

God's hands are tied if we remain babes in faith

Lesson Scripture: Hebrews 5:11-6:12

Lesson aims: to recognize the need for spiritual growth, to understand that this process is ongoing, and to commit to spiritual growth.

Background: Expounding on Jesus being the High Priest in 5:1-10, the writer abruptly halted his discourse and began to rebuke them for their lack of growth. Several terms come up in this lesson that need some clarification. Perfection here means maturity, not living a sinless life. The other term, apostasy, deserves a little more than one sentence. UMI Direction says that it refers to the defection from or revolt against God. The Scriptures use the phrase "falling away." Hebrews mentions this concept in 2:1; 3:12; 6:4,6; 10:26,29,39; and 12:25. Each reference needs to be studied within its own context, but their common strand suggests a warning against "falling away."

There are at least three views on the matter. The first interpretation says that some profess Christ but don't possess Him. In other words, they show their beliefs by giving lip service and works without a change from



Mildred Peppers
Sunday School Lesson

within. These people are lost! It is impossible to fool God. The second view implies a "reprobate" mind. This means that one accepts Him and then chooses to reject Him. These people are considered evil. The third position is somewhat similar to the first. Proponents here believe that ultimately if one "falls away," he or she loses the rewards of God's eternal rest.

Think back to the Jews that didn't make it to the Promised Land. In other words, believers must grow in the faith or lose out on the fullness of the promise.

Lesson: The readers are admonished for not growing.

They've been in the number for some time yet they haven't made any progress. Probably second-generation believers, the writer feels that they should be teaching by now but instead they remain at the elementary stage of growth. He desires to speak of weighty matters but can't due to their immaturity. They must go beyond the rudimentary doctrines listed in the text.

Grouped in three pairs (Bible Expositor and Illuminator), they represent repentance and faith (don't rely on legalism). The second pair centers on rituals. There must be a change within a person. The final pair centers on their faith in the general resurrection and the final

judgment. He calls for them to become mature (perfection) in their faith. This maturation process is ongoing and requires faith and patience. Their strength to accomplish this comes by the grace of God (II Peter 3:17,18).

They are presented with a practical illustration. God waters the whole earth, yet some lands are fruitful while others produce thorns and briars good for burning only. This means that people can decide for themselves. Their fruits will bear witness to their decisions. His tone changes and the writer begins to encourage them by stating that God will not forget their good works (done for the right reasons). He urges them to mature for a greater witness for the High Priest and God and to inherit the promise of rest.

Application: For nine months anticipation runs high. Is it a girl or boy? Who will the baby look like? How will it act? In the fullness of time, the blessed event comes to fruition. Baby gets what that delicate system can handle. Twenty years later, this child is still on milk! Something is wrong. In my imagination, I see God disappointed in our lack of spiritual

maturity as these parents are.

A large number of us haven't grown beyond the basic doctrine of the faith. We are stuck on the material things of this world. Have we stopped to ask ourselves can we take them to glory? Like babies at first, we were fed on the simple things (Bible stories, recitations, and children's songs). As time goes by we should progress to the heavy stuff (meat). God has great things in store for us, but His hands are tied if we choose to remain babes. Yet, at the point of acceptance we are saved, but

there is so much more! Are you satisfied with a piece of candy? Why not the jar? If each day is to get sweeter than the day before, how can this happen if maturity is stagnant? How can we help others if we remain on a milk diet? Spiritual maturity is the desired goal or it should be. God wants us to experience all of His power and majesty. How can we if we don't grow up? Become all that God wants you to be!

I need your feedback - mpeppers@hotmail.com

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 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
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Tabernacle of Faith Church will hold Youth Empowerment Conference

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Youth Council of Tabernacle of Faith Church will have a Youth Empowerment Conference July 7-11. There will be a pre-conference Praise Festival July 6 beginning at 7:30 p.m. Several youth choirs, step teams, dancers and gospel artists are scheduled to offer praise and worship to God during the preconference celebration.

Tuesday through Friday services will begin at 7:30 p.m. Youth Pastor Rondy Long Jr., Temple International Fellowship, Charlotte, will speak on Wednesday night to officially open the conference. He has more than 19 years of experienced in the ministry and has written three books, "Waiting, Dating and Mating"; "The S.A.T.: Are You Really Saved?"; and "Where Are They Now?"

Pastor M. Lamont Cooper Sr. will speak Thursday evening. He serves as the founder and executive director of Rapture Ready Ministries Inc. and pastor of the Millennium Revival Center COGIC. He is also the founder and executive director of the Visions Institute of Youth under the umbrella of the Raleigh Wake Leadership Foundation. He is the former youth pastor of Youth Room COGIC, one of Raleigh's leading ministries.

Rev. Herbert C. Crump Jr. is the pastor and founder of Freedom Temple Ministries Inc. in Rock Hill, S.C. As a result of a devastating fire that totally destroyed their recently purchased worship facility, God is

using Crump to lead Freedom Temple through the process of erecting a new 1,200-seat worship facility.

Crump participates extensively in community activities. For example, in an attempt to offer a solution to many of the socioeconomic ills within the community, he established Saving Our Seed Inc., a 501-C3, nonprofit organization that encompasses a mental health counseling center, GED program, food bank, Saving Our Seed Summer Academy and Freedom Academy. Saving Our Seed also serves as the resource center for the Job Corps program, serving the upper region of South Carolina through the Department of Labor and the Freedom Economic Development Division (FEDD). The resource center supports existing minority businesses and encourages future entrepreneurs.

Pastor Albert Haskins and "Power N' Da Houz" Ministries out of Glory Center Ministries in High Point will facilitate children's church on Thursday and Friday evenings for ages 2-9. Haskins and his team evangelize select neighborhoods in the High Point community.

Elder Phillip McCloud Sr. will close the conference on Sunday at 11 a.m. In addition to his duties as the co-pastor, Tabernacle of Faith Church, McCloud serves as the youth pastor.

In addition to this spiritual agenda, the Youth Council of T.O.F. Church has not neglected to include activities for fun. On Thursday after service there will

be a Gospel Apollo Show. Those who wish to participate may sign up at any of the services before the Apollo Show. There will be a winning prize in addition to door prizes, games, food and fun. Friday, a midnight skate party will take place at Skate Haven, USA in Winston-Salem until midnight. Tickets are free to Conference Covenant Partners only. All others must purchase tickets at the church for \$10 each. No tickets will be sold at the door of Skate Haven.

On Saturday beginning at 11 a.m., there will be a Youth Olympics and Field Events competition between local youth groups. All church youth groups are invited to register for this "Exercise your faith on the field" fun day. Events will take place at High Point City Lake Park on High Point Road in High Point.

Covenant Partner packages are as follows:

- Ages 10 and up - a covenant seed of \$50 or more (includes midnight skate party ticket, seating preference, a conference T-shirt and conference gifts).
- Ages 10 and up - a covenant seed of \$25 or more (includes seating preference, a conference T-shirt and conference gifts).
- Ages 9 and under - a covenant seed of \$15 or more (includes an option between a ticket to the midnight skate party or a T-shirt, two carnival tickets and conference gifts).
- Daily covenant seed of \$10.
- For groups of five or more - a covenant seed of \$20 per person (includes midnight skate party

ticket, seating preference, a conference T-shirt and conference gifts).

For more information, call:
 • 777-1113 - Youth Olympics and Field Events group sign up or general information.

• 777-1113 ext. 32, Conference Choir, directed by Cory Jones.

• 785-2805 or 777-1113 for general question and Covenant Partner forms.

Tabernacle of Faith Church is at 1410 Attucks Street in Winston-Salem. The conference host is Assistant Pastor and Youth Pastor, Elder Phillip G. McCloud Sr. Eldress Brenda J. McCloud is the senior pastor.

House of Faith will have women's revival this week



Minister Boone

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

House of Faith Outreach Ministries will present a three-day women's revival June 30 through July 2 at 7 o'clock nightly.

The guest speaker will be Minister Michelle Boone

from Greater Grace Cathedral Church. The public is invited.

House of Faith Outreach Ministries is at 1384 W. Sedgfield Drive. Stephan A. Jordan is senior pastor. For more information contact Deaconess Angel Cunningham at 785-1181.

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Summer Praise Break

"Let Freedom Ring"

Hanes Mall - Belk Court
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 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

If you continue in my word...you will know the truth and this truth shall be your freedom. John 8:31-32

Join us as we celebrate our liberties in song, music and dance!

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 Agape Faith Church Choir
 Pastor Mario Burgeos - El Camino Church

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 First Friday,
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 Byron Cage
 and a Back to School Hype Night!

Please bring toiletries for Deployed Service Men & Women

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