

Hebrews 5:11-6:3, Time to Climb

2.17.19

We have many teachers and coaches in the room today. I look out across the room and I see you... I also see many parents across the room AND...I also see business owners, bosses and supervisors. Therefore, what I'm getting ready to share with you, should make sense to most everyone in the room.

Let's for instance, say you're a basketball coach and you're at practice and you call a play for the third time, and yet again...the team can't get through the play without botching it up. Yes again, the ball is lost out of bounds as an errant pass is fumbled by your best player. You, as the coach, look at what has just transpired and you blow the whistle and say, "What in the world is going on with you guys...it's like you've never seen a basketball before." You pick up the ball and make a bounce pass to the player...fingers pointed down...accentuating the follow-through and you say, "Guys...that's a bounce pass...now come on...this is basic stuff...get your head together and let's run the play and get it right! We've got to move beyond the basics!"

And church family, to use our analogy of climbing mountains, I would say to us:



It's TIME TO CLIMB!!!

You get what I'm saying, don't you church? It's like you blow the whistle and say, "Come on!! What in the world is going on!!" And let me tell you...that's exactly what the Apostle Paul has had to do with this group of believers in Hebrews 5. In midstream, during a complicated "teaching passage," he's had to stop and blow the whistle, call a time-out, because many of them weren't getting it...and you can sense the frustration as you read this passage. Let's do that now and I'll believe you'll see...

Hebrews 5:11-6:3

¹¹About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹²For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

¹ 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, ² and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do if God permits.

The Apostle Paul has just called a spiritual: “TIME-OUT!” Paul has stopped his teaching and he says “This can’t continue, because we are getting nowhere.” See this coach... He’s imploring his team:



And that’s what I feel like I’m trying to do here today and every Sunday. In fact, let me say it again: “It’s TIME TO CLIMB...”



For several weeks now we’ve been talking about seeking the Lord in a more profound way...moving beyond the base camp of salvation and experiencing freedom and power in our lives. We’ve talked about the fact that we’ve all got a mountain before us...and I’ll tell you this...that mountain before you looks different than the mountain before me. Yes, they are similar in that they are spiritual mountains, but they are different because the mountain before you is unique to you and the mountain before me is unique to me. You see, the Lord has a purpose in what He’s set before you and me. He has a purpose in what He’s seeking to do in your life and in my life.

You see, this life is NOT just about enduring to the end. This life is not some miserable endurance test like we’re in the Marines and going through some horrible boot camp! No, this life is about coming to know Jesus in the fullest way possible because when we are doing this life with Jesus and we experience Him in our lives...it doesn’t matter what our circumstances are...we can be like Paul and Silas in a Philippian prison cell with our feet in stocks and still sing praises to Jesus. You see, it doesn’t matter how difficult the climb is...how steep the terrain might be...with Jesus we can experience life to the fullest because He said we could. See the screens... Over and over Jesus told the disciples the same thing... see it...

John 10:7-10

⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

And you see, this is what the Apostle Paul is trying to describe to these Jews in the first century, who seem to be struggling with moving forward in their faith. He’s been trying to describe to them why Jesus is Superior to anything they’ve ever known in Judaism and he’s having to spend quite a bit of time doing so regarding the subject that relates to this guy...



That’s a depiction of a High Priest, and we talked about this last week. For the Jews...they had always had someone who acted on their behalf toward God. They had a go-between. In other words, they believed they couldn’t come to God on their own...they had to have a priest do it for them. Yet, when Jesus came and He died on the cross...see it...



The veil in the Temple separating mankind from God was torn into and Jesus said we could go through Him to the Father. And yet, it seems these Hebrews...now Christians...were struggling with this concept because they couldn’t trace Jesus’ family lineage back to Aaron... And so, Paul was seeking to show them that Jesus didn’t come from the line of Aaron... Instead He came from the line and order of Melchizedek. Remember this chart...



- 1) Asher
- 2) Benjamin
- 3) Dan
- 4) Gad
- 5) Issachar
- 6) Joseph
 - Ephraim (son of Joseph)
 - Manasseh (son of Joseph)
- 7) Judah → David → Jesus
- 8) Levi → Aaron → Priests
- 9) Naphtali
- 10) Reuben
- 11) Simeon
- 12) Zebulun

Now, this is pretty “heady-stuff” for sure, and it could even be considered somewhat complicated and that’s when Paul sensed the eyes are getting glazed over of the people and he says, “Time-out...you’re not getting this! You keep fumbling the ball out of bounds...” And the question is why? Why are these Hebrews now turned Christians struggling so much. Well, let’s see...

Hebrews 5:11

¹¹ About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

“Dull of hearing.”

What does this mean? Well, the Greek word is:

Nō-thro's: slow, sluggish, dull, lazy

Lazy... Maybe like this guy...



Isn't that sad! Isn't that amazing...he's so lazy he's got the spaghetti plate on his chest where he can suck it into his mouth? So sad! That's: No-thros. Maybe a better word would be: “No-thrust”... Like an engine that has no power when you push the accelerator...

Listen, that's EXACTLY what the Apostle Paul was running up against. He wanted to move forward but he couldn't. There's no thrust! It's like Paul was saying, “I can't show you anything more until you get this.” And I would say this to us... Church, “We've got to climb what's in front of us...don't look to the summit...climb what's here.” Listen, you and I will never reach the top of the mountain, if we don't climb the section in front of us!! Don't ask for the Lord to give you more when you've not obeyed what you already know to do right now.

You see, the Holy Spirit, through Paul is lovingly scolding these Hebrews and challenging them...just like a coach to their team at a time-out...

Hebrews 5:11-12

¹¹ About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food.

Folks, this is pretty tough stuff... It's like our coach...



imploing the team... "Come on! You can do this!"

Do what...??? Move beyond the basics of Christianity and go from being a baby on milk to eating meat...and moving beyond having to be taught over and over again the same thing...moving on to the place that you and I can actually become the COACHES...the teachers. How long have you been a Christian? Can you lead someone to Jesus? Can you tell someone the basics of Christianity, or do you still need someone to hold your hand?

Listen carefully, I read in a commentary earlier this week this quote:

"Failure to appropriate the truth of the Gospel produces stagnation and lack of growth."

Stagnation: what is that? Well, to use our basketball analogy...it's like a team that isn't moving and the guard just stands at the top of the key dribbling the ball. Nothing is happening. And there's many Christians like that. They're stuck at Base Camp and they're not climbing. They're not going anywhere. They're still at Base Camp which is littered with baby bottles and Gerber baby food jars.

Listen church family, I see this in love: **knowledge without obedience leads to NO-WHERE!** (Conversation with Pastor Brad about the Beatitudes...blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, blessed are the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the persecuted) **When you and I choose NOT to obey what Jesus has told us to do, we'll never grow!** In fact, we're in danger of getting to a place that we can't even tell right from wrong anymore.

Hebrews 5:13-14

¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

"Unskilled/Trained" Those are athletic and military terms. Teams that win are the best trained... Armies that win are the soldiers who are the best trained and most skilled. Hey Church, how are we trained? Where do we learn SKILL to be a Christian? Simple: In the gym of the Word and by

the Holy Spirit as our spiritual trainer. Are you spending time with the Lord in His Word and in Prayer with the Holy Spirit? Are you sitting before the Lord in the training gym, or are you skipping the gym? To be a disciple of Christ means that you've chosen a lifestyle of discipline! It's a discipline to follow Christ and it's not for the faint of heart. (I think of the skit Justin and Matthew did Wed. night...God chiseling on us! It hurts!) And that's why most won't climb. They're afraid to climb for fear of what the Lord might ask them to do.

Some Christians are afraid if they begin to climb and leave the safety and security of Base Camp the Lord is going to call them to Zimbabwe? Church, I can you tell He's most likely NOT. **He's not going to call you to Zimbabwe, He's going to call you to your hallway.**



It's time to climb, folks and that means we've got to be students of the Word of God and we've got to be Spirit-led people... And the only way that's going to happen is for us to sit before the Lord with an open Bible and an open spirit...and say, "Lord take my life...lead me...I'm yours!"

Dear people, are you climbing or are you dull...listless...lifeless. Listen, dullness comes when we're not in the Word...which is the sword. We need the sword to make us sharp. Paul said as much to the Thessalonian church (who is, by the way, the only church he commended for their growth):

1 Thessalonians 2:13

¹³ And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

"...is at work in you believers..." You're running the play...you're at work...you're climbing?

Think of it from the perspective of a student. How long are you a student in school or college? Forever? No! Eventually you graduate...students are expected to graduate, right? To do what? GET A JOB! Students don't go to school forever, eventually they leave the classroom and get a job-work.

Listen, a team doesn't get credit for what they do on the practice field? It's what they do in the arena...that counts. Listen, no one congratulates a builder on a foundation, do they?



No...they only congratulate those who finish the house. And you see, there's a lot of Christians who look like that unfinished house. They got saved and that's where it stopped...they haven't grown! They're still on the milk... Oh it's sad...instead of being Christians who are discipling others...teaching others...they are still on the milk or sucking spaghetti...



They've stagnated and they're not growing!

Did you know the Apostle Paul had this same problem with the Corinthian believers....

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

¹ But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

Paul was saying to the Corinthian believers the same thing he was saying to the Hebrews and the same thing I'm saying to us: "It's Time to Climb!" And we've got to leave the baby bottles at Base Camp and move beyond the basics. And that's what he was saying in chapter 6...

Hebrews 6:1-3

¹ 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, ² and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do if God permits.

What are these basics? See them:

1. Repentance from Dead Works-(Keeping the Law--Old Testament Legalism)
2. Faith toward God (Elementary Faith-Even the Devil believes there is a God)
3. Doctrine of Washings (Rituals of routine washings no longer necessary in Christ)
4. Laying on of Hands (What a Priest Did to a Lamb-Priestly blessing not needed)
5. Resurrection of the Dead (Yes, Jesus did rise from the dead, it happened!)

6. Eternal Judgment (Judgment comes to all who reject Christ!)

You see, these were the “basics” like dribbling...passing...shooting...are the fundamentals of basketball. It’s time to move on from that and run the plays.

Church family, I’ve thought a lot about this. How many of us are still spiritual babes on the milk down at base camp with all the baby bottles VERSUS THOSE on the spiritual meat who are climbing the mountain... Listen carefully:

It’s easy to be a spiritual babe...it’s easy to make excuses for how we’re living. That’s what young kids do, right? Instead of owning up to what they’ve done when they make a mistake or when they’re struggling, they make excuses...and usually there’s a lot of emotion involved...whining, crying, belly-aching...

That’s how it is with kids...spiritual kids...babes in Christ...when things don’t go their way, they get angry, frustrated, even bitter. And from that point...most everything that happens to them becomes a life crisis and every molehill becomes a mountain. For these baby Christians, instead of going to the Word of God and seeking the Holy Spirit to guide their lives, just simply doing what Jesus says to do...they cry and whine and demand other Christians to give them attention and meet their needs. They become dependent on others to prop them up. And they circle the same ground over and over again at base camp sucking up the spaghetti! Hey...it’s time to lace up the boots and look unto Jesus! It’s time to stop making excuses! Hey...



IT’S TIME TO CLIMB! Do you want climb...grow in Christ...let me tell you how...

One word: **Surrender!** Jesus said, “Take up my yoke, because it’s easy and my burden is light.” Why? Because He’s carrying the weight...we rest in Him. Surrender. Have you? Have you bowed the neck to take on the yoke of Jesus? **Listen and look at the screens as we close.** See this quote from A.W. Tozer’s “The Pursuit of God.” It’s powerful!

“In our desire after God, let us keep always in mind that God also has desire, and His desire is toward us, and more particularly those of us, who will make the once-for-all decision to exalt Him over all. Such as these are precious to God above all treasures of earth or sea. In them God finds a theater where He can display His exceeding kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. With them God can walk unhindered, toward them He can act like the God He is.” A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*

Can the Lord walk with you unhindered? Can He act like God toward you, or are you hindering Him...are you pulling away from Him wanting the baby bottles of the comfort and ease of life!

Last quote from Tozer...

“I have one fear; it is that I may convince the mind before God can win the heart. For this God-above-all position is not easy to take. The mind may approve it while not having the consent of the will to put it into effect. While the imagination races ahead to honor God, the will may lag behind and the man never guess how divided his heart is. The whole man must make the decision before the heart can know any real satisfaction. God wants us all, and He will not rest till He gets us all. No part of the man will do.” A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*

Yes, you may see yourself climbing the mountain in your imagination...but, the scary thing is: your will may be stuck back at Base Camp with the baby bottles. Are you willing to obey Jesus in what He's already told you to do? Are you willing to grow in Christ?

1 Corinthians 13:11

¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

Church:



It's Time to Climb! It's time to surrender everything! Surrender all! Will you? Will you today repent of any known sin in your life...it's the only way to leave base camp and begin to climb.

Will you leave the baby bottles behind? For some that will mean being willing to forgive... For others it will mean being willing to move past that thing that happened to you as a child that you continue to use as an excuse for you to act like a child... For others it will mean you'll have to stop making excuses for why your marriage isn't what it should be... Oh...let the Holy Spirit reveal to you now the excuses...that are holding you back from climbing...and then allow Him to cut those chains...slide on those boots and climb! Church family...It's Time to climb!! You come as we sing!
