

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Hebrews 5:12-6:3**.
- B. From Roy H. Enoch.
- C. Thesis: To show why the “first principles” are important.
- D. The Hebrew Xians had forgotten the first principles (5:12-13).
 - 1. A very common statement from a coach whose team has been struggling is: “We need to get back to the fundamentals.”
 - 2. Often when a Xian is struggling with sin and worldliness in his life, “he needs to get back to the first principles.”
 - 3. As long as there are young people who need instruction, untaught people who need understanding and unfaithful Xians who need restoration, we need to continue to emphasize the “first principles.”
- E. We need to identify what we mean by “first principles.”
 - 1. I would identify the “first principles of Xianity” by looking at Jesus’ final instructions to the apostles (Mt. 28:19-20).
 - 2. Mt. 28:19 refers to “first principles”: the things one must **know**, **believe**, and **do** in order to become a Xian.
 - 3. Mt. 28:20, “...teaching them to observe **all things** that I have commanded you...” as the solid food of a growing and maturing Xian.
 - 4. Another way of describing “first principles” would be to refer to the fundamental principles upon which Xianity is based.
 - a. God created all things and maintains them.
 - b. The Bible is God’s word.
 - c. God requires man to worship Him according to His word.
 - d. All men have sinned and are lost.
 - e. X died for all and offers eternal salvation to all who will obey Him, etc.
 - 5. Perhaps 5:12 includes both classes of doctrines.

I. A BUILDING IS NO STRONGER THAN ITS FOUNDATION.

- A. The Hebrew writer specifically lists several things as “first principles” (Heb. 6:1-3):
 - 1. “...repentance from dead works”
 - 2. “...of faith toward God,”
 - 3. “...of the doctrine of baptisms,”
 - 4. “...of laying on of hands,”
 - 5. “...of resurrection of the dead,”
 - 6. “...of eternal judgment.”
- B. These are foundational principles of Xianity. One cannot live only on a foundation, nor build without one.
- C. Since these principles were taught by X, to build upon them is to build upon X, the only foundation (1Cor. 3:11).
 - 1. The integrity of a house depends on the strength of its foundation (Mt. 7:24-27).
 - 2. Our lives must be built on doing the teachings of X or they will eternally fail.

II. THE FIRST PRINCIPLES ARE THE “ORACLES OF GOD.”

- A. See Heb. 5:12-14.
- B. “Oracles” (Gk. *logion*) means the “divine utterances of God” (Isa. 1:2; Jn. 12:48).
- C. Peter admonished us to “speak as the oracles of God” (1Pet. 4:11).
 - 1. A Bible class should have a focus on studying the Bible.
 - 2. Preaching should be a proclamation of “thus says the Lord.”
 - 3. Paul warned that men would prefer to hear “fables” (2Tim. 4:2-4).

4. There are two dangers mentioned in our text:
 - a. Some did **not even learn** the “first principles of the oracles of God” and needed to be re-taught over and over again (5:12-14).
 - b. Some would not **leave** the first principles and go on to “perfection” or maturity to the more advanced principles.

III. THE FIRST PRINCIPLES ARE PART OF THE DOCTRINE OF X.

- A. See Heb. 6:1.
- B. Our relationship to God is determined by our faithfulness to the doctrines of X (2Jn. 9).
- C. Timothy is urged to “take heed to the doctrine” (1Tim. 4:16).
- D. We have just noticed Paul’s warning to Timothy of those who “turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables” (2Tim. 4:4).

IV. THE FIRST PRINCIPLES FORM THE BASIS FOR XIAN PERFECTION.

- A. The word “perfection” here means completer, or the one who consummates (from *Strong’s*). It is often translated, mature, full grown, or complete (1Cor. 2:6).
- B. The marks of Xian “perfection” or “maturity” are set forth in God’s word.
 1. The “perfect” or mature person eats the meat of God’s word (5:12-14).
 2. He can discern between good and evil (5:14).
 3. He controls his tongue (Jas. 3:1-2).
 4. He loves his enemies (Mt. 5:48).
 5. He realizes his imperfections (Phil. 3:13-14).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Why should we preach and emphasize the first principles?
 1. The young and non-religious must be taught.
 2. Error must be combated.
 3. The lost must be converted.
 4. The faithful need to be reminded (1Tim. 4:6).
- B. We must understand and teach the first principles, but we must also go beyond them to the solid food of God’s word.
- C. Build your life on the foundation of the first principles and then go beyond to maturity (Heb. 12:28).
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.