

## Rebuke of the Babes in Christ (Part II)

*Hebrews 5:13-14*

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Introduction: We interrupted our study in the Psalms last week to find out more about Melchizedek, mentioned in Psalm 110. He is first mentioned in Genesis 14, then in Psalm 110:4; & then again in Hebrews 5-7. As the writer of Hebrews begins to set forth the superiority of Christ's Priesthood, he says that Christ was "*called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec*" (5:10). He then says, "*Of whom we have many things to say, & hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing*" (5:11). He will continue with his discussion of Melchisedec in 6:20 & chapter 7. But before he does so, he speaks to his readers who should be much further along in their spiritual maturity (& able to benefit from a deeper study of Melchisedec). Last week we considered the rebuke of the babes in Christ in verses 11 & 12 of chapter 5. There we noted such rebuke declared & defined. Tonight we come to verses 13 & 14 where we see the rebuke of the babes in Christ demonstrated. Note with me tonight the contrast between dependence upon the milk of the Word (:13) & discernment with the meat of the Word (:14).

### I. **Dependence** upon the milk of the Word (5:13)

A. Indicates immaturity (still needing a "bottle").

B. Indicates inexperience - "*unskilful*" ("unacquainted with the Word").

1. No experience in the Word ("*of righteousness*" - instruction to live righteously).
2. No experience in the work (involvement in teaching, outreach, etc.).
3. Yet, plenty of experience in the world ("worldly-wise").

C. Immaturity and inexperience can lead to indifference.

### II. **Discernment** with the meat of the Word (:14)

A. "*By reason of use*" – the need for discipline:

[Implies attendance at all services (Heb. 10:25) & attitude at all services (Acts 10:33).]

1. Spiritually matured - Ephesians 4:14-15.

a. "*Of full age*" – "of mature maturity."

b. "*No more children*" (Eph. 4:14) & "*may grow up into Him*" (4:15).

Application: Note Ephesians 4:12 – the responsibility of the "*pastors & teachers*" (literally, the "pastor-teacher") to equip the saints for the exercise of the ministry that the body of Christ might be edified. This is also the responsibility of "*evangelists*."

2. Faithfully serving (as a workman) - II Timothy 2:15.

B. "*Senses exercised to discern*" – the need for discernment:

[ "*Senses*" – only time this word is used in the N.T. It refers to "aesthetic senses" – spiritual intuition developed by attaining maturity in the Scriptures. "*Exercised*" – from which comes our word "gymnastics" & speaks of acquiring discernment just as an athlete trains & disciplines his body for competition.]

1. Seeing things through God's eyes - Ephesians 5:10; John 7:24.

a. That which is pleasing to the Lord > Philippians 1:10.

b. That which is displeasing to the Lord > Proverbs 6:16-19 (& cf. Psalm 97:10).

2. Serving God as a “wise-man” - Proverbs 1:7 & 9:10

- a. “*Try the spirits...*” > I John 4:1.
- b. “*Prove all things...*” > I Thess. 5:21.

Illustration: Consider a small child, crawling on the floor - he will stick anything into his mouth; touch anything within his reach; go anywhere he can crawl - unable to discern what is good for him or dangerous to him. Spiritual parallel?? Our discernment between right & wrong, true or false, helpful or harmful. Examples: Temptation? Do we recognize it & resist it, before it takes control (see I Corinthians 10:12-13 & Romans 13:14)? Taking offense? Do we realize the need of being slow to take offense as well as slow to give offense (see James 1:19-20)?

Conclusion: Again I ask, would you be considered a babe in Christ? Are you ignorant of the Word of God? Have you become indifferent to the things of God? Or have you matured to the place where you can be a teacher? Are you still dependent upon the milk of the Word, or are you growing in discernment with the meat of the Word? These Christians (babes in Christ in Heb. 5) knew at least this much (6:1-2). How well could you define or explain or teach concerning the milk of the Word listed in Hebrews 6:1-2? By God's grace, may we build upon the foundation of the milk of God's Word and go on to perfection. Chapter 6:1 says, “...*let us go on unto perfection.*” The verb here is passive, meaning, “let us be moved along.” “Maturity will not be attained by personal effort as much as by personal surrender to God, Who alone can accomplish the needed perfection” (Hindson). “*And this will we do, if God permit*” (Hebrews 6:3). God is willing & he has promised to us such “perfection” in Hebrews 13:20-21. Will you claim this promise?