. A repentant person is sorry he sinned, whereas a remorseful person is sorry he got caught.

Paul like John the Baptist warned King Agrippa:

Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should **repent** and **turn to** God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance (Acts 26:19-20+)

Genuine repentance as described by Paul before King Agrippa is demonstrated by the saints at Thessalonica (although the specific word metanoia is not used here), Paul recording that...

they themselves (those in Macedonia and Achaia) report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you **turned to God from idols** to **serve** (douleuo = be in bondage to another with the servant's will now subjected to the Master's will) **a living and true God** (changed behavior, from serving

pagan idols to serving the true God) and to wait (eagerly and expectantly - present tense = their habitual practice) for His Son from heaven (changed outlook from temporal to eternal), Whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, Who delivers us from the wrath to come. (see **notes** 1Thessalonians 1:9, 1:10)

The saints at Thessalonica gave sure evidence of their changed mind in that they now submitted to a new Master. They manifested a clearly visible (to all in Macedonia and Achaia) break with pagan religion and a redirection of their whole life to God.

John MacArthur - True repentance not only should but will have correspondingly genuine works, demonstrated in both attitudes and actions. Right relationship to God brings right relationship to our fellow human beings, at least as far as our part is concerned (cf Romans 12:18+). Those who claim to know Christ, who claim to be born again, will demonstrate a new way of living that corresponds to the new birth... The idea that repentance is evidenced by renunciation of sin and by righteous living did not originate with John the Baptist, but had long been an integral part of orthodox Judaism. Faithful rabbis had taught that one of the most important passages in Scripture was, "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless; defend the orphan, plead for the widow" (Isaiah 1:16–17). Theologian Erich Sauer, in *The Triumph of the Crucified* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951, p. 67), speaks of repentance as "a threefold action. In the understanding it means knowledge of sin; in the feelings it means pain and grief; and in the will it means a change of mind." True repentance first of all involves understanding and insight, intellectual awareness of the need for moral and spiritual cleansing and change. Second, it involves our emotions. We come to feel the need that our mind knows. Third, it involves appropriate actions that result from what our mind knows and our heart feels. (MacArthur, J: [Matthew 1-7 Macarthur New Testament Commentary Chicago: Moody Press](#))

In another of his works, **MacArthur** summarizes **repentance** - Like faith, repentance has intellectual, emotional, and volitional ramifications. Berkhof describes the intellectual element of repentance as "a change of view, a recognition of sin as involving personal guilt, defilement, and helplessness." The emotional element is "a change of feeling, manifesting itself in sorrow for sin committed against a holy God." The volitional element is "a change of purpose, an inward turning away from sin, and a disposition to seek pardon and cleansing." (from Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1939), 486) Each of those three elements is deficient apart from the others. ([MacArthur, J. The Gospel According to the Apostles. Nashville, TN: Word Pub](#))

Easton's Bible Dictionary defines "evangelical repentance" as...(1) a true sense of one's own guilt and sinfulness; (2) an apprehension of God's mercy in Christ; (3) an actual hatred of sin (Psalm 119:128; 2Corinthians 7:9-10) and turning from it to God; and (4) a persistent endeavor after a holy life in a walking with God in the way of his commandments. ([Easton](#))

Stedman reminds us that "**Repentance** is a permanent change of mind which results in right behavior ("Produce fruit in keeping with repentance"—Mt 3:8). The change they needed was to cease trusting in acts that lead to death (a phrase which is repeated in 9:14) or useless rituals, as the NIV alternatively translates. R. V. Tasker describes the result as "an abandonment of the attempt to obtain righteousness by seeking to obey the precepts of a lifeless moral code" (quoted by Bruce 1964:113). ([Ibid](#))

Vincent - The illustrative proposition is that a building is not completed by lingering at the foundation; and so Christian maturity is not to be attained by going back to subjects which belong to the earliest stage of Christian instruction. He purposely selects for his illustration things which belong to the very initiation of Christian life.

In the OT repentance meant turning from evil that brings death and turning to God but too often the Jew only turned to God in a **superficial** fashion. In so doing they fulfilled the letter of the law but their spirit was still dead as Paul explained in Romans writing that...

he is not a Jew who is one **outwardly**; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter (the law, including the idea of keeping the law); and his praise is not from men (men praise the external works), but from God (He sees the changed heart). (See **notes** Romans 2:28; Romans 2:29)

Such external, man pleasing repentance does not bring genuine salvation. Only repentance and faith (Mark 1:15 "repent and believe in the gospel", cp Acts 2:36-38, 20:21) in Messiah's finished work results in regeneration and the new birth.

Related Resource:

- [Great quotes on repentance primarily from Puritan writers](#)
- [What does the Bible say about repentance? What does it mean to repent?](#)
- [What is repentance and is it necessary for salvation?](#)

Ray Stedman writes that...The change they needed was to cease trusting in acts that lead to death (a phrase which is repeated in Heb 9:14 - note) or useless rituals, as the NIV alternatively translates. R. V. Tasker describes the result as "an abandonment of the attempt to obtain righteousness by seeking to **obey** the precepts of a lifeless moral code" (quoted by Bruce 1964:113). After turning from lifeless works (by repenting), a positive action of faith in God must be taken. This recalls for us Paul's word to believers in Thessalonica: "You turned to God from idols (REPENTANCE) to serve (FRUIT IN KEEP WITH REPENTANCE) the living and true God." (1 Th 1:9+) Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin. They form the essential foundation upon which one may enter the Christian life.

What are **dead works**? **Dead works** are those which do not spring from the life-giving principle of faith.

Dead works are all that an unsaved person does (or even can do!), whether they "look" good or evil, since one who is dead in sin can only do dead works that can never gain saving merit before God. See **Good Deeds** for what constitutes **works** that are not "dead" (see note Hebrews 6:1) See Torrey's Topic [Reward of Saints](#)

Steven Charnock wrote that...All our works before repentance are **dead works** (Hebrews 6:1). And these works have no true beauty in them, with whatsoever gloss they may appear to a natural eye. A dead body may have something of the features and beauty of a living, but it is but the beauty of a carcass, not of a man... Since man, therefore, is spiritually dead, he cannot perform a living service. As a natural death causes incapacitate for natural actions, so a spiritual death must incapacitate for spiritual actions.

The truth about the inefficacy of one's **works** to merit salvation would have been one of the first things expounded to the **works based righteousness** mindset of the typical Jew who was considering the Messiah. This opening section of Hebrews 6 is another support for the assumption that the writer's target audience was primarily Jews. This same message concerning **dead works** was constantly proclaimed by the OT prophets as well as by John the Baptist. The clear call was for the Jews to turn from works that were dead in the sense that they were devoid of faith.

Isaiah declared that...

all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds (they are "dead works" which seem "right" in our eyes but in God's eyes they) are like a filthy garment (like a menstrual cloth) and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away (A LEAF BLOWN AWAY IS PHYSICALLY DEAD - WE ARE SPIRITUALLY DEAD). (Isaiah 64:6)

Galatians 3:2,5,10+ clearly teach that we receive the Spirit not by works of the Law but by hearing with faith and that works of the Law in fact place us under the Curse! How foolish!

Galatians 3:2-3; 5; 10+

(3:2-3) This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

(3:5) So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

(3:10) For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."

The phrase **dead works** is used again in Hebrews 9...

how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from **dead works** to serve the living God? (Heb 9:14+)

Vincent observes that the phrase **dead works** is found "only in Hebrews. Not sinful **works** in the ordinary sense of the term, but **works** without the element of life which comes through faith in the living God. There is a sharp opposition, therefore, between **dead works** and faith. They are contraries. This truth must be one of the very first things expounded to a Jew embracing Christianity."

Wuest - "The principles of the doctrine of Christ," must refer to the First Covenant sacrifices, for these Jews are exhorted to abandon them. Likewise, the word "perfection" must speak of the NT Sacrifice to which they are exhorted to allow themselves to be borne along. All dependence upon the Levitical sacrifices is to be set aside in order that the Hebrews can go on to "perfection,"

which speaks of the NT Sacrifice, the Lord Jesus, and the Covenant He inaugurated = Greek teleios = that which is complete, cp Romans 7:11+ where the writer argues that if perfection (same word family) were under the Levitical priesthood, then there would be no further need of another priesthood. So leave the ABC's of the Levitical Priesthood & the Old Covenant and be borne along to perfection to the perfection of the priesthood of Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:19+ = the law of Moses, the sacrificial law, made nothing perfect. Christ's sacrifice was complete. Thus, the writer exhorts these Hebrews to abandon the type for the reality, that which is incomplete for that which is complete. ([Hebrews Commentary online](#))

Kent Hughes says "NT scholarship is in general agreement that the six facets of "the elementary teachings about Christ" listed in v1-3 outline the primitive catechism used in Jewish churches to induct converts." ([Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul. Volume 1. Crossway Books; Volume 2](#))

Henry Morris and **J. Vernon McGee** agree these (Hebrews 6:1-3) are primarily Old Testament teachings being referred to.

Jameson, Fausset & Brown favor this section as referring to the OT teachings and quote Bengel who says that "The six particulars here specified had been, as it were, the *Christian Catechism of the Old Testament*, and such Jews who had begun to recognize Jesus as the Christ immediately on the new light being shed on these fundamental particulars, were accounted as having the elementary principles of the doctrine of Christ."

D. L. Moody was once approached by a stumbling drunk on the street who slurred, "Mr. Moody, I'm one of your converts." To which Moody replied, "You must be, because you're certainly not one of the Lord's!"

Faith toward God - Faith directed toward God the Father is not saving faith unless accompanied by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. As a side note how often we hear people say when asked about their faith, "Sure, I believe in God" without mentioning God the Son specifically, the One Who is the sinner's Substitute and provision for satisfactory standing in the sight of the Father Who demands perfection.

Dead ([3498](#)) (**nekros** from **nékus** = a corpse; English - necropsy, necrophobia, etc) refers to that which lacks life and spiritually speaks of works that "have no life" for they will not endure the test of God's refining fire. They are works wrought by the flesh not by faith. See word study of **Good Deeds**.

Works ([2041](#)) (**ergon**) gives us our English word "erg," a unit of work or energy, equal to the work done by a force of one dyne when its point of application moves one centimeter in the direction of action of the force. **Friberg** defines **ergon** - (1) generally work; (a) active, anything done or to be done = deed, work, action ([Jn 3.21](#)); (b) passive, anything achieved or made as the product of an action or process = workmanship, deed, accomplishment ([1Cor 3.13](#)); (2) in contrast to rest = work, activity ([Heb 4.3, 4](#)); deed ([1Jn 3.18](#)) in contrast to word (lo,goj); as a corollary or complement to faith, as a practical demonstration or proof of it work(s), deed(s) ([James 2.18](#)); (3) as God's activity in the world work(s), deed(s), act(s) ([Jn 5.20](#)); (4) as human duties and occupations = work, task ([Acts 14.26](#)); (5) in a weakened sense = matter, thing, undertaking ([Acts 5.38](#)) (Borrow [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

Ergon in Hebrews - Heb. 1:10; Heb. 2:7; Heb. 3:9; Heb. 4:3; Heb. 4:4; Heb. 4:10; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 6:10; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 10:24

Faith ([4102](#)) (**pistis**) is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it. **Swindoll** writes that **pistis** "word denotes confidence in the reliability of a person or thing and can describe one's trust in a person's word, a compact or treaty, or a deity (or deities). The term implies both knowledge and action. One may receive knowledge of a certain truth and may even offer verbal agreement, but "trust" or "confidence" is not said to be present until one's behavior reflects that truth."

Pistis in Hebrews (a key word) - Heb. 4:2+; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 6:12; Heb. 10:22; Heb. 10:38; Heb. 10:39; Heb. 11:1; Heb. 11:3; Heb. 11:4; Heb. 11:5; Heb. 11:6; Heb. 11:7; Heb. 11:8; Heb. 11:9; Heb. 11:11; Heb. 11:13; Heb. 11:17; Heb. 11:20; Heb. 11:21; Heb. 11:22; Heb. 11:23; Heb. 11:24; Heb. 11:27; Heb. 11:28; Heb. 11:29; Heb. 11:30; Heb. 11:31; Heb. 11:33; Heb. 11:39; Heb. 12:2; Heb. 13:7

Related Resources:

- [What are some of the signs of genuine saving faith?](#)
- [What is saving grace?](#)
- [Why is faith without works dead?](#)
- [What does it mean to have faith in Jesus?](#)

- [What is the relationship of faith, works, and security in salvation?](#)
- [Where does faith come from?](#)
- [Can a person believe in some sense but not be saved?](#)
- [The faith](#)
- [Obedience of faith.](#)
- [Saving Faith by J.C. Ryle](#)
- [Miscellanies on Faith-- Jonathan Edwards](#)
- [The Spirit Working Faith -- A. W. Pink](#)
- [True Faith -- A. W. Pink](#)

Higher Ground

[\(Play Vocal\)](#)

(I'm Pressing on the Upward Way)
 I'm pressing on the upward way,
 New heights I'm gaining ev'ry day;
 Still praying as I onward bound,
 "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

My heart has no desire to stay
 Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
 Though some may dwell where these abound,
 My pray'r, my aim is higher ground.

I want to live above the world,
 Tho' Satan's darts at me are hurled;
 For faith has caught the joyful sound,
 The song of saints on higher ground.

I want to scale the utmost height,
 And catch a gleam of glory bright;
 But still I'll pray till heav'n I've found,
 "Lord, lead me on to higher ground."

Chorus

Lord, lift me up and let me stand,
 By faith on heaven's tableland,
 A higher plane than I have found;
 Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

QUESTION - [What is repentance from dead works in Hebrews 6:1?](#)

ANSWER - In the [book of Hebrews](#), the author sounds several warnings about false faith and addresses the problem of immaturity among believers who had formerly followed Jewish customs. Although these believers should have been at a higher level of maturity, to the point that they should have been teachers themselves, they were still infants in the faith and were slow to learn (Hebrews 5:11–14). The author of Hebrews urges these believers, "Therefore 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, and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:1–2, ESV). Instead of being focused on the "elementary teachings" of the faith, these believers needed to move on to [spiritual maturity](#).

The "**dead works**" to be repented of are works performed by those who are "separated from the life of God" (Ephesians 4:18). These works may be religious in nature, but they are "**dead**" in that they cannot bring spiritual life. Such works may appear virtuous and even sincerely pious, but they are not rooted in faith in Christ or love of God and so are useless in terms of [salvation](#) and eternal life. Repenting of one's own works is foundational to trusting Christ and is thus called an "elementary doctrine" of Christ (Hebrews 6:1).

In the context of the book of Hebrews, the specific **dead works** to which the author refers are the Levitical rituals that the **professing Jewish Christians** had trusted in before salvation in Christ. Offering sacrifices and performing rituals never saved

anyone, but rather served to make a person ceremonially clean: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (Hebrews 9:13–14ESV). Note the reference to “dead works” in this passage as well—this time clearly linked to the works of the law.

The law pointed to the need for Christ (Galatians 3:24) and served a vital purpose of revealing the presence of sin in people’s lives (Romans 7:7; 1 Timothy 1:8–11). The first-century Jewish followers of Jesus had already turned from their trust in Levitical works to trust in Christ’s death and resurrection. In their pursuit of [spiritual maturity](#) they did not need to keep returning to that basic teaching of the faith. It was time to move on.

The Mosaic Law laid the foundation for the Christian faith, and those who had formerly kept the law needed to move on to embrace the truth of God’s revelation in Christ. If these professing Jewish Christians parked themselves on the **“foundation of repentance from dead works,”** then they would cease maturing in their faith. The **“elementary truths of God’s Word”** they were to move beyond also included **“faith in God, instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment”** (Hebrews 6:1–2). All these teachings were learned under the Old Covenant; it was now incumbent upon the Jewish Christians to move on to the fuller teaching of Christ under the New Covenant. The writer of Hebrews was encouraging these believers to press on in faith in Jesus Christ—the [fulfillment of the law](#)—not to return to the law, which he warns against in Hebrews 6:4–6. The Jewish believers needed to see the law as the foundation it was, to recognize it as a shadow and symbol that pointed to the reality in Christ. Jesus had fulfilled the law and given them something better (Hebrews 8–10). As they [grew in the faith](#), they could partake of the “solid food” available to them (Hebrews 5:12–14).

Just like the Christians in the book of Hebrews, we can become stagnated in the faith and fail to grow. Instead of focusing solely on the basic tenets of the faith, all Christians should seek to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). The first step of faith is to stop trying to please God with dead works, rituals, and hollow forms of religion. Trying to keep the law cannot save anyone (Romans 3:10, 20; Ephesians 2:8–9). Like the first recipients of the book of Hebrews, we should move on to maturity in Christ: “And so, God willing, we will move forward to further understanding” (Hebrews 6:3 NLT). [GotQuestions.org](#)

A W Tozer uses Hebrew 6:1 to launch into a discussion of the **The Deeper Life** (from chapter 5 [Success and the Christian: The Cost and Criteria of Spiritual Maturity - page 64](#) - BORROW THIS BOOK).

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God. (Hebrews 6:1)

By the words “deeper life” I do not mean a life deeper than Scripture indicates. I do not want anything that cannot be found within the framework of the Christian revelation. I do not want anything that is added. That is why I never buy books or listen to lectures on how to wake up your solar plexus and tune into the cosmic processes. All that is extra-scriptural; any of it that is good is in the Word of God and any that is not in the Word of God is not good. So I let those fellows talk to people who don’t know the Word and I stay by the Word.

I am a Bible Christian and if an archangel with a wingspread as broad as a constellation shining like the sun were to come and offer me some new truth, I’d ask him for a reference. If he could not show me where it is found in the Bible, I would bow him out and say, “I’m awfully sorry, you don’t bring any references with you.” So what I’m talking about is not a life deeper than the Scriptures indicate; but merely one that is, in fact, what it professes to be in name.

A Christian is not one who has been baptized, necessarily, though a Christian is likely to be baptized. A Christian is not one who receives Communion, though a Christian may receive Communion, and if he’s been properly taught, he will. But that is not a Christian necessarily. A Christian is not one who has been born into a Christian home, though the chances are more likely that he will be a Christian if he has a good Christian background. A Christian is not one who has memorized the New Testament, or is a great lover of Christian music, or who goes to hear the Apollo Club sing the Messiah every year. A Christian may do all of those things and I think it might be fine if he did; but that doesn’t make one a Christian. A Christian is one who sustains a right relationship to Jesus Christ.

Christians enjoy a kind of union with Jesus Christ. Everybody sustains some relationship to Jesus Christ; just the same as everybody in America sustains some relation to Krushchev [former leader of the Soviet Union]. My personal relation is one of active hostility so far as can be possible within a Christian framework. We can’t hate people, but we can hate everything they stand for, and I want it known that I do. But everybody has a relationship to everybody else, and everybody has a relation to Jesus Christ. The relation he sustains may be one of adoring faith and love; it may be one of admiration; it may be one of hostility; it may be one of complete carelessness; but it is an attitude of some sort. A relationship of some sort exists between every human being and Jesus Christ; that is, every human being that ever heard of Jesus Christ. But a Christian is one who sustains a right and proper relation, a biblical relation, to Jesus Christ.

The Nature of the Relationship

The Christian sustains two kinds of relationship—or rather, the union is of two kinds; it is judicial and vital. I'll explain those two words.

In Romans we have the judicial relationship everybody sustains toward Christ: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1–2). Then in the book of Ephesians, the first chapter, that very oft-quoted passage, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph 1:3–4), and so on.

I quote those not to give exposition, but only to point up the fact that we sustain toward God in Christ a certain judicial relationship, just as you have legal obligations to your children. You can get in trouble with the law if you deny them. The legal system recognizes a relationship between you and your son. It is not only biological, it is judicial—you are accountable before the law not to neglect him, abuse him, starve him or run away and leave him. You've got to look after him; he's your son.

There is a relationship which we sustain toward God in Christ. It is a relationship of children to the Father; we are children of God. Because so many verses deal with that, I don't need to quote any one of them.

Then there is a vital relationship which is another matter altogether. A husband and wife have no children and decide to adopt a boy. Under the law, that boy has exactly the same relationship to that man as if he were his own son. As the legal father before the law, he is responsible to feed and educate and shelter and care for that boy till he comes of a certain age. However, the relationship is judicial, not biological, not vital; the boy did not come from the long, age-old life stream of that father. He came from another life stream and was adopted into the family. So the father has a judicial but not a vital relationship to that son.

But a Christian has a vital relationship to God and to Christ. He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5a). The branch is a branch because it sustains a vital relationship. The life of the vine is in the branch and the life of the branch comes from the vine. The two are united; that is a vital relationship. A Christian is one who has been judicially, legally made a brother of Jesus Christ and a child of God. But he is more than that—he is one who has been united to Jesus Christ by the power and motions of life so that he is vitally related to Him.

That is where we begin and, in most circles, that is where almost everybody ends. Bible schools and Bible conferences and books and printing houses are dedicated to the constant repetition of the fact that we're judicially and vitally related to Christ in salvation. That is as far as we go. There are other relationships which we can also bear toward Christ and that is what the writer meant in Hebrews when he said, "Therefore... let us go on unto perfection" (Hebrews 6:1a).

That is what was meant in First Corinthians chapter 3, when Paul told them that they were carnal and they ought to move on out of that carnal state into a spiritual state. There are at least three other relationships that everybody ought to bear toward Jesus Christ: volitional, intellectual and emotional.

The Volitional Relationship

Our union with Christ is judicial and vital. It is that by virtue of our faith in Christ; but there is a volitional relationship too. What do I mean by that? I mean a relationship of our will to God so that every known will of God should be mine. Everything that God wills, I should will. I should not only be judicially, legally related to Him, not only vitally related to Him in life, but in my mind, in my volitional life, I should be united to Him by doing and knowing and willing exactly as He does. That is what I mean by "Let us go on."

Most Christians do not go on to make all the will of God their will. They sing very tenderly that rather lugubrious and pretty little ditty, "Sweet will of God, still fold me closer." I like that hymn; don't get me wrong. But we can sing that and have moist eyes and yet be selfish and self-willed and not make the will of God our own. The will of God must be known and then be adopted as my will. And then I begin to sustain a relationship of will, a volitional relationship toward Jesus Christ.

How do I know the will of God? By listening to stories told by preachers? I know by prayer, by Bible study and by experience. I go to the Scriptures and I read it regularly. I go to prayer and I ask God for grace to help me to understand it.

The fourth stanza of the hymn, "Break Thou the Bread of Life," says:

Oh, send Thy Spirit, Lord,
Now unto me,
That He may touch my eyes

And make me see;
Show me the truth concealed
Within Thy Word,
And in Thy Book revealed,
I see Thee, Lord.

I believe that hymn writer knew what he was writing about. We must pray that the Lord would give the Holy Spirit as a light upon the Scriptures. If we pray and have the Spirit of God give us illumination and we read the Word of God with avidity and relish and watch our spiritual experiences, there will begin to crystalize within us a will that is God's will. I wonder if that is what Paul meant when He said, "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16b). There is an infinite number of attitudes and relationships within the mind and heart, and these are all wrong to start with. They don't all get corrected when we get converted either. They don't all get corrected after we've been to Bible school. They get corrected only by working on them. By prayer, study, spiritual experience and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, those attitudes begin to become spiritual instead of carnal. They begin to get straightened out.

The Intellectual Relationship

There is a second relationship that we should go on to: an intellectual relationship to Jesus Christ. Of course, there is a sense in which the volitional and the intellectual come as soon as we're converted; but there is another sense in which they wait for development and growth. By the intellectual, I mean that we should think the way Jesus Christ thinks; that we should think scripturally, that we should see things the way the Lord Jesus sees them, that we should learn to feel the way the Lord Jesus feels about anything or anybody, that we should love what He loves and hate what He hates.

The question then arises, does God actually hate anything? Sure He does—He says so. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:9).

It is a psychological impossibility to love anything without hating its opposite. If I love holiness, I hate sin. If I love truth, I hate lies. If I love honesty, I hate dishonesty. If I love purity, I hate filth. Hate is only bad when it is aimed against people made in the image of God or when it springs out of some unworthy or low motive like jealousy or envy or anger. We should learn to hate what Jesus hates. I'm sure that if we had the mind of Christ intellectually, so that we judged things the way He judges them, there would be less need for preaching separation from the world than there is today among Christians.

In my earlier Christian life I read a great deal of the English authors Keats and Milton. Then I got away from Keats; I still admire him very greatly for the marvelous music of his poetry, but there's nothing of God in it, nothing of Christ. So I don't find it very helpful anymore. Milton, of course, is all right. I think we'll read Milton in heaven.

But here's what the critics said about these two men. Keats was an Englishman born of English stock, reared in England, and, I think, never left England, and died when he was in his twenties—an Englishman of Englishmen. But Keats had read Greek literature so much that his mind was not an English mind; it had nothing of the restrictions and strengths and weaknesses of the British mind at all. It was a Greek mind. He thought like the Greeks.

Milton was an Englishman as well, born English of the English. He lived in England all his life—perhaps a few trips abroad, but not many. He lived and died in England and is the second of all the great English poets. Milton read the Bible and memorized it so much and lived in it so much that he was a Hebrew in his heart. Milton had a Bible mind which got into everything he wrote. He could not knock off a common sonnet of fourteen lines but somewhere in it, would be the lilt and rhythm of the Hebrew melodies, Old or New Testament. Of course, I understand the New Testament was written in Greek, but it is Hebrew in its thought pattern.

Here we have two minds, both of them English, living in the same country and eating the same kind of foods and seeing the same scenery and having the same kind of basic education. And yet one of them became a Greek in everything but nationality because he loved Greece so much. The other became Hebrew, or biblical rather than Hebrew, because he loved the Bible so much.

Now that is what I mean. You can have a Christian mind, a biblical mind. You can be Bible-minded in the sense that even though you are an American, you have a New Testament mind. I believe that is what the Holy Spirit wants to do for us. I believe that He wants our intellectual relationship to Jesus Christ to become so close, so intimate, so all-embracing that we'll think as Jesus thought, and love as He loved and hate what He hated and value what He valued and have the mind of Christ in us.

This does not come by believing on Jesus and buying a Scofield Bible and singing choruses. You have to go beyond that, "on unto perfection." Those things are all basically sound and right and good; and I have no objection. Stick by your Scofield Bible. It is good. It did, since the early part of this century, wonderful yeoman service in helping us stand against liberalism and modernism; but it has its limitations. Its limitations consist of an excess of emphasis upon the judicial relationship to Jesus Christ and very little about going on to maturity. But that is the same criticism that I bring against most of evangelicalism today. So I say there's a volitional and an intellectual relationship to Jesus Christ which a Christian should go on to cultivate.

The Emotional Relationship

Then thirdly, there's an emotional relationship—a love attachment to Christ. Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ—really? Now I know we sing that we do. We sing things that aren't very true sometimes. Do you really love Christ?

A half-comical answer was given to Moody one time when he inquired of a man on the street, "Do you love Jesus?" He answered, "I have nothing against Him." I think that is about as far as a lot of people go. We have nothing against Jesus, but can we say we love Him?

Find a young mother with a three-month-old baby—it may be howling with its first little tooth or grinning as it looks up at its parents—and ask her, "Do you love your baby?" You know what will happen—every inch of her face will wrinkle up into a smile. Ask the sick, weary boy sitting in a foxhole somewhere, cold and hungry and tired and weary of life, "Do you love your country?" He won't give you any cynical answer like some of our present politicians. I think he'll break down and say, "O, my God, if I only could go back home."

A missionary was in China for many years. While he was there, children were born to him and his wife. They were sent home and came by way of the West Coast to San Francisco. At every port of call the children would say, "Is this America, Daddy? Is this America?"

"No," he would say, "this is not America."

After three or four such disappointing incidents, the ship came into the harbor of San Francisco, and they saw the Golden Gate Bridge, the shoreline and two peaks with the sun shining down brightly on them. They stood on the deck and looked and the little children said, "Daddy, is this America?"

Suddenly he went all to pieces in a welter of homesickness and patriotism and love and memories and said through his sobs, "Yes, yes, children, this is America."

He didn't know how much he loved his country. He didn't know how dear her rocks and rills, her woods and templed hills had been to his American heart until he'd been shut away from there so long. The first sight of his homeland broke him up and he cried like the child that he was for a moment. Ask that man, "Do you love America?" He'll grin at you sheepishly and tell you that story. Yes, he loves America.

Do you love Jesus—really? It is possible to be a Christian, that is, to have faith in His power, in His work, in His atonement. It is even possible to have a vital relation to Him in the new birth and yet not have cultivated His fellowship to a point where we love Him very much. We're not finished until the love attachment to Christ has become so strong that it burns and glows and consumes.

When I read the writings of the old mystics and the devotional writers and hymn writers of the Middle Ages and later, I get sick in my heart and I tell God, "God, I'm sorry; I apologize and I'm ashamed. I don't love You the way these loved You." Read the letters of Samuel Rutherford. If you haven't, you should. Read those letters and then see how sick it'll make you. You'll fold that book shut and get down on your knees very likely and say, "Lord Jesus, do I love You at all considering that this was love? Then what have I, what have I got?"

There should be an emotional relationship to Jesus Christ, a relationship of love. "Thou hast left thy first love" (Revelation 2:4b) said the Lord Jesus, and maybe that is what it means. You have allowed things to cool you off like the young husband who really loves his bride but he's so busy making a living for her that he neglects her. I wonder if Jesus might not have had something like that in mind—"You are busy for Me, you are dashing here and there in My service, but you've left your first love."

What is this Christian then who has gone on until he sustains toward our Lord a right, a scriptural, a Spirit-inspired volitional and intellectual and emotional attitude toward the Savior? He is one who has been freed from earthly loves and fears.

Freedom from Earthly Loves

What do I mean by earthly love? I mean any love out of the will of God, any love that we would not allow God to take away. If you have anything in this world or anybody in this world that you would not let God take away from you, then you don't love Him as you should and you don't know anything about the deeper life in experience. For the Spirit-filled Christian life means that I am delivered from earthly loves to a point where there is no love that I would not allow Jesus Christ to take away—be it money, reputation, my home, my friends, my family or whatever it may be. The love of Jesus Christ has come in and swallowed up all other loves and sanctified them, purified them, made them holy and put them in their right relationship to that all-consuming love of God so that they're secondary and never primary.

I want to ask you this question: Is there anything or anyone on Earth that you love so much that you'd fight God if He wanted to take

him? Then you are not where you should be and you might as well face up to it and not pretend to be something you're not. Complete freedom means that I want the will of God only. And if it is the will of God for me to have these things, then I love them for His sake, but I love them with a tentative and relative love and not an all-poured-out love that makes me a slave. It means that I love nothing outside the will of God and that I love only what and who He wills that I should love. Then you can love everybody.

I think Paul loved Timothy and Silas and Titus and the rest of them with a love that glowed like a furnace. But he didn't love them to a point where he could not separate from them or where he would fight God for them. He only loved them in the margin of his heart; he loved God at the center. He loved them for God's dear sake. This is Christianity.

Does that mean that you are not to love your baby? No, it means that you are to love God so much that you love your baby in its right context. Does it mean you are not to love your spouse? No, you are to love him. But you are to love him in the right context, in right relationship.

There was a lady, a very intelligent, brilliant woman, and writer of note. She lay beside her baby who was very sick. She was trying to get a little sleep and trying to care for and nurse the baby, too. The little thing had a high fever and was really suffering and she knew it. She watched that little suffering face and after having done everything she could do to assuage its pains and sufferings, she turned away to think it over.

"When I turned away," she said, "I saw the strain and the pain in the flesh on the baby's face and the two bright eyes and I knew that baby was suffering. I turned and said, 'God, I'm through with you. You let my baby suffer like that; I'm through! I can't love a God who'll let my baby suffer!'"

She went on to become a rationalist, an unbeliever. Well, she was a poor fool and she didn't understand. And unless she changed her mind, and I don't think she did, she knows more now than she did then, for that has been a century ago. What happened there? Just this. She loved her baby more than she loved the God who created her. If the God who created her would let her baby run a fever, she would have nothing to do with Him. That kind of love is not love. That is supreme selfishness. It is the extension of her personality, the projection of her personality into that baby and it is sheer pure selfishness.

My own mother-in-law had a baby that died and she went through fire and water and blood and tears and toil, but through it she came to a wonderful spiritual experience. She had to sit up in bed, weak and weary as she was, and make the baby's coffin. Her husband made it out of wood and she made a cloth lining of whatever she could get hold of. When the funeral was held, she stood by the grave with the rest and when everybody was expecting her to break down, she said, "Shall we sing together?" And she led off in the Doxology. Some people went away and said, "Mrs. Pfautz is insane." Others went away with moist eyes and said, "There's a faith and love that can give her newborn to the grave and sing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow' beside that grave."

If you love anything enough that there's any question about whether God can have it or not, you know nothing about the deeper life; you are a slave to that love whatever it is. If we've been freed from every earthly love, then we have no unsatisfied longings and we have no wishes and no dreams. I never use the word "wish," never! Years ago, I quit it; and if it ever breaks out in my speech or preaching, it is only a colloquialism, I never mean it. If God wants me to have something, I'll pray for it. And if He doesn't want me to have it, I don't want it.

Freedom from Earthly Fears

The Christian who goes on gets freed from earthly fears. These two chains bind the whole human race: loves and fears. We love something and can't get it or we love something and we're afraid we're going to lose it. So we're bound with that chain. Or we're afraid we'll get something we don't want; we're afraid we'll lose something we have, we're bound with that chain. Fear and love bind humanity in two golden chains.

And the gospel of Jesus Christ never is finished until it goes on to set us free from loves and fears. We'll love our family more than we ever loved them before. We'll love our country with cheerful devotion. We'll love every good thing there is in the world; but we'll love it in its right context and we'll love it for Jesus' sake. And we'll hold it lightly, so we can let go of it any second for the Lord's sake. That is to be free from earthly loves.

Freedom from earthly fears means that I choose the will of God now and forever; it is my treasure, my whole attitude. The only fear I have is to fear to get out of the will of God. Outside of the will of God, there's nothing I want, and in the will of God there's nothing I fear, for God has sworn to keep me in His will. If I'm out of His will, that is another matter. But if I'm in His will, He's sworn to keep me.

And He's able to do it, He's wise enough to know how to do it and He's kind enough to want to do it. So really there's nothing to fear.

I get kidded by my family and friends about this, but I don't really think I'm afraid of anything. Someone may ask, "What about cancer? Do you ever fear that you'll die of cancer?" Maybe so, but it will have to hurry up, or I'll die of old age first. But I'm not too

badly worried because a man who dies of cancer in the will of God is not injured; he's just dead. You can't harm a man in the will of God.

Socrates, the heathen stoic, could die saying, "No harm can come to a good man in this world or the next." If he could say it, a pagan, why should I tremble and walk softly through this world looking over my shoulder furtively? Rather should I, by the grace of God, say, "Lord, I believe at least as much as a pagan. I believe no harm can come to a good man in this world or the next."

"But I'll lose my job."

Well, you'll lose your job then; you won't lose your head.

"What if I lose my head?"

Well, if you lose your head, you won't lose your Savior. Can't harm a good man. So a good man is free from fear.

I pity the preacher that is afraid of his congregation or afraid of his superiors in his denomination. Maybe I'm a little abnormal on that, but I've never known one single twinge of fear of my superiors; and only rarely do I ever get self-conscious before a congregation. If there's somebody who really is a great preacher present and I know that my poor little sermon will sound rather amateurish by comparison, I feel a little inadequate. But nothing can harm you if you are in the will of God.

If you let the love of God burn within you until it consumes everything, then you will never be a slave to any earthly yearnings—even though you still have them. You'll have earthly yearnings and earthly loves and people you love and care for and would weep to part with; Jesus wept beside the grave of His loved friend, Lazarus. There's no harm in weeping when we must say good-bye.

Our son Wendell said good-bye last evening to fly throughout South America. He was flying out in a blizzard; I didn't like it too well, but he was breezy. He tried to pretend he didn't care. You can have your own personal loving feelings, but you are not a slave to them. You are boss of them. And you can have your dislikes; I'd run a mile to keep from having a needle put in my arm.

Once when I was ill, a heart specialist came to my house—somebody sent for him, I don't know who. He came upstairs to my room and sat down beside my bed. And when he came in, he had this huge rocket in his hand with a long sucker affair; and I saw it. And, brother, did I argue him down.

He said, "Now, I'll give you this and you'll sleep and you'll be all right. It's just a sedative."

I said, "You won't give me that."

And he said, "Well, if you are going to make so much of it, probably you'd be worse off if you took it." So he said good-bye and left. And I got better.

So I don't say that the deeper life—the Spirit-filled life—means that you won't be normal. If lightning strikes near you, you'll jump. And if somebody comes at you with a needle, you'll shrink—you are human. But that is one thing; it is quite another thing to walk around chained by human fears—chained by the fear of death or the fear of sickness or the fear of poverty or the fear of friends or the fear of enemies. God never means that His children should thus be afraid.

All that I've preached to you now is not a dream. It is not a misty ideal that nobody can reach. It is the normal Christian life. Anything short of it is abnormal or subnormal. Shall we not obey God and go on to maturity? May God grant that together we may press on out into the deep waters, "that could not be passed over" (Ezekiel 47:5).

Hebrews 6:2 of [instruction](#) about [washings](#) and [laying](#) on of [hands](#), and the [resurrection](#) of the [dead](#) and [eternal judgment](#). (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [baptismon didache](#), [epitheseos te cheiron](#), [anastaseos te nekron](#), [kai krimatos aioniou](#).

Amplified: With teachings about purifying, the laying on of hands, the resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgment and punishment. [These are all matters of which you should have been fully aware long, long ago.] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: and giving information about washings, about the laying on of hands, about the resurrection from the dead and upon that sentence which lasts to all eternity. ([Westminster Press](#))

NLT: You don't need further instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: - baptism and laying-on of hands, belief in the life to come and the final judgment. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: of the teaching of ablutions, and of imposition of hands, of a resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment [doctrines of the Mosaic economy].

Young's Literal: of the teaching of baptisms, of laying on also of hands, of rising again also of the dead, and of judgment age-during,

- Heb 9:10; Mk 7:4,8; Lk 11:38; Mt 3:14; Mt 20:22,23; Mt 28:19; Mk 16:16; Lk 3:16; 12:50; Jn 1:33; 3:25,26; Jn 4:1,2; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12,13,16,36-38; Acts 10:47; 16:15,33; Acts 19:2-5; Ro 6:3,4; 1 Cor 1:12-17; 10:2; 12:13; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 3:20,21
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

MORE BASICS THAT NEEDED TO BE LAID ASIDE

The **KJV** renders it as "**doctrine of baptisms**". However notice that the Greek word (see below) **baptizo**.

Instruction about washings (see "various washing" in note) - There is disagreement as to what this means - some favor the OT ceremonial washings, especially given that the word washings is plural. Others feel this refers to Christian baptism.

Hebrews 9:10+ refers to various washings writing "since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

There were a number of ritual washings:

- [Washing](#)
- [Washing The Hands And Feet](#).

Instruction (1322) (**didache** from **didasko** = to give instruction in a formal or informal setting with the highest possible development of the pupil as the goal; English = didactic = intended to teach, particularly in having moral instruction as an ulterior motive) is a noun which describes the activity of teaching (instruction).

Washings (909) (**baptismos** from **baptizo** = baptize) refers to dipping, ceremonial washing. It was used to refer to the washing of one's body or part of it as in a religious rite. It was used to refer to ceremonial washing. It usually referred to purification ceremonies other than Christian baptism and the fact that it is plural (which would be unusual for baptism - see note below) favors the translation as washings as in **Hebrews 9:10** (note). Furthermore, the usual word for baptism (**baptisma**) is not used here.

There is only one baptism in the authority and name of Christ and it does not need to be repeated if it is properly performed upon a genuine believer. However, even this baptism is only the beginning of the Christian journey and one must still press on toward maturity in Christ.

There are 4 uses of **baptismos** in the NT...

Mark 7:4+ and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the **washing** of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) (Clearly refers to ritual or ceremonial washing)

Colossians 2:12 (note) having been buried with Him in **baptism**, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (**Comment:** Although some commentators explain this as water baptism, it would be better explained as spiritual baptism into Christ when one's heart is circumcised by the Spirit at the time of salvation by grace through faith. In either case, baptismos in this verse does not refer to ritual or ceremonial washings as in all of the other NT uses. This usage therefore does leave open the possibility that the writer was using baptismos to refer to baptisms in the plural [see Ryrie's comment below] and not to ritual or ceremonial washings.)

Hebrews 6:2 (note) of instruction about **washings**, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

Hebrews 9:10 (note) since they relate only to food and drink and various **washings**, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation.

In the first century, it was common practice for Jews to place a basin by the entrance which all who entered could use to carry out

ceremonial cleansings. It is these ritualistic washings that the Jewish readers are told to abandon. In the OT God speaking through His prophet Ezekiel predicted that one day Israel's ceremonial cleansings would be replaced by **spiritual washing** associated with entrance by grace through faith into the **New Covenant**...

For I will take you (Israel) from the nations, gather you from all the lands, and bring you into your own land (at the end of the **Great Tribulation** and the beginning of the **Millennium**) Then (in the context of entrance by faith into the New Covenant in Christ's blood God says) I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. (Ezekiel 36:24-25+)

Ryrie however disagrees with the interpretation of **baptismos** as **washings** and feels that **baptismos** does refer to **baptisms** writing...The distinction between various baptisms is a necessary part of basic Christian doctrine (e.g., the baptism of Jewish proselytes, baptism by John the Baptist, Christian baptism). ([The Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard Translation: 1995. Moody Publishers](#)) (I disagree with this interpretation as 2 of the other 3 NT uses of baptismos clearly favor the main meaning as washings, but as stated earlier the use in Colossians 2:12 [see note] does leave open the possibility of baptisms)

J Vernon McGee on the other hand writes that..."Doctrine of baptisms [washings]" has nothing to do with New Testament baptism. They refer to the washings of the Old Testament ritual, and there were many of them. The Hebrew believers were wanting to return to these things which were only shadows; they were the negatives from which the spiritual pictures were developed. They prefigured Christ, the reality. ([Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

There were Jewish proselyte baptisms, Levitical washings for religious ceremonies, and numerous ritual baptisms in the mystery religions being practiced at that time. The teaching is that we must get beyond the elementary and be borne along toward maturity, ultimately the baptism into Christ's death, burial and resurrection (Ro 6:3+, Ro 6:4+).

All the "washings" in the world will not suffice IF we do not grow toward maturity in Christ. As an aside, in the same way all the Bible studies in the world mean nothing to maturity unless we obey what we learn. Biblical Truth brings accountability and demands a response.

AND LAYING ON OF HANDS: *epitheseos te cheiron*:

- **Laying on** - Acts 6:6; Acts 8:14-18; Acts 13:3; Acts 19:6
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Laying on (1936) (**epithesis** from **epitithemi** = to put, to lay on, used frequently in Septuagint for laying one's hands on the substitutionary sacrifice) means literally a placing or laying upon.

Laying on of hands was seen in both the Old and the New Testament records. From the **Old Testament** records the practice of laying on of hands was well known to the Jews. For example it was associated with commissioning for public office

So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and **lay your hand on** him... 23 Then he **laid his hands on** him and commissioned him, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses. (Nu 27:18, 23)

Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses **had laid his hands on him**; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. (Dt 34:9)

Under the **Old Covenant**, the person who brought a sacrifice placed his hands on it to symbolize his identification with it as a substitute sacrifice for sin

And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. (Lev 1:4)

'If he is going to offer a lamb for his offering, then he shall offer it before the LORD, and he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and slay it before the tent of meeting; and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle its blood around on the altar. (Lev 3:7-8)

(On the Jewish Day of Atonement that occurred once each year) Then Aaron (the Levitical High Priest) **shall lay both of his hands** on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins; and he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who stands in readiness. (Lev 16:21)

J Vernon McGee writes that **laying on of hands** was...an Old Testament ritual. When a man brought an animal offering, he laid his hands on its head to signify his identification with it. The animal was taking his place on the altar of sacrifice. ([McGee, J V: Thru the Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson](#))

The context does not seem to refer to the practice of some of the apostles in laying hands on various individuals in the New Testament (cf Acts 5:18; 6:6; 8:17; 1Ti 4:14; etc.)

Our identification with Jesus Christ comes by the Spirit's baptizing us into union with Him by faith. "Forget the teaching about laying hands on the Temple sacrifices," the writer is telling these immature Jews. "Lay hold of Christ by putting your trust in Him."

Related Resource:

- [Laying on of hands - what does the Bible say?](#)

AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD: anastaseos te nekron:

- Heb 11:35; Isa 26:19; Ezek 37:1-14; Da 12:2; Mt 22:23-32; Lk 14:14; Jn 5:29; 11:24,25; Acts 4:2; Acts 17:18,31,32; Acts 23:6; Acts 24:15,21; 26:8; Ro 6:5; 1 Cor 15:13-57; Phil 3:21; 1Th 4:14-18; 2Ti 2:18
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And the resurrection of the dead - This last pair of ABC's (**resurrection** and **eternal judgment**) are in a sense eschatological teachings or teachings that speak of last things or future events. The KJV Bible Commentary has an interesting note regarding study of prophetic things...

Eschatology is included here among the first truths, not as part of the deeper truths. The mere study of last things does not demonstrate spiritual maturity. The practical changes which these eschatological truths produce within our lives are what manifest maturity. ([KJV Bible Commentary](#) - online)

Resurrection (386) (**anastasis** from **ana** = up, again + **histemi** = to cause to stand) literally means "to stand again" or "to cause to stand again" and most NT uses refer to a physical body rising from the dead or coming back to life after having once died. The **resurrection** is distinguished from belief in reincarnation, which usually involves a series of rebirths from which the soul may seek release. **Resurrection** has primary reference to the body. The resurrection is the central, defining doctrine and claim of the gospel for as Paul wrote "if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain." (1 Cor 15:14+)

Speaking to Martha on the occasion of the death of her brother Lazarus, Jesus in His fifth great "I Am" statement declared "I am the **resurrection** and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies." (Jn 11:25+) Martha had just declared her belief in the resurrection (implying that she believed the OT Scriptures) stating "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." (Jn 11:24+)

Resurrection of the dead - This is mentioned in at least three OT Scriptures (see below) but in general the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is neither clear or complete in the OT. We learn of life after death and of rewards for the good and punishment for the wicked but not much more until we come to the NT teachings, especially those of Paul.

The Greek word for resurrection, **anastasis**, is used four times in the Septuagint (LXX), but none of these uses (Ps 66:1, Lam 3:63, Da 11:20, Zeph 3:8) clearly describes the resurrection per se.

Nevertheless, we know that the OT saints knew something of the reality of the resurrection for the writer of Hebrews tells us that Abraham believed in the **resurrection**, writing that

He considered that God is able **to raise men even from the dead**; from which he also received him (Isaac in Genesis 22) back as a type. (Heb 11:19+)

Hebrews 11 also records that...

Women received back their dead by **resurrection**; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection (Heb 11:35+)

Isaiah records that

Your dead will live; their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, for your dew is as the dew of the dawn, and the earth will give birth to the departed spirits. (Isaiah 26:19)

Job declared

as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, Yet from my flesh I shall see God. (Job 19:25-26)

In Daniel we read that

many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. (Da 12:2+)

Thus Daniel gives us a preview of two distinct resurrections which are explained in more detail in the New Testament references above.

In Jesus' day, the resurrection from the dead was an important belief of the Pharisees, as **Paul** explained in Acts declaring to Jewish Council...

perceiving that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!" (Acts 23:6+)

Paul emphasized the importance of the resurrection asserting that the resurrection of Christ was the central truth of the gospel message explaining that

if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. (1 Cor 15:14+)

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the **first fruits** of those who are asleep. (1Cor 15:20+)

Christ's resurrection is the first of the harvest to eternal life and guarantees that all of the saints who have died will be resurrected also. Thus an understanding of this resurrection of Christ and the subsequent resurrection of believers would change the whole aspect of the doctrine of resurrection as understood by these Jewish converts and professors.

AND ETERNAL JUDGMENT: kai krimatos aioniou:

- **Eternal judgment** - Eccl 12:14; Mt 25:31-46; Acts 17:31; 24:25; Ro 2:5-10,16; 2Cor 5:10; 2 Pet 3:7; Jude 1:14,15; Rev 20:10-15
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And eternal judgment - **Eternal judgment** of the OT contrasts to **no condemnation for the believer in Christ** of the new (see **note** Romans 8:1). And thus the Hebrews readers are exhorted not to return to Old Testament teaching, but to go on to faith in the NT Sacrifice. Clearly taught in the OT

Spurgeon on **eternal judgment** - Let us take these things for granted, and never dispute about them anymore, but go on to still higher matters.

Eternal (166) (**aionios** from **aion** = age) means perpetual, eternal, everlasting, without beginning or end, that which always is.

Judgment (2917) (**krima** from **krino** = to judge; suffix **-ma** indicates result of judging) denotes the result of the action signified by verb **krino** and thus is a judicial sentence from the magistrate. It is the sentence pronounced, the verdict, the act of judging.

We can learn little more from the OT about final judgment than what is given by **Solomon** who wrote...

The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. (Eccl 12:14)

Related Resource:

- Eternal Punishment

Judgment

The General

1Chr. 16:33; Job 14:17; Job 21:30; Job 31:13-15; Psa. 9:7; Psa. 50:3-6; Psa. 96:13 Psa. 98:9. Eccl. 3:17; Eccl. 11:9; Eccl. 12:14; Ezek. 18:20-28; Dan. 7:9, 10; Amos 4:12; Matt. 3:12 Luke 3:17. Matt. 7:22, 23; Matt. 8:29 With 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6. Matt. 11:22 Matt. 10:15. Matt. 12:36, 37, 41, 42 Luke 11:31, 32. Matt. 13:30, 40-43, 49, 50; Matt. 16:27 Mark 8:38. Matt. 22:13, 11-13.; Matt. 23:14; Matt. 25:1-14 [Luke 19:12-26.] Matt. 25:15-46; Mark 4:22; Mark 13:32; Luke 10:10-14; Luke 12:2-5; Luke 13:24-29; Luke 20:45-47; John 5:22; John 12:48; Acts 2:19-21; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; Acts 24:25; Rom. 2:5-10, 12-16; Rom. 14:10-12; 1Cor. 3:13; 1Cor. 4:5; 1Cor. 6:2; 2Cor. 5:10; 2Thess. 1:7, 8; 2Tim. 4:1, 8; Heb. 6:2; Heb. 9:27; Heb. 10:27; 1Pet. 4:5, 7; 2Pet. 2:4, 9; 2Pet. 3:7, 10-12; 1John 4:17; Jude 6, 14, 15, 24; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 6:15-17; Rev. 11:18; Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 22:12

According to Opportunity and Works

Gen. 4:7; Job 34:11; Prov. 11:31; Prov. 12:14; Prov. 24:11, 12 Psa. 62:12; 2 Tim. 4:14. Isaiah 3:10, 11; Isaiah 5:15, 16; Isaiah 24:2; Isaiah 59:18; Jer. 17:10, 11; Jer. 32:19; Ezek. 7:3, 4, 27; Ezek. 9:4-6; Ezek. 16:59; Ezek. 18:4, 5-9, Ezek. 18:19-32; Ezek. 33:18-20; Ezek. 39:24; Hos. 4:9 Hos. 12:2. Amos 3:2; Zech. 1:6; Matt. 10:14, 15 Matt. 11:24; Mark 6:11; Luke 9:5; 10:12-15. Matt. 12:37; Matt. 23:14 Luke 20:47. Mark 14:21; Luke 11:49, 50, 51.; Luke 12:47, 48

See parable of the vineyard, Isaiah 5:1-6

Of the farmer,

Isaiah 28:24-28.

Of the wicked tenant farmers,

Matt. 21:33-36.

Of the talents,

Matt. 25:14-30.] Luke 13:6-9; Luke 19:12-27; Luke 21:1-4; John 3:19, 20; John 5:45; John 9:41; John 12:48; John 15:22, 24; Rom. 2:5-12, 27; 1 Cor. 3:8, 13-15 v. 12.; 1Cor. 4:5; 2Cor. 2:15, 16; 2Cor. 11:15; Gal. 6:5-10; Eph. 6:7, 8; Col. 3:25; 1 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 2:2, 3; Heb. 10:26-30; Heb. 12:25; Jas. 2:12, 13; 1Pet. 1:17; 2Pet. 2:20, 21; Rev. 2:23; Rev. 20:12, 13

See: [God, Judge; Jesus, the Christ, Judge; Punishment, According to Deeds](#)

Hebrews 6:3 And **this** we will **do, if God permits.** (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [kai touto poiesomen](#) (1PFAI) [eanper epitrepe](#) (3SPAS) [o theos](#)

Amplified: If indeed God permits, we will [now] proceed [to advanced teaching]. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: God willing, this very thing we will do. ([Westminster Press](#))

NLT: And so, God willing, we will move forward to further understanding. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: - No, if God allows, let us go on. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: And this will we do if only God permits,

Young's Literal: and this we will do, if God may permit,

- **And this we will do** - Acts 18:21; Romans 15:32; 1Corinthians 4:19; 16:7; James 4:15
- [Hebrews 6 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**GOD WILLING
LET'S GO ON**

And this we will do - Do what? Press on to maturity. **Amplified** = "to advanced teaching." **NLT** = "to further understanding." The writer now begins to warn his readers in an attempt to move them on to maturity in order that they might receive and understand the difficult doctrine which they are about to hear about the priesthood of Melchizedek and its relationship to the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Spurgeon - We must keep on going forward; there is no such thing in the Christian life as standing still, and we dare not turn back (See discussion of progressive sanctification). If this happens on a bicycle one will take a fall (I have fallen more times when I had slowed down, stopped pedaling and lost inertia and the falls almost always leave some significant cuts and bruises.)

If God permits ([epitrepo](#)) - if indeed: 3rd class condition; conditional particle, represents something as under certain circumstances actual or liable to happen.

Ray Stedman explains **if God permits** ([epitrepo](#)) writing that...

This foundation and accompanying instruction could, if appropriated by faith, bring a Jew to new life in Christ. This would not be difficult to accept since it was based upon truth already taught in the Law and the Prophets. But though some among these Hebrews knew these truths intellectually, they gave little indication in their behavior that they had combined them with personal faith (Heb 4:2+). The combination of the word about Christ with individual faith should have produced a Spirit-born vitality and enthusiasm which would make it delightfully easy to instruct them in the wonders of the Melchizedek priesthood. But since this élan (vigorous spirit, energy or enthusiasm) is so visibly absent the writer must warn them that something is seriously lacking. It is dangerous to stay forever on the foundation; in fact, it is impossible. If they are not willing or able to move on to more mature understanding, they are in grave peril of losing what they already have, and that irretrievably! Growth in truth is something all Christians (note the pronoun **we** in Heb 4:3) must do, God permitting. Surely God would **permit** all of us to go on to maturity in the Christian life whenever we wished to do so! Or would he? This is the very question raised by the words God permitting. It seems to parallel the quotation in Hebrews 3:11 (note), "So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'" The unbelieving Israelites in the desert wanted to enter into Canaan, and, presumably, into the spiritual rest which Canaan symbolized. But they could not, for God would not **permit** it! Hence they must continue to wander in the wilderness till all were dead. Far from being a polite cliché or pious wish, these words **God permitting** form the fulcrum on which the warning of Hebrews 6:4-8 turns. ([Hebrews 6:1-3 Leave These Elementary Teachings](#)) (bolding added)

Vincent explains that...An ominous hint is conveyed that the spiritual dullness of the readers may prevent the writer from developing his theme, and them from receiving his higher instruction. The issue is dependent on the power which God may impart to His teaching, but His efforts may be thwarted by the impossibility of repentance on their part. No such impossibility is imposed by God, but it may reside in a moral condition which precludes the efficient action of the agencies which work for repentance, so that God cannot permit the desired consequence to follow the word of teaching." All of which goes to say that while there is such a thing as the sovereign grace of God, yet there is also such a thing as the free will of man. God never in the case of salvation violates man's free will. The choice must be made by these Hebrews between going back to the sacrifices or on to faith in Christ as High Priest. But their spiritual declension if persisted in, would result in their putting themselves beyond the reach of the Holy Spirit. This is implied in Heb 3:7, 8 where they are warned that if they desire to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, they should not harden their hearts, the implication being clear that they could harden their hearts to the extent that they would have no more desire to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. This shows that the "impossibility" of 6:4,5,6 resides in the condition of their hearts, not in the grace of God

Permits (gives permission)(2010)([epitrepo](#) from **epi** = upon + **trepo** = to turn) means to turn to, entrust, hence to permit. To allow the doing of (something); to consent to. In Mark 5:13, John 19:38, and Acts 21:39 it carries the sense of release from restraint in order to have freedom of choice. For example, in Mark 5:13 Legion gained freedom from being sent away, and instead was permitted to enter a herd of swine (see Mark 5:8-13).