

Training for Maturity
Hebrews 5:11-14

“Here the writer of Hebrews deals with the difficulties which confront him in attempting to get across an adequate conception of Christianity to his hearers.

He is confronted with two difficulties. First, the full orb of the Cristian faith is by no means an easy thing to grasp nor can it be learned in a day. Second, the hearing of his hearers is dull. The word he uses (nōthrós) is full of meaning. It means slow-moving in mind, torpid [sluggish] in understanding, dull of hearing, witlessly forgetful. It can be used of the numbed limbs of an animal which is ill. It can be used of a person who has the imperceptive nature of a stone. Now this has something to say to everyone whose business it is to preach and teach; in fact, it has something to say to everyone whose is a real person.” Barclay

- I. The churches are being tested to see where they stand in their commitment to the righteousness of Christ. The testing involves whether we hold to a biblical worldview, whether our lives are truly committed to living holy and godly lives and whether we are on our guard against buying into the ever-shifting godless standard of the world. The battle we are in is never to be taken lightly. If it is taken lightly, then the church puts itself in danger of following deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. There is no middle ground. Either we follow Jesus with full commitment to his Lordship over us, or we are not truly following him at all.

Heb. 5:11

Rev. 2:7

Rev. 3:7-8, 10-11

Rev. 2:8-10

Luke 8:14

Isa. 63:1-6

νωθρός nōthrós, no-thros'; *sluggish, i.e. (literally) lazy, or (figuratively) stupid:—dull, slothful. Strong's*

1 Timothy 4:1-2 *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.*

- II. Becoming acquainted with the teachings about righteousness is a choice we consciously make. It is not a subconscious determination, but a choice as to whether we want to truly put the Word of God into practice in our lives. It is likened to either staying in spiritual infancy or moving on to maturity in Christ. Those who remain spiritual infants don't like taking responsibility for the redemption, reconciliation, righteousness, and salvation given through the sacrifice of Christ. They enjoy the free ride of grace with little regard to its cost, which is seen in how they live their lives. Sadly, those who think this way will be held accountable at the judgement seat of Christ.

Heb. 5:12-13

1 Peter 2:2

1Cor. 3:1-2

1 Kings 18:21 *Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.*

- III. The wisdom that is gained when we choose to acquaint ourselves with the teachings about righteousness is the ability to distinguish good from evil. It implies that believers who don't, lose their ability to clarify what is good and what is evil. It is a danger we all face if we are not careful. Therefore, we must stay in the training process of putting the Word of God into practice on a consistent basis so that we can become progressively more mature in the faith. It takes work, but we who are among the mature know that *his divine power has given us everything we need for life godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness (2 Peter 1:3).*

Heb. 5:14

1 Cor. 9:24-27

Eph. 6:14 *Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place.*