

# The Living God Ministries, Inc.

PO Box 2784  
Eugene, Oregon 97402  
Ph. 541-461-3337  
Email: [billgloverlgm@comcast.net](mailto:billgloverlgm@comcast.net)

## GOING ON TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

By Bill Glover

The first three verses of Hebrews 6 contain information that each true follower of Christ should take to heart. Ironically, one seldom hears this passage read and expounded. Yet, in fact, these three verses **OUTLINE** the life of a true follower of Christ - - the very **FOUNDATION** of eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

Let us slowly and carefully study these three verses and drink in of their meaning. Remember that Christ said, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by those words that proceed from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). And Paul added, "All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for **TEACHING, REBUKING, CORRECTING and TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS**, so that the man of God (true Christians) may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). These words will become most important as you study this article.

Hebrews 6:1 reads (I am using the Amplified version of the Bible) "Therefore let us **GO ON and GET PAST the ELEMENTARY STAGE** in the teachings and doctrine of Christ, the Messiah, **ADVANCING STEADILY TOWARD THE COMPLETENESS AND PERFECTION THAT BELONGS TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY.**"

Stop and think deeply about what we just read from God. Read that verse again. Drink in of its meaning. Note that this verse states we are to **GET BEYOND** the foundation matters involving our calling. When one builds a new **BUILDING** he must first build the **FOUNDATION** to support that structure. The foundation is **NOT** the building but is the basis [or footing] on which the building is constructed.

This passage then shows that there are matters that represent the **SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION** for the support of the **SPIRITUAL EDIFICE** (building) we are to be constructing as a Godly person - - as a **SON OF GOD** (Romans 8:14-17).

Keep in mind that the foundation is **NOT** the building but merely the substance that supports the building. It is the building that houses and shelters you - - **NOT** the foundation. It is most important that we fully understand this point.

At this point we also need to fully understand John 6:44. JESUS Christ stated very clearly that "No one can come to me UNLESS the Father who sent me draws him." It is clear then that no one can become a true follower of Jesus Christ UNLESS GOD THE FATHER CHOOSES AND CALLS HIM. The rest of mankind is *blinded* (see John 12:40, Romans 11:7, 2 Corinthians 3:14 and 2 Corinthians 4:4).

It is important that you understand these points IN THE EVENT YOU ARE ONE OF THOSE CHOSEN AND CALLED BY THE FATHER. If you are one of those NOT called and chosen by God, you will merely perish with the rest of mankind in the coming cataclysm.

The second portion of Hebrews 6:1 reads (Amplified translation) "Let us not again be laying the foundation of repentance and abandonment of dead works [dead formalism], and of the faith [by which you turned] to God." The point should be clear to all of us. When you construct an edifice (the Christian person) you do not keep laying a foundation on top of the foundation already laid. You build your spiritual house using the foundation so as to support that which you are building.

The truly converted person is ONLY "CONVERTED" ONCE. This conversion comes from God the Father (as we see from John 6:44). This is a "ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE." Once the Father converts you, you are given the ability to REPENT and to understand the words of God as found in the Bible. Having repented of your sins [the breaking of God's laws] you are then baptized and you receive the laying on of hands for the receipt of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Timothy 4:14). However, it is imperative that each of us understands and fully grasps what is involved in this calling from God. Once God calls you to Himself, HE DOES NOT CHANGE HIS MIND. As Paul explained in Romans 11:29, "God's gifts and call are IRREVOCABLE." This points out how serious the matter is. If God the Father has called you to Himself then you will not be able to escape that calling even if it takes the great tribulation to wake you up!

It is with extreme sadness that I report that several people from various parts of this earth have notified me they are dropping out of this quest for salvation because the trials they face are too severe. It seems these people think we humans can "TURN ON" or "TURN OFF" our quest for salvation at OUR own convenience. Perhaps they believe God is merely going to give up on them. Obviously they do not realize that "This grace (this calling) was given to us in Christ Jesus BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF TIME" (2 Timothy 1:9). From the very beginning of time God's plan and purpose was that of creating us and bringing us into His Kingdom. Do we think God is going to give up that plan because of the weakness of our human flesh? None of us will escape that calling just as Jonah was unable to escape his calling. Even if you are not one specifically called by the Father; YOUR TIME WILL COME LATER and when that time comes you will not be able to escape that calling. God has many options that can and will humble us and make us willing to listen to and respond to His calling. If any of you think your road is difficult today then just wait until God puts you in a vice and begins to break your carnal human will and make it willing to respond to Him. Remember Job's experience as God humbled him and brought him to repentance (see Job40:1-5 and42:3-6). Job finally saw himself as God saw him and saw the need to bitterly repent.

One woman wrote to me that she is finding it necessary to "GO UNDERGROUND" [whatever that means] since her trials were so great. I genuinely feel for this person and many others who

are sliding away from the God they once knew. In the correspondence I had with these people God's Spirit in me bore witness with God's Spirit in them that **THEY ARE AMONG THOSE GOD HAS CALLED**. Thus, they are not going to be allowed to slip out of Christ's grasp. Christ made a dogmatic pledge that He would **NOT LOSE A SINGLE PERSON** the Father had given to Him (John 6:35 – 40).

Thus, this is a stern warning to anyone who is faltering [finds himself spiritually lethargic] in his or her calling. If you are one of those the Father has called and chosen **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ESCAPE!** God will eventually harvest you even if it takes having you go through the great tribulation. I am not trying to scare any of you but merely pointing out that God will finish the work He has begun in you. If we do not truly work at changing our character (through help from the Holy Spirit) then we just will not be in God's kingdom. My motive is to allow you to see **WHERE YOU STAND BEFORE YOUR MAKER** and to hopefully give you the incentive to begin making those necessary changes..

Lets us get back to Hebrews 6 and review what we are learning. These three verses state clearly that there are certain teachings or practices that make up **THE FOUNDATION** of the true Christian faith. Let me list them at this point.

No. 1: Repentance being the first step a person takes once called by God.

No. 2: Abandonment of dead works. Most of us came out of a religious background made up of dead works **OR WORKS THAT LEAD TO DEATH**. God clearly states "There is a way that **SEEMS RIGHT** to humans but it leads to death (Proverbs 14:12). We were taught that certain things were sin or we were taught that if we are good little boys and girls we get to go to heaven even though the Bible refutes such a teaching. As 1 Peter 1:18–19 states **WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED FROM THE EMPTY WAY OF LIFE HANDED DOWN TO US BY OUR HUMAN FATHERS**. Thus, when we are converted to God and by God we are to **ABANDON** our former way of life because it had no meaning and no future but leads to death!

No. 3: Faith in God. This means faith in the true God of the Bible who is actually unknown by the peoples of this world including most of those claiming to be "Christian" (Acts 17:23). We proclaim the **"UNKNOWN GOD OF THE BIBLE."**

No.4). Baptism **IN A WATERY GRAVE** (translated "purifying" in the Amplified version).

No.5). Laying on of hands (for the receipt of the Holy Spirit).

No. 6): The resurrection from the dead [the reward - - **SALVATION** - - of the saved].

No. 7): Eternal judgment [either entry into the kingdom of God or a total cessation of life].

No. 8): Punishment [the final end of those who reject God].

Let me repeat again that these eight (8) points make up or compose the very **FOUNDATION** [the **BASIS**] of the "spiritual house" God is building in each true follower. The first thing a person

should do in building a house is make certain it has a good and solid FOUNDATION. Therefore in order to correctly "FOLLOW CHRIST" one must TRULY repent by acknowledging that he has allowed sin to cut him off from God and salvation. He must also have complete faith in the Almighty God; must be baptized (immersed) in water; must have the laying on of hands for the receipt of the Holy Spirit; must believe in the resurrection from the dead and that God will judge and punish those who refuse to repent and change [recognizing there will be a time we must all answer for our human deeds].

If and when a person has followed and complied with these FOUNDATIONAL points he has then and there laid his FOUNDATION for eternal life with God. But true Christianity" does not end there. One must GO ON TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY. Turning to Hebrews 5:11-13 we read: "We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain BECAUSE YOU ARE SLOW TO LEARN. 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 (spiritually), is not acquainted with the teachings of righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have TRAINED THEMSELVES to distinguish good from evil."

Have you ever taken the time to slowly digest the words in this passage so as to grasp and understand what it is saying to you personally? We need to take the time to break this passage down phrase by phrase and see what it is telling us. This passage states clearly that if we have only laid the basic foundation but have not GONE ON TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY we cannot and will not be able to acquaint ourselves with the true "TEACHINGS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS." But note also that we must each "TRAIN OURSELVES" IN DISTINGUISHING GOOD FROM EVIL. This is an on-going process of continual spiritual growth.

Paul clearly followed God's instructions to His true ministry as found in Isaiah 58:1-2 when he boldly stated (Hebrews 5:11) "YOU ARE SLOW TO LEARN." Paul was not complimenting these people who were Hebrews and supposedly schooled in God's ways. Let us carefully stress each point Paul is making in this passage, point by point.

Point no. 1): You are slow to learn

Point no. 2): By now you should be teachers.

Point no. 3): You actually need someone to teach you

Point no. 4): You need to learn the ELEMENTARY TRUTHS of God's Word.

Point no. 5): You need milk

Point no. 6): You are not ready for solid (spiritual) foods

Point no. 7): Those living on the milk of the word, being a spiritual Infant, ARE NOT

ACQUAINTED WITH THE TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT IS IN GOD.

Point no. 8): Solid (spiritual) food is for the (spiritually) MATURE.

Point no. 9): By CONSTANT USE spiritually mature people TRAIN themselves spiritually.

Point no. 10): The spiritually mature person can then DISTINGUISH GOOD FROM EVIL.

All of those ten points were made by Paul in the last three verses of chapter 5 in preparation for what he then said in the first three verses of chapter 6. Let us again go over these ten specific points very slowly and deliberately and see what we can learn.

[NOTE: Take the time to read and digest each of those ten points]

Paul was speaking to people who "claimed" to be the people of God. He vividly pointed out that they were spiritually immature - - mere babes spiritually speaking. It obviously did not dissuade Paul from bluntly telling those Hebrews how God regarded them. Can each of you contemplate that this is a message for you today? Just how mature are you spiritually? Are you slow to learn about the ways of God? Are you actually qualified to be teachers about God and His kingdom? Are you able to move beyond the elementary points about God SO THAT YOU CAN BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH THE TEACHING ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS? Are you constantly TRAINING YOURSELF TO DISTINGUISH GOOD FROM EVIL?

As Hebrews 6:1 states, "We are to go on beyond the elementary teachings about Christ AND GO ON TO MATURITY." The elementary points are nothing more than the foundation. But we cannot live solely ON A FOUNDATION since we need a SPIRITUAL HOUSE. We build our spiritual house by MOVING ON to GREATER SPIRITUAL GROWTH - - TO MATTERS OF GREATER IMPORTANCE (Matthew 23:23).

Let me use a basic point to illustrate what Paul is saying here. I have found many people becoming quite uncomfortable when I refer to James 1:19-26. Let's study these verses to see what God is telling us.

Verse 19: We are to be quick to LISTEN, slow to SPEAK and slow to ANGER. If we are honest with ourselves then we each must admit how far short we fall in that area. The problem is that we each recognize that we fall short but we do not EXERCISE OUR SPIRITUALITY by an in-depth INTERNAL EVALUATION OF OUR OWN HUMAN NATURE AND WHERE IT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED!

James continues by stating that "man's anger does not bring about the RIGHTEOUS LIFE that God desires in us!" (Vs. 20). Then James instructs us to get rid of ALL MORAL FILTH AND THE EVIL THAT IS SO PREVALENT and in humility ACCEPT THE WORD PLANTED IN US WHICH IS WHAT SAVES US! (Vs. 21).

Verse 22 is quite profound. We are not to just "listen" to the word (of God) WE ARE TO DO IT! If we are not doing these things in our daily lives then we are deceiving ourselves into believing we are "righteous" when we are not. The point is quite simple. It is not enough to merely "look" into the Bible OR JUST TALK ABOUT THESE THINGS - - we must DO WHAT IT SAYS!

Verse 25 says we are to LOOK INTENTLY into that word and not forget what we see there. Note that James says a person who does NOT do what it says "goes away and IMMEDIATELY FORGETS WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE (TO GOD).

Verse 26 vividly points out how a true follower of Christ MUST KEEP A TIGHT REIN ON HIS TONGUE. God says that a person who does not keep a tight rein on his tongue DECEIVES HIMSELF AND HIS RELIGION IS ALL IN VAIN! Those are the words of God by which we are all going to be judged.

We all look into a literal mirror each day to comb our hair, brush our teeth, wash our face and adjust our clothing. We do this in hopes of gaining a favorable impression from other humans. This passage shows we should be LOOKING INWARDLY INTO OUR SOULS AND CHARACTER SO AS TO SEE OURSELVES AS GOD SEES US. In this way we can see where we need to change our nature and character so that it can become more like that of Christ so as to gain a favorable reaction from God. We see where we fall short and, by God's grace, are able to go to God for the help needed to change.

Let me take this point one step further to illustrate the point. Take the time to evaluate your own life. Ask yourself if there is another human being you have hard feelings against. If you are honest with yourself you will recognize such a person in your life whom you have trouble forgiving. So you harbor these resentments against that person. Yet what does Jesus Christ Himself say on the subject? His clear teachings are specifically set forth in His instructions about prayer as found in Matthew 6:12-15. But we should first consider Matthew 5:23-24 which lays the foundation for Matthew 6:12-15. Christ could not be clearer. He states that if ( when we approach God in offering any service to Him) we remember or are reminded that another human has something against us or we have something against another, we MUST STOP OUR EFFORT TO OFFER SERVICE TO GOD AND FIRST GO AND RECONCILE WITH OUR BROTHER. Christ states that our service to Him will NOT be accepted UNLESS OR UNTIL we correct these difficulties.

Now let us read Matthew 6:12-15. Here we find in no uncertain terms that if we cannot bring ourselves to forgive others their mistakes (or, our perceived mistakes of others) then GOD WILL NOT FORGIVE US OUR SINS! In clear language Christ is saying that to be unforgiving is in REALITY AN UNPARDONABLE SIN! We may be committing an unpardonable sin and not recognize it as such! BUT GOD KNOWS and our sins remain until we reconcile with our brother and with God!

What then is the point of all this? Going back to Hebrews 6 we can see that following these clear and specific instructions from Christ is the way we move from the FOUNDATIONAL issues to greater heights of SPIRITUAL MATURITY! Christ also showed in Matthew 23:23 that THERE ARE WEIGHTIER (MORE IMPORTANT) MATTERS of the law such as JUSTICE, MERCY AND FAITHFULNESS. And, as Paul expounded in 1 Corinthians 13, if we [who claim to be followers of Christ] do not *show, display and exemplify* that true love of God by being willing to forgive others then WE ARE NOTHING TO GOD and are actually cut off from God.

Many believe they possess great knowledge of God's "truths" which supposedly stands them in good stead with God. Yet, God says that, regardless of how much knowledge we think we have, if one does not have this true love of God he is nothing to God [study 1 Corinthians 13]. Even if one gives his body to be burned in martyrdom and if he does not possess and exemplify this true love of God such a sacrifice NETS HIM NOTHING. The same is true even if we are willing to give our wealth to feed the poor and even if we have the faith to move mountains. Doing the things that show the character of God in us enables us to GO ON TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY and, as we found in Hebrews 5:11-13, become acquainted with the teachings of righteousness and being trained by these spiritual truths so that we can distinguish between good and evil!

The point of all this is really quite simple. If you and I have laid the FOUNDATION as described in Hebrews 6:1-3 [i.e. accepted Christ as Savior through repentance and baptism and understanding about the resurrection and judgment] then we are REQUIRED BY GOD TO GO ON TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY. We must go forward and build our SPIRITUAL HOUSE where Jesus Christ can reside through the Holy Spirit. It is not enough to merely "profess" Christ; one must LIVE AS CHRIST LIVED lest he become a cast away.

What about you? Where do you stand at this very moment before God? Are you personally getting rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent? (James 1:21). For example, how much time do you waste with ill feelings against another rather than time spent in the study of God's word - - the Holy Bible? And as verse 22 says, are you ACCEPTING these words of God to be planted in you: WORDS THAT CAN AND WILL SAVE YOU? Exactly what are your priorities? Only you can answer these questions before God your Creator!

We are each then facing some tough questions about ourselves. Have we laid this FOUNDATION mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-3? Has God ANOINTED you and set His seal of OWNERSHIP and put His Spirit in your heart AS A DEPOSIT guaranteeing WHAT IS YET TO COME? (STUDY 2 Corinthians 1:21-22). Are you using the FOUNDATION to build and support your SPIRITUAL HOUSE? If not, why not? Where are the fruits of the Holy Spirit in your life? (See Galatians 5:22-26).

Going on to spiritual maturity means we are diligently looking into that mirror of God's word and learning where we are short spiritually and then we go to God for the help needed to overcome these human weaknesses- - we are to GROW in the GRACE and KNOWLEDGE of our Lord

Then in Hebrews 6:4-6 Paul delivers an extremely serious warning to all of us. If we are among those God the Father has called and chosen and added to His church we dare not allow spiritual lethargy and lukewarmness, animosity or the cares of this world trip us up and keep us out of the kingdom.

This message has only scratched the surface on this topic. We have printed material available on this subject and others that will help you see what God says you should be doing so as to move from these foundation points to TRUE SPIRITUAL MATURITY. We cannot do this for you but we can show you what the Bible teaches.

The Living God Ministry is NOT trying to get you to "follow us" or our group. What we are doing is encouraging you to FOLLOW CHRIST as outlined in the Bible. We have printed material that will guide you in building your spiritual house by showing how you can get beyond foundational matters and go on to TRUE SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND MATURITY.

In closing let me give you one final bit of encouragement as found in 2 Timothy 1:6-12. "For this reason I remind you to FAN INTO FLAME. ["Stir up" (KJV) the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of *power, of love and of self discipline*. . . but join me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and CALLED US TO A HOLY LIFE - - not because of anything we have done but THROUGH HIS OWN PURPOSE and grace. THIS GRACE WAS GIVEN TO US IN CHRIST BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF TIME, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death (through the resurrection) and ***BROUGHT LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT THROUGH THE GOSPEL*** . . . I am not ashamed because I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED AND AM CONVINCED THAT HE IS ABLE TO GUARD WHAT I HAVE ENTRUSTED TO HIM FOR THAT DAY. . . Guard the good deposit (of the Holy Spirit) that was entrusted to you - - guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit that lives in you!"

God has now used this article to help those the Father has called and chosen get past the foundational issues so as to begin to make real spiritual growth and maturity in their quest for salvation.

May God help each one of you reading this learn how to build your spiritual house on Christ.