

Amen. Mike's on. You guys hear me okay? Rock and roll. Well, happy Sunday.

Thanks for having me again. Like Darren mentioned, I am not pastor Gus. My shoes are less fabulous, and my voice is a couple pitches lower, so hope you'll deal with me. All right. Hey, we're going through a series in Hebrews.

We're chugging through it, so we're going to pick up where Darren left off last week. Kind of the tale end of chapter five and then the front end of chapter six. It's been a fun journey. Hope you guys have enjoyed it. Everybody enjoying it so far?

Learning something? All right, good. Well, today's title is grow up. Why don't you turn to your neighbor and tell them to grow up?

Turn back to your neighbor and tell them. No, you grow up.

All right, so today's message is going to be focused on growing in Christ and not being a baby anymore, maybe even an adolescent. So first we're going to start with a pop quiz. So next slide. This is for the art majors in the room. Anyone know the artist on the slide?

Not Dolly. No. Picasso. Who said Picasso? Dave and my wife.

You guys both get the silver star for the day. All right. Yeah. Pablo Picasso. So Pablo Picasso is a famous artist.

He's kind of the granddaddy of cubism. Made close to his art. Sales have been, like, in the hundreds. His art has sold for close to a billion dollars. Like, north of \$800 million for all of that.

Pretty cool. Next slide.

Anyone know who that artist is?

Picasso. All right, good job, Elijah. All right, so how does someone get from scribbling in a notebook to \$800 million in sales? Anyone? Take a guess.

Venture a guessdehenous. Practice, practice, practice, practice, practice, practice, practice. Okay, so when we're little and we're in elementary school, there's certain things that we do that are just rudimentary. Basic math, counting your colors, letters, spelling, things like this that are fundamental to learning and growing and exploring. So Picasso just didn't wake up one day and start painting cubes all over the place.

He practiced. When I was in college, I took a j term. I don't think they have those anymore, but I took a j term for art class in Paris, mainly so I could just go walk around Paris. But one of the things I walked into was the Picasso museum. And it's interesting.

You can kind of see him starting with the little sketches in the books, but then he gets into drawing fruit and people and stuff like this. And there's this progression of learning and growing to a place where you're confident in a pen and a pencil, and then because you're confident, you've got freedom to explore and create. I don't know if you get some parallels to where we'd be going with Hebrews, but there's fundamental practices that you can't skip from a to z. You have to go a, b, c, d, e, f. You have to commit to a learning process to get to a place where you can be creative and have expression of freedom of expression in what you have learned.

Make sense? Okay, so there's some fundamentals that we'll go over, but what you'll need to know for now is thousands of years ago, God picked up some stones and he wrote some instructions on those stones. Thou shalt not do this, don't do that, do this, don't do that. Ten commandments, everybody familiar with those? Okay, I won't ask us to recite them because I'm sure I would maybe like get six out of ten or seven out of ten.

I don't have them all memorized. A couple thousand years ago, Jesus Christ came to Earth and he said, I'm going to write the law on your heart. Okay? And he's given us his word and he's given us his spirit as fundamental things to learn and grow and practice in. This is our school.

This is our school. And as we commit to learning and growing, we're going to do just that. Okay? So the point is there's spiritual practices that we can engage in. We're meant to utilize those spiritual practices.

Did I just cut out? Am I back? Alright. And ultimately, if you love something, I don't know what I'm doing different.

Oh, my butt's too big.

I'll try that. Thanks, Mandy, the tech wizard. Appreciate it. I guess what I want us to understand so far, if you like something, if you love something, you'll practice it. And practice makes perfect, okay?

Cool beans. Cool beans. All right, so back to Hebrews, back to the basics, next slide. Again, this is Hebrews chapter 5:11 through 14. We're going to try to read this together just to, I think reading it together helps us remember it.

You guys ready? All right, here we go. We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though, by this time, you ought to be teachers. You need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again.

You need milk, not solid food. Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who, by constant use, have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Amen. Thank you.

Okay, so a few things I want to point out here. Point number one, there's people who stop listening. So we're just going to explore why people would stop listening a little bit. Point number two, there's something about milk. There's something about milk that I'd like to explore.

Milk is good when you're an infant. And then there's something related to righteousness and how it's related to maturity. So there's three points for this portion of scripture that we'll go over. Listening, milk and righteousness. You guys ready?

Here we go. All right, so the first part. Next slide. Rituals require personal meaning or they become meaningless. So here again, it's starting out by saying, we have much to say about this, but it's hard to make it clear because you no longer try to understand and that you no longer try to understand.

Part the Greek. I'm not a greek scholar guy, but the word in lexicon is nothros, meaning slow, sluggish, dull, slothful, lazy, inert, listless. That's a good thesaurus. Okay, managers. Any managers in here might identify with how frustrating it is to have somebody that you're trying to manage completely uninterested in what you're telling them, or maybe a parent.

Do you ever have this where you're trying to communicate something and you say, this is the way you do this, and the person you're trying to communicate to is completely disengaged. And it doesn't matter how much you shout, how much you spin, how much you jump around, you're not getting their attention, and they're not doing what you're telling them to. Do. Anyone have that experience before? Okay, so the writer of Hebrews is basically saying this, I don't know how to get through to you anymore.

I keep saying the same thing over and over and over and over, and for some reason, you have stopped your ears, and this seems unimportant to you, and I don't know how to make it important to you. I'm trying to tell you the basics, but I keep having to spoon feed you and spoon feed you and spoon feed you and spoon feed you. You're not growing up. You're a 30 year old baby. Grow up.

Okay, so the way that God would say this is in Isaiah 29:13. He says, these people come near to me with their mouth. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their hearts just are not in this thing. They're doing it for.

I don't know why. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules that they have been taught. So I was trying to think of some reasons why me in my life, I just grow dull, like I'm uninterested. And my wife can attest to some of this. There's some times where my wife is trying to communicate something that's important to her.

And I've had a long day or whatever, and my eyes will start to, any other husband's guilty of. It's just me. Sorry. I'm the only good bad guy in here. But in those kind of cases, it's obvious it's important to her.

I'm just not engaging at her level. For whatever reason, it's not personal to me. So I'm not able to step into her space and experience the same thing and understand why it's important. So lack of empathy or just you don't see how it's related to you, so you just start disengaging. So that's maybe one reason why people would just seem hard of hearing is they don't understand why it's important.

Make sense. Okay. Another reason would be maybe pride. I found this in my life. There's other reasons than a few I'll mention.

But a reason for me is pride. If I think I understand something, I am not really open or receptive to your opinion about that something. If I feel I've got a grasp on it and you're trying to tell me how to do it differently, back off. This is my space. I know how to run a vacuum.

I know how to wash the dishes or whatever it is, I got it. Leave me alone. So I'm not open or receptive to input. I'm not listening to you and your perspective on how I could do that different. Pride, it's sin.

And the third one, this is probably the most relatable to me. Is some kind of false belief or just a general lack of faith about something. So maybe it's just myself, but maybe some of us can relate to guilt, shame, condemnation, rejection. Where you've accepted a lie about something and you believe that lie over the word of God, that you're rejected or that you'll never be good enough or what you do doesn't matter. It does, and that's a lie.

But when you believe, when you accept and consume that lie, you start to disengage from the truth. Because what does it matter what does it matter if I engage? It's not going to benefit me any or God won't come through or whatever. So you start to drift away. Does that make sense?

Okay, so those are just a few reasons. There's probably more. But without a personal meaning to the ritual, it just becomes meaningless. And so the writer of Hebrews is trying to say, hey, perk your ears up. This matters to you.

This matters to you. Listen to what I'm saying. Okay, so it says here you need milk, not solid food. Next slide. Sorry.

Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. So I'm going to take a tiny detour and welcome you to take it with me if you have your bible to first Peter, chapter one. And I'm going to start in verse 17, and I'll go all the way through chapter two to verse ten. And the detour is going to take us through this verse, but then also into some Old Testament stuff about, like, the elementary teachings. So another way to say elementary is just the beginning.

So kindergarten is the beginning of your learning journey for school anyway. And some of what we'll read about here is the beginning of a faith journey. Doesn't mean that it's. That it's dumb or inconsequential. It's just the beginning.

Cool beans. Cool beans. All right. One Peter, chapter one, verse 17.

It's going to be long, so I urge you to try to stick with me. Here we go. Also, I'm reading from my daughter's bible. Isn't that nice? I think it's Niv.

Since you call on a father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. So he's saying again, we've got a father. He's going to judge you impartially. He's not going to judge you based on what someone else is doing. He's going to judge you based on what you're doing.

And he's saying, you're a foreigner here. This is not your home. All right? America isn't your home. Minnesota isn't your home.

Ward isn't your home. Heaven is your home because heaven is your home. Live out your life in fear, in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold, that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. So I won't pause after every verse.

But here again, just to make it clear. You weren't bought or redeemed out of this world by junk. You weren't bought or redeemed by a car. You weren't bought or redeemed by a house. You weren't bought or redeemed by your job or your education or your family line or anything.

You were bought and redeemed and rescued out of hell by Jesus Christ's body. Sacrifice and blood. There is meaning to the exchange that he bought you with. He didn't take something regular and common off a shelf and say, I'll buy you for this. He took himself and he became sin for you so that you could become the righteousness of God in Christ.

His body on the cross bought you. Is that clear?

He was chosen before the creation of the world and revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him, you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him so that your faith and hope are in God now that you've purified yourself by obeying the truth. So obeying the truth is part of what purifies you in relationship to Christ's sacrifice. So that you have sincere love for each other, love for one another deeply from the heart. For you have been born again, not a perishable seed, but imperishable through the living and enduring word of God.

All people are like grass, their glory and flowers of the field. The grass withers and flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever. This is the word that was preached to you. So this is a big setup. Here comes the milk.

So part of what we're learning here is there's a beginning teaching that says, God redeemed you. And now there's this craving to understand that more. In chapter two, he says, therefore, rid yourself of all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander, every kind. Like newborn babies crave pure, spiritual milk so that by it you may grow up in your salvation. Now that you have tasted that, the Lord is good, so he's not.

None of this is saying milk is bad, milk is fantastic. And a baby craves milk. They're crying out for their mama's milk, and the baby can't feed himself. So he's saying, feed me more, feed me more, feed me more, feed me more. Right?

And so what he's saying here now is, okay, you've tasted and seen that the Lord is good. Why would you continue to taste stuff from the world that God rescued you out of, that he paid for you to be removed from. Why would you continue to partake in gross, nasty stuff when there's this spiritual milk available to you to partake of? And he's saying, don't stop there. So, yes, turn this way.

Crave spiritual milk. Stop partaking in this junk over here. Turn this way. And now, as you do, it says, as you come to him, the living stone, rejected by humans, but chosen by God, precious to him. You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

It goes on to say, I'm laying a stone in Zion, a precious cornerstone. And some will stumble on him, others will get crushed. And those that stumble are in verse eight, because they disobey the message. Okay, it says, but then verse nine, you're a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you warrant a people, but now you are a people.

Once you had not received mercy, but now you got mercy. Okay, so that was kind of a longer journey. I'm not done yet, but we're going to keep going backwards in time to the temple. So hopefully you're still with me a little bit. Milk is good.

Milk is foundational, and it requires that you're turning away from other things to receive this pure, spiritual milk. So, on the next slide, you'll see a picture of the original, the Og temple. It was a tent, and this tent seems kind of long there. It's about the width of a basketball court. So it's not, like, super huge, but it's a tent.

And inside that tent, you would see some partitions or, like, there's a way of things, the way things happen in here. And the point of this temple being established was this is a way or a method for

God to say, here's how you come close to me. Here's how you become righteous. So if your conscience was pricked, he's saying, here's a method for you to come close to me and have your conscience cleansed. So the term offering is corbin, which really just means, come close.

Come close to me. So, in old Testament times, these are people that are like. They're traveling through the wilderness. So you have to kind of put yourself in that space where you'd feel and hear gravel under your feet. You'd hear the wind coming through the valley.

You'd hear and see the wind flapping these tent walls. I guess they are. But as you come up. You're coming for a reason. You've got a motivation to come here and you're bringing something.

You're bringing an animal of some sort. And the animal that you're bringing is a certain class of animal, meaning it's not a piece of junk. I don't know how else to say that. It's not defective, it's not broken, it's something of value, and it's something that is costly. And the reason you're bringing that animal is because, again, you're trying to come close to God.

You want to draw near to him. So as you approach, we're just going to take some slides that kind of walk through quickly the elements that you'd see in this temple. The first thing you'd see is a curtain that says, okay, I'm going to come in as soon as you pass that curtain. Next slide will show you the biggest thing that you would see is on the right there. That's the altar.

So that's 7ft by 7ft cubed, 4ft high. It's a big altar, and with it you would have your animal, your bowl, or whatever the sacrifice called for. You'd see some priest dressed in a priestly robe. So Darren talked about last week how that priest is appointed by God. It's not just some dude, it's not Larry from the shop.

It's a priest that's appointed, set apart by God to do these things. And there's a washbasin. So what you would do is you would come up with your animal, and doing so is like a sign of confession and repentance. And part of what you would do is you would lay your hand on that animal and you would confess your sin. And the laying on of hands is saying, this is a visible sign of something invisible that's happening.

I am transferring my guilt onto this animal. And then the priest would come, he would wash himself ceremonially, he would clean himself, and he would take your sacrifice as a mediator and he would kill the thing. The lifeblood would be spilled out and then he would roast it. Okay, so next slide again. Behind all of that scene there's another tent, another secret place.

This is called the holy place, and only the priest was allowed back there. So the mediator would go in and out of this place. A bunch of Old Testament scriptures would say, even though it's hidden from you as the person coming, God knows and sees what's going on in this place, he knows and sees the condition of your heart. And he knows and sees the condition of the priest and the mediator, if they're doing things appropriately or if their condition is appropriate. So nothing's hidden from the Lord, even in there.

But inside of there, next slide, again, you would see three elements. One is the lamp. This is meant to be a sign that God is your light. The only source of light in this place is that menorah there. Some people would say it was shaped like a tree to remind them of the garden of Eden, stuff like that.

I don't know. On the other side. So to your left, you'd see that lamp that's given off light. To your right, you'd see a table of bread, twelve loaves of bread, simplifying the twelve tribes of Israel. And again, we remember the words Jesus said, I'm the light of the world.

I'm the bread of life. And then directly in front of you, there would be another curtain. And right in front of that curtain, there's this incense altar that is continuously lit, continuously burning incense. And this could signify the prayers of God's people. Just behind that incense altar and just behind that other curtain is the ark of the covenant.

This is where the stone tablets, the law, are placed, inside of it, along with a couple other things. But this is the mercy seat. So these cherubs would cover the ark, the altar. The high priest would go back here one time a year as part of the sin offering ritual. So we're stuck on that slide.

If we can go forward again a little bit. Yeah, that guy. So just one time of year, some people say that the priest, the high priest would have bells on his robe. So if he went back there improperly, dude would die. But this ark is a symbol of God's presence.

It's a symbol of his power. But the cherubs, that's called the mercy seat. So mercy triumphs over judgment in that place. So just a quick visual reference. Next slide.

One more time. So fundamentally old school stuff. Righteousness required sacrifice. I committed a sin. I gotta find an animal that's not just a junky animal, but a pure animal, a costly animal.

I'm walking through the camp or taking a journey with this animal to a tent. My motivation is that I would be made right with God. I want to be righteous. I want to be close to God. I want God's nearness in my life.

I would be presented with a huge altar. I would smell and see burning flesh. Okay? And there would be a priest there with his priestly garments. There's a washbasin.

There's another curtain with stuff I can't see inside of it with lights and bread and incense and then another curtain with God's presence. And you can kind of see there that Hebrews ten, the law is just a shadow of good things that are coming, not the realities themselves. For this reason, it can never by the same sacrifice, repeated endlessly year after year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered worshippers, would have been cleansed once for all and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins.

It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Whew. We made it. So that's an Old Testament journey. What I want to just overlay on top of that fundamental process is I want to take the New Testament Jesus Christ, and just put that over top of this model for a second.

So the first thing again is that altar. So remember, you're laying on your hands and you're transferring guilt to this animal and then killing it. In the New Testament, the Bible says that Jesus became sin for you so that you could become the righteousness of God in Christ. Jesus is our pure sacrifice. Jesus took on our guilt and our shame.

He became that, and it was nailed to the cross. That sacrifice was completed once and for all through the death and resurrection of Christ. Secondly, that wash basin where the priests would

ceremony wash themselves. In the Old Testament, you would have John brought a baptism of repentance, where you'd be baptized in water and brought up new. That's a symbol of repentance.

In addition, the Bible says that Jesus will baptize you with fire. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. So there's something that's going to be made new inside of you as you accept the sacrifice of Christ and receive the Holy Spirit inside that curtain. Jesus would say that I am the light of the world. So Jesus is your light.

In his light, you see light. Jesus said, I am the bread of life, eat of my flesh, drink of my blood. And Jesus is our mediator of a new covenant he ever lives to make intercession for us before the throne of God. So that that lampstand, that bread and that incense altar are all again. You could lay those right on top of Christ.

Christ is fulfilling this. And then finally, Christ is fulfilling the law. So the ten Commandments, the cherubs, the holy place when Christ died didn't mention this last week. That curtain that divided the holy place from the most holy place was torn apart so that now you and I, anyone who accepts Christ has free access to find mercy and grace in our time of need. We have free access anytime to go right to that most holy place, to the holy of holies through Christ's blood.

So if we take that back to. Hey, why aren't you listening? There's something of magnitude there that we can just get used to or familiar with, that Jesus Christ died for my sins. Like, that just becomes kind of a fact or a ritual that we can repeat to each other and call ourselves a christian, and you lose the magnitude. Like the immensity and the weight of what Christ actually physically did, he became sin for you.

He was murdered on a tree. He became condemned so that you could be called the righteousness of God in Christ and that you could have free, voluntary access to the power of the Holy Spirit. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is alive in you.

We don't want to lose sight of that. Okay, so we good on the milk? That's milk, all right. Hebrews 5:13 says, anyone who lives on milk is still an infant and not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use, have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Okay, so like we discussed, milk is awesome. Milk is great. I still love milk, but if all you do is live on milk, your growth will be stunted. So several years ago, Maya and I went to England to visit some friends, and there's this old roman town called Bath. Anyone hear of bath before?

It's like an old roman bathhouse? Our friends took us to the oldest bun shop, or tea shop, whatever it was, in England, the Sally Lund bun shop. And this original structure from 15 hundreds was, like, down in the cellar still. And so you can kind of walk down there and see this thing, and it's like the human beings were like, 4ft tall. Like, you really have to crouch down there.

Not exaggerating. Am I? Like, it was super short. Maybe it was 5ft. But whatever malnutrition had stunted the growth of human beings because they didn't have, like, healthy food to eat.

They were just wee baby human man. They were tiny, right? So, praise God, we live in America. I can eat whatever I want whenever I feel like it. I can have steak and ice cream and doritos and whatever, mashed potatoes, too much.

But we have a spiritual feast available to us at all times. And if we're never opening this book, and if we're never challenged in our faith, we're going to stay a wee, little, tiny baby christian guy or a gal. So there's something about milk that's going to inspire you to stick with it and to persevere during tough times. And if you don't have, you're going to stay a little wee baby spiritual person. That's about yay big.

And you're going to continue to require someone to spoon feed you and spoon feed you and spoon feed you and spoon feed you. When what we read out of Peter says, hey, you're a royal priesthood. You're a spiritual house. You should be taking territory and commanding things to be the way they should be. You don't have to put up with the environment that you're in.

You can create something. You're a living stone. You're a royal priesthood. Take dominion. You can take territory.

So I guess the first thing I so we've got teaching about righteousness and distinguishing good from evil are the other two points I wanted to make there. So next slide says, just what is righteousness? Again, we know that righteousness is not equated to your works. It says there's no one righteous. No, not one.

You're saved not because of your works, lest any man should boast. So righteousness really comes down to faith. Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. Righteous live by faith. Faith comes by hearing those who love me obey me.

Jesus said, and God said, I'll write the law on their hearts. So righteousness in the Old Testament model is me taking a. An animal to a priest, transferring the sin and guilt onto it. In the new Testament, it's taking the finished work of the cross, and by faith, it's applying that to my life. It's allowing the Holy Spirit to empower me to say yes to him and no to sin.

And the more and more and more I do that, the stronger and stronger and stronger my faith muscles get. So in John 16, Jesus said it this way about the Holy Spirit, he says, and he, when he comes, will convict the world regarding sin and righteousness and judgment regarding sin because they do not believe in me. Regarding righteousness because I'm going to the Father and you are no longer going to see me. And regarding judgment, because the ruler of the world has been judged, one of the key words I want to pick out there is when he comes, he will convict. So the Holy Spirit is here to convict you of a few things.

Sin, righteousness, judgment in regards to sin because you don't believe so. Unbelief is sin in righteousness because they won't see me anymore. So righteousness you can equate to faith. That's the evidence of your life lived in. God, is that you believe, not based on what you're seeing, not based on your circumstances, but you're believing God's word.

You're believing that Jesus Christ has a work ahead of you to do.

And because of judgment, because the rule of the world has been judged, Titus would say it this way. Titus 2:11. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us so, the grace of God, the Holy Spirit, bringing salvation, instructing you to deny ungodly and worldly desires and live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and

appearing of the glory of our great God savior Jesus Christ. Christ. So the Holy Spirit is here to convict and compel.

Next slide is kind of wrapping up this Hebrews five stuff. So again, we're talking about your ears, we're talking about milk, and we're talking about righteousness, and we're going to transition into chapter six, which is going to talk about putting behind the elementary stuff and growing. And in romans seven, if you read romans six, romans seven and romans eight, it is the human condition all wrapped up together. And in romans seven, right in the middle of it, Paul is basically saying this. So I find this law at work.

Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. You know, I felt like that before. You want to do good. You felt convicted about something. God is telling me to stop doing this or start doing that.

I want to do good. Evil is right there with me. I am tempted to keep doing that thing. It's comfortable. I got used to it.

I got a habit. I can't stop. I'm addicted, whatever in my inner being, I delight in God's law. So it's not that he's hating God. I really want to please God.

I delight in God's law. But I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. He's stuck. He's trapped. He wants to please God.

He is bound to his flesh. One ever feel like that? What a wretched man I am. This is hopeless. Who can save me?

Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There's a conviction that comes to the Holy Spirit. The fundamentals teach you enough about right and wrong to know when something's right. And when something's wrong and when you confess Jesus as Lord, the Holy Spirit is now going to take up residency inside of you, you're going to get hammered with this thing, and the Holy Spirit is going to begin to prick you in certain ways, to say, maybe I should stop doing this, and maybe I should start doing that. And as that pricking happens, you have a choice. Are you going to stay a baby or are you going to grow up?

Growing up says, I'm going to deny myself this thing. I'm going to put it aside now. I'm not going to live that way any longer. I'm going to make a decision right now in this millisecond to not partake. I'm going to choose right now in this millisecond by faith to follow God.

And it doesn't matter what that is. It could be a gross sin. It could be something that God is just prompting you to do.

But to not act on that is sin. And God's grace through the Holy Spirit is going to compel you to do the right thing. The more you resist, the more callous you become. The more you say yes, the more inspired you become. Obedience through faith is your victory.

You cannot strong arm sin in your life, and you cannot overcome it on your own. Otherwise, why would Christ have to die? If you could do it, you could get the credit for it. You can't. You can't do it.

Praise be to God that he sent his son Jesus Christ. He gives you the victory. So when you're struggling in those circumstances, you have a choice to partake, to resist. Or if you're stuck in the middle, like I am often, you just say, God, I am overwhelmed. I want to participate in this thing, and I'm probably going to.

Please help me. Please take these desires from me. Please lift this burden off of my soul and off my mind. In faith, offer that as a prayer. If you're stuck and watch what happens, he will help you.

In one corinthians 10:13, it says, no temptation has overtaken you, except which is common to mankind. God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will provide a way out so you can endure it. Amen.

I found that with, when Maya and I were dating, we made a commitment to stay pure, whatever that meant, not have sex before we were married. And as part of that boundary, we just said, you know what? If we start making out, it's overdeveloped. So our first kiss was our wedding day. But it doesn't mean we weren't tempted.

Temptation found a way through whatever boundary we set up. Temptation found a way through that wall, through that barrier. But God is faithful. Anytime that temptation started to come, a way of escape was provided. Someone would call a knock on the door, whatever.

You just have to accept that escape route. Does that make sense? You have to say yes to God in that moment and recognize that he's there with you as a mediator to help you. James four says that another way says, submit yourselves then to God. Resist the devil.

He will flee from you. So again, you're growing your faith muscle. You're saying, I want to do this thing, but because of my faith and my commitment to God, I'm going to resist God help me. And he does.

Romans twelve puts it this way, says, this is about the constant use part. Okay? So don't conform to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you'll be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will. So a steady intake of the word of God is your best defense for this topic against growing dull.

Whatever it says, be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So I've given this analogy before. I'll just say it again real quick. Our family used to drink smoothies a lot. And the smoothie cup would get gross and nasty and the film would stick to the outside.

But you notice as you put that under the faucet, you just turn the faucet on. And if you let the faucet run long enough, it'll start to kick out the chunks of blueberry or strawberry or I, whatever grime is left in there. That water, that living water, as it pours through that cup, starts to eject the grime and the dirt that's stuck in there. Right? So I think that's a good analogy.

I think for our soul as well. We get stuff that just sticks into our soul and the residue hangs out in there. But as we partake of the living word of God, through Bible reading, through worship, through fellowship, that living water starts to, starts to break things up and eject it and get it out of our life. And it's not by any work of our own. It's just by gazing at him, partaking of his goodness, we receive his life and his light.

Okay, so I'm going to kind of run short on time for this, but here, let me, let me start wrapping up. I was going to ask the worship team to come back up. I don't know if you want to start prepping for that, but we'll pick up Hebrews six a bit more in detail than the week after next. But let me just read over some things and kind of put a bow on this. Hopefully this is making sense so far.

Finishing up chapter five. Okay, so in chapter six, next slide, it says, therefore, let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ. So everything we just talked about is foundational. It's elementary. Jesus Christ loves you.

He gave his life for you. There's life in God, there's victory over sin. So let's move past that, be taken forward towards maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death or faith in God or instruction, cleansing rites, laying on of hands, resurrection from the dead, eternal judgment, God permitting, will do so. So this basically is, that's why I wanted to go through that temple slide. So this verse, if you take that back to the picture of the temple, that kind of looked like a cross.

Repentance in the Old Testament was the bull. I'd bring up a bull or a sheep or a lamb or whatever the sacrifice called for. In the New Testament, this is confession. So he says, don't lay again the foundation of repentance that lead to death and of faith of God. So faith in the Old Testament, again, you're bringing animals and sacrifices out of obedience to the law because you want to be close to God.

In the New Testament, this is obedience to the Holy Spirit and his written word, the cleansing light rites that are laid out in Hebrews six. Again, Old Testament talks about the basin of washing. New Testament, this is baptism, the laying on of hands. In the Old Testament, I'm transferring guilt onto this animal, and that animal is taking on that sin, and that sin is being murdered. In the New Testament, laying on of hands is more dealt with.

Transfer of blessing. So again, it's still an invisible transference through a physical act, but it's more related to blessing and authority. Resurrection of the dead. Jesus just simply says, I am the resurrection and the life. So if we were to sum up all of this stuff, all of the gospel, Jesus says, I am the resurrection, I am the life.

And then eternal judgment is the last part of Hebrews six two again, we'll get into that more next time. But that talks about Sheol Gehenna, Hel, the lake of fire. There's a great white throne judgment that's coming where all of your hidden deeds will be exposed and there'll be a separation of sheep and goats.

So in Roman there's a Roman's road, I'll just skip over that for now. Again, but the elementary teachings, any of you that's gone like an evangelism classes or in an outreach may be familiar with this. Romans wrote, does that ring a bell to anybody? Okay, so it's basically just kind of walking people through repentance, basically. So all sin falls short.

Wages of sin is death. There's a gift of God for eternal life, that while we were sinners, Christ died for us. So if you confess with your mouth, believe in your heart that Jesus was raised from the dead, you'll be saved, and there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

As you continue to read through chapter six, there's some questions about, hey, can I lose my salvation? We'll talk about that next time, but maybe I'll just go to the last two slides.

So there's warnings about growing cold. So again, we're talking about stopping up our ears, we're talking about milk, and we're talking about discipline and righteousness. And wrapped up between five and six, it's saying, hey, there's things that you should know that you're not seeming to understand. And basically I'm concerned about your salvation, you're not seeming to get it. And that's not an isolated instance.

In the writing of Hebrews, Jesus says in revelation, hey, you're lukewarm. You're neither hot nor you're cold. Pick one. Pick a side, but stop trying to dance in the middle because you're lukewarm. I'm going to spit you out.

So Jesus from his mouth is saying, I recognize those that are mine and I recognize those that aren't. You're playing a game. You're a hypocrite. Pick a side and choose. The side you picked is you're trying to do half and half.

It's not going to work. Pick one. Also, Jesus said in Matthew 13 about the farmer and the seed, how some would spring up really quick and then the pressures of life would dry that thing out. Whether it's rocky soil or weeds, some fruit would spring up quickly and then life would happen and whoop, you'd lose all your fruit. So there's an admonition to have good soil in your heart, to be receptive to the words of Christ, to produce a good harvest.

And then finally, even in Galatians, Paul is kind of rebuking them a bit. He's saying, you guys are dumb. You're acting foolish. You clearly saw Christ crucified, you clearly began a journey with him. And now I'm noticing that you're trying to finish God's work in your own strength, and that's dumb.

You're being foolish. God didn't save you because of your works. He saved you because of his mercy. Get back to God. Get back to mercy.

So the last, very last slide, I'll just leave you with this. And as the worship band kind of sings us out, something I want you to contemplate. So in John 17, it says, now, this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you've sent. So this is eternal life, that they know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he sent. Do you know God?

Not. Have you read your Bible this week? Not. How much have you prayed this week? Have you gone on a service mission this week?

Did you swear? Did you drink alcohol? Did you smoke a sleep? None of that doesn't matter. Do you know him and does he know you?

So, growth happens basically in one of four ways. I added the first one. You know, when I first broke this out, I just had confession, repentance and humility. But for me, confession is even. You need something prior to that.

You need to be convicted by the Holy Spirit. Without a conviction from the Holy Spirit, you're just reciting words. So I guess the challenge during the last song here is ask. During this time, would you just ask God to inspect you, ask him to bring conviction to your life. And if that scares you, maybe that's a good thing.

You know what I mean? Like, if you're saying God, would you convict me of such and such? If you don't have faith that God is real, you're probably not expecting anything in return. But if you think God is real and you think God can speak to you and you think God is directing your life, if you say, God, would you convict me of whatever thing I don't see in faith, you can believe that he will. And he'll challenge you in certain ways to say yes to him in that thing and say no.

He'll give you the strength to say no to it. Amen. All right, so let's take a few minutes, just as we close to ask God to search us. Thank you. I'm just reminded, as we're worshiping and praying and stuff, sometimes if you hear a message that's, like, about sin, it can bring a lot of condemnation and guilt and shame.

It's not the point of this. The point of this is there's joy in victory. Jesus Christ paid the victory for you. So don't leave here somber. Don't leave here dejected.

Leave here thankful that Christ redeemed you, that he rescued you, that he paid a price for you. And there is a path to victory through obedience for each and every one of us. Amen. All right. So go in God, go in peace.

Have an awesome fourth. Bless you. Thank you.