

**Sermon Series**  
**The Superiority of Jesus Christ**  
**July 25, 2021**

**Title: Moving On, Lord Willing!**

*Subject: Jesus Christ, The Law, Judaism. Maturity, Ceremonial Law, Type, Shadow, Backsliding, Substance, Reality,*

**Theme Text: Hebrews 6:1-2 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> 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, <sup>2</sup> and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.**

**Theme Illustration:** The Holy Spirit is urging these faltering Hebrew Christians to move on, to move beyond that which served as a teacher in pointing them to greater things concerning God and His provision for them in the Messiah of Israel who has already come. Concerning this aspect of Judaism or the Old Covenant, the apostle Paul instructed the Galatians believers that circumcision and the sacrifices and rites were meant to serve as a schoolmaster or a guardian to point them to the coming Messiah. **Galatians 3:24-26 (ESV) <sup>24</sup> So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, <sup>26</sup> for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.**

The inspired writer is not referring to moving on from instructions in the new Christian life but is urging them to move on from the type and shadows of Judaism to the real thing. This is a lesson for all of us. If we try to understand this in terms of the Christian or new covenant meaning we will totally misapply and not interpret this text correctly.

The Holy Spirit is urging them to move onto placing their trust in the risen Christ and not to trust in the elements of the Old Covenant religion. The Old

order was temporary, the new order is eternal. Move on from the temporary to the eternal.

***Read: Hebrews 6:1-3***

**Introduction:** In our previous exposition, the Holy Spirit has challenged the saints to progress to solid food in the word of God. Their spiritual diet consisted of the Old Testament types and shadows found in the law of Moses. By the way, He is not urging them to move on from the moral law as God's revealed will, but to trust that Christ in His perfect active and passive obedience fulfills the law for them. God's people, having been redeemed by Christ's sacrifice, which has justified them with God by faith, have a source of righteousness granted or imputed to them through belief in the gospel and the superiority of Christ over all the Old Testament pictures, pointing towards Christ. The elementary doctrines mentioned in our text are the fixtures of Judaism. To hold onto those fixtures, render the believer vulnerable to trust in their obedience to those things for their standing with God. Thus, they were unskilled in leaning on Christ and His righteousness, and grace to live the Christian life.

***Transition:*** *The Holy Spirit now moves us from examination to exhortation and motivation. Like a good coach, He implores them to:*

**1. Move On: Hebrews 6:1-2 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> 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, <sup>2</sup> and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

We need to focus upon the first clause of verse one. The believers are commanded to move on from the elementary doctrine of Christ and grow up. The meaning of this phrase is revealed in the second half of the verse and verse two. Here is where the context of the letter is key to understanding the meaning of our text. The theme of this letter has been the overarching superiority of Christ and Christianity over Judaism. Remembering this has

been the key to unlocking every section. The apostle is not contrasting to different stages of Christianity, and an immature stage and a mature stage. No, he is demonstrating the superiority of the antitype over the type, the reality over the shadow.

This Christian community has not progressed but is even regressed. This fact will help us greatly in the next chapter. Now we can understand those solemn warnings in Hebrews 6:4 – 6.

The Holy Spirit is reminding them that by receiving Christ. They had already by faith left those elementary doctrines and He warns them about going back. This phrase means having left the word of the beginning of Christ. This is a reference to what God revealed in the Old Testament concerning His Son, the Messiah of Israel. The beginning of Christ means from Genesis 3 through Malachi. These prophecies predicted the facets of Christ personally and His work.

The maturity spoken of is the full revelation of God now made known in Christ. No longer is He veiled by types and shadows. His glory is now being seen, **2 Corinthians 4:6 (ESV) <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.** When the Holy Spirit commands the old to be left, He is not saying the old be forgotten. A full understanding of Christ includes the types, shadows, and the reality of Christ from both Testaments.

The question we have is that how may we apply this to our Christian situation? We have a similar task, but different. We are also to move on. We are to move on from the world and its glittering attractions and find our joy in the things above. It means that we need to lay aside the sin that so easily entangles and run the race set before us.

**Transition:** These believers are now urged in the next clause to:

**2. Resist Tradition: Hebrews 6:1-2 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> 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,** <sup>2</sup> **and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.**

These six items that are listed are the types in the shadows found in the law. They have nothing to do with the foundations of Christianity or to elementary experiences of a Christian. This is a warning not to go back to Judaism, **Galatians 3:24 (ESV)** <sup>24</sup> **So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.** Justification is not possible, by and through the law. The Holy Spirit is urging them not to live in their childhood.

Judaism's rites and ceremonies only sanctified the flesh. The dead works are the works of the law required in the sacrifices. Those works were dead because they are performed by fallen men in the flesh.

Faith towards God is a contrast between Hebrews and Gentiles spiritually. Gentiles worshiped idols. The history of Israel reveals their faith was more formulaic, a tradition than the reality of a relationship, **Matthew 5:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> **“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

For Christians, justification, regeneration, the promises of the gospel, adoption, and salvation result from faith that rests upon Christ, not acts of piety, or acts of the Jewish law.

With regards to washing, the reference is not to baptism as Christians understand it. These washings are the ritual washings required by the law. These washings refers to pots and pans, people, food, and other ordinances. These were designed to communicate that the Lord is a holy God, and no defiled person could come before Him. These foreshadowed the once for all perfect and eternal cleansing from sin which the atoning blood of Christ purchased.

The laying on of hands refers to the instructions concerning the scapegoat, **Leviticus 16:21 (ESV)** <sup>21</sup> **And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. In other words, the imputation of sin and guilt to another. The scapegoat has come.**

The Old Testament teachings on resurrection of the dead and judgment is not as robust. The Christian understanding is far more robust. Several texts point to an understanding of these things including, **Ecclesiastes 12:14 (ESV)** <sup>14</sup> **For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.**

**Transition:** Now we close with the reality of the situation facing the inspired writer. At the time of the writing of this letter, he understands their attachment to these old things and thus moving on to the mature things was at the mercy of:

**3. Lord Willing: Hebrews 6:1-3 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> 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, <sup>2</sup> and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. <sup>3</sup> **And this we will do if God permits.**

Here the inspired writer pauses and reflects on the unknown, the sovereign purposes of God, to which all of our plans must submit. The writer as well is every one of us must recognize that all progress in the truth and the faith is a special gift of God, **John 3:27 (ESV)** <sup>27</sup> **John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.**

**Conclusion:** Let's summarize what we have been considering. These Hebrews had confessed their faith in Christ at some time in the past. By doing this, they had forsaken the shadows of the Old Testament law for the

substance in Christ. The Holy Spirit is urging them to substitute repentance unto life for repentance from dead works, **Acts 11:18 (ESV)** <sup>18</sup> **When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”** The Holy Spirit is urging them to embrace a personal faith in Christ in substitution for a national faith. Remember that repentance that leads to life for a Christian begins with the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart regenerating the heart to understand the sinner’s precarious position with God. Working faith in the heart, the Holy Spirit now enables the Christian to receive Christ and believe that he or she is forgiven from their sins and granted eternal life. Remember to receive Christ means to believe in Christ. Repentance is a turning away from sin enabled by an act of God’s grace and a looking to Christ not only for forgiveness but for strength and faith to continue the battle against our flesh and the resulting sin that we struggle with.

Then, let us all go on to spiritual maturity in Christ, the Lord willing.