

## “Infant Formula” Hebrews 5:11-6:3

**Context: Context:** A third blunt exhortation interrupts an in-depth discussion of Jesus’ priesthood that began in Hebrews 2:17-18 and re-emerges in chapters five through ten. It demands that the reader be sufficiently disciplined in understanding and living the basics of Scripture to grasp how Christ’s priesthood relates to the order of Melchizedek. Of particular importance is our acceptance of Christ’s propitiation that we might come before God’s throne of Grace when in need of understanding. It is here that the mysteries of His word can purify our emotions and reality constructs unto godly righteousness. This exhortation fits in with the other four and points to the basic purpose of the book: ‘to cast off any weight or entangling sin by fixing our eyes upon Jesus, the initiator and perfecter of our faith’ (cf. Heb. 12:1-3).

**Life Principle:** Grasping mature teachings from God necessitates hands freed from childhood utensils (cf. Hebrews 6:1).

### 1. Mental sloth – Hebrews 5:11-14

Competing traditions coupled with mental sloth result in apathy toward the disciplined demands of theological thought and life application involved in knowing Christ. Although the time spent in spiritual training was sufficient for any of the readers to be able to teach, their lack of discipline left them wanting in understanding even basic Christianity. Those maturing in Christ will have done the hard training needed to apply Scripture in discerning good from evil and to put Scripture into practice in order to live righteously and avoid sin.

### 2. Open minds – Hebrews 6:1-3

Using the repetitive theme of “initiate and perfect,” the writer calls the reader to let loose of their baby blankets of faith and move on to a life of mature faith and practice. The baby blanket includes teachings against justification by works, purification rites, sign blessings, resurrection doctrines, and judgment here and in eternity. The writer plans on teaching the deeper doctrines of the faith if the Lord permits him to cast these pearls before them. This depends on the openness of their ears to hear.

### For Further Study:

- Melchizedek plays an important role in describing Jesus’ office of High Priest. There are three possible interpretations that the readers of Hebrews may have wrestled with: (1) a Gnostic idea that he was mankind’s redeemer, (2) a rabbinic teaching that he was stripped of his priesthood because he blessed Abraham before blessing God, and (3) Philo’s allegorical interpretation that he represents human reason. How does maturity in Scriptural thinking remedy these misconceptions, particularly faulty reality constructs and emotional attachments (cf. Hebrews 4:12)?
- In Hebrews 5:11-14, the writer describes what mental sloth toward God’s teachings looks like by using metaphors. As a **Bible study method**, make three columns: (1) image, (2) primary referent, and (3) secondary referent. Populate the columns with the 5 images according to the following example:

<i>Image</i>	<i>Primary Referent</i>	<i>Secondary Referent</i>
Babes	Beginning learners	Novice Christians

What image best describes your explanations of the basics of Christianity in Hebrews 6:1-2? How would you give account to Christ at the *bema seat* for the use of time He gave you while on earth (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15)?
- Hebrews 6:1 speaks of letting go of the basic teachings of Christianity and moving on to the mature teachings of the faith. This is commonly called the doctrine of progressive sanctification (see our **doctrinal statement ‘On Salvation** under **what we believe**, footnote 16- <http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/DocStmnt.pdf>). Explain how God permits growth in the faith (Ephesians 1:17ff; Philippians 2:13). What is our part (Philippians 2:12)?

### Transformation training:

Read Hebrews 6:1 each night before going to bed and spend 10 minutes each morning meeting God through reflecting on the Psalm that corresponds with the day’s date. What concept jumps out at you in the text? How do you apply that concept in order to live with Christ-like virtue?