

The Pursuit of God's Presence

Tabernacle Series #1

May 24, 2020

Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb 10:19-22)

Pressing on to maturity

Heb 6:1-2 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, 2 of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

“to press on” = (figuratively ‘to move from one place to another’) to change from one state to another, with the implication of progressive development - ‘to change to, to move on to, to progress.’ (from The Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament)

“maturity” = teleiōtēs; perfect, one who reaches a goal. Perfection or perfectness, stressing the realization of an end in view, the state achieved when a goal has been accomplished (Col 3:14; Heb 6:1).

Synonyms: katartismós, the condition or characteristic of perfection; plērōma, a filling up, fulfillment, fullness, that which fills or has been filled; apartismós, completion, finishing; ékbasis, the end, result; holoklēría, integrity, physical wholeness, perfection, soundness.

Antonyms: hustérēsis, a falling short. (from The Complete New Testament Word Study Dictionary)

Growth and maturity implies movement

Heb 5:13-14 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Faith in Christ is more than just being saved, it is not a static condition of no movement where we remain the same throughout life. It is a process of change, a way of life. It implies growth and development.

2Pt 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Jn 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

2Cor 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Ps 84:7 They go from strength to strength, Every one of them appears before God in Zion.

Prov 4:18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.

Justification (our legal standing) - we are justified by grace through the work of Jesus (Rom 4:25; 5:9, 16, 18)

We have righteousness as a gift (Rom 5:17; 6:23). But righteousness is not a place it is a path. It implies movement or progress towards maturity (Heb 5:13-14).

Four warnings about not maturing in Christ in Hebrews

1. Neglect God's Word

Heb 2:1-4 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

"Neglect" - to not think about, and thus not respond appropriately to - 'to neglect, to disregard, to pay no attention to.' (Mt 22:5; 1 Tm 4:14)

2. Not entering the rest of God because of hardness of heart through unbelief

Heb 4:1-3 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. 3 For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. (see Heb 3:7 - 4:16).

We are called to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. Failure to hear his voice leads to a hardened heart, resulting in no longer being able to hear his voice.

3. Not growing, unable to hear the word of righteousness

Heb 6:4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. 7 For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; 8 but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. (see Heb 5:11-6:8)

The ground = our hearts and lives

The rain = Word of God through Holy Spirit

Vegetation = fruitfulness

Thorns and thistles = weeds of sin and failure

4. Willful sin / willful disobedience

Heb 10:26-29 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? (Heb 10:38-39)

God expects more from man under grace than He did when man were under law.

Heb 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

The Tabernacle - the way to intimacy with God (Heb 8:2-5; 9:2-21; 10:19-22; Ex 25-40)

Jn 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

dwelt = to dwell as tents, to tabernacle (Rev 7:15; 12:12; 13:6);

Derivatives: episkēnōō, to abide; kataskēnōō, to dwell, to camp down, lodge, remain; skēnōma, literally an encampment, the temple as God's residence, the body as the dwelling place of the soul, tabernacle, tent.

Synonyms: oikēō, to dwell; ménō, to abide, remain.

Antonyms: apodēmēō (589), to go into a far country; analúō, to depart.

Heb 8:1-6 Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer. 4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; 5 who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN." 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

copy

1) an example of behavior used for purposes of moral instruction, example, model, pattern (Heb 4:11; Jn 13:15; Jas 5:10; 2Pt 2:6)

2) an indication of something; an outline, a sketch, a symbol (Heb 8:5; 9:23)

shadow = a faint archetype which foreshadows a later reality

Col 2:16-17 Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day 17 things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (Heb 8:5; 10:1)

pattern = a visual form designed to be imitated or copied; a model, a pattern (Ac 7:44)

The structure of the Tabernacle had three different parts;

The outer court – only Jews could enter

The holy place – only priests could enter

The holy of holies – only the high priest could enter once a year

The tabernacle was the place of God's presence (Ex 25:8; 33:9-10; 40:34-35)

The veil in the temple that separated the holy place from the holy of holies was torn in two, from top to bottom when Jesus died (Mt 27:51; Mk 15:38).

God has given us access (Eph 2:18; 3:12) to draw nearer to God (Jas 4:8).

The Tabernacle gave us a pattern but could not give access into the holy of holies because it was not yet opened under the Mosaic covenant (Heb 9:23-24).

LET US DRAW NEAR

Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Heb 7:25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

References Used:

The Complete Word Study Dictionary
Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament
Willmington's Book of Bible lists