**Through Faith and Patience**

*Hebrews 6:9-12*

**Introduction**

1. After having introduced Jesus as our High Priest ***“according to the order of Melchizedek,”*** the Hebrew writer paused the progression of his thought to reprove his readers (**cf. Hebrews 5:10-11)**.
   1. ***“dull of hearing”*** – (dull – sluggish), when paired with hearing indicated mental dullness. (Not that they could not hear, but their spiritual intellect had atrophied.) He explains 🡪
   2. **5:12-14** – The Hebrews had been negligent in their spiritual walk. They were not growing as they should have been, and were thus immature.
   3. **6:4-8** – If they did not straighten up, apostasy was a real and present danger.
      1. ***Upon being enlightened by God’s word, they should put what they know to practice. This translates into growth.***
      2. **(v. 7-8)** – an illustration of a field taking in water. If you bear useful herbs you will be blessed. If you bear thorns, you will be cursed and burned. (Same for the Hebrews. Bear fruit to/for God!)
2. After this necessary reproof and warning, the writer continues on to exhortation **(cf. 6:9-12)**.
   1. **(v. 9)** – Although they were displaying evidence of apathy leading to spiritual immaturity, the writer expresses confidence in their response to his reproof.
   2. **(v. 10-11)** – Their past has been with expressions of love toward God and His saints, and he encourages them to continue this type of work ***“until the end.”***
   3. **(v. 12)** – To conclude this exhortation, he commands that they imitate others who had lived before them.
      1. ***“do not become sluggish”***
      2. Have ***“faith.”***
      3. Have ***“patience.”***
      4. In doing so, you will inherit the promises of God.
3. We should heed the same instruction. Without consistent effort, faith, and patience, we cannot inherit the promises. 🡪
4. *“do not become sluggish”*
5. Sluggishness Reveals a loosened grip on hope.
   1. **(v. 11)** – They were to have diligence – a stark contrast to sluggishness.
   2. **2 Timothy 1:8-12** – Paul expressed a diligent spirit in his work as an apostle and preacher.
      1. He fully committed his life to God in the preaching of the gospel.
      2. **He had full confidence that God would provide salvation for him.**
      3. **This was acted out in diligent labor in the gospel.**
   3. **Philippians 3:12-14** – If Paul did not have the mind to press on it would have expressed an absence of hope in the goal.
   4. God ***“has begotten us again to a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3)*** – It is alive, and active.
6. Sluggishness forfeits the prize.
   1. **Ephesians 2:10** – We are to be workers for God. (What we are created for in Christ.)
   2. **James 1:22-25** – Only the doers of the word will be blessed.
7. ***During this time of diligence, we must not forget the virtues that allow us to continue on. Two of which the Hebrew writer expressed 🡪***
8. Faith
9. Trust in God is a must – **Hebrews 11:6**
   1. **Hebrews 6:13-18** – We must trust in God’s immutable (unchangeable) faculties, and the two actions He took that are in and of themselves immutable.
      1. Promise – God cannot break a promise. (However, promises have conditions, and if the conditions aren’t met then the end of the promise is not seen.)
      2. Oath – men take oaths to eradicate doubt. (God took this oath, or swore by, Himself – there is nobody greater.)
   2. **Revelation 2:8-11** – Our faith must be that which exists in the direst circumstances.
      1. This is a quality that is scorned by the world.
      2. It is noted as “radicalism” or “extremism.” This is what God calls for. It is not negative, but honorable, and rewarded by God.
      3. We should be willing to die for our God in faith that He will deliver us from the ***“second death”*** – which is eternal and far worse.
   3. The Hebrew writer mentioned Abraham. He had this “extremist” faith. 🡪
10. Abraham’s trust.
    1. **Romans 4:18-22** – Abraham was given the nation and seed promise which God ultimately fulfilled.
       1. These two promises were predicated upon God’s ability to give Him a son **(v. 21** – *Abraham was convinced at God’s ability to do this.*).
       2. **This did not come without proving his faith to be what the world today would consider as “radical” or “extreme.”**
    2. **Hebrews 11:17-19** – God promised Isaac, and fulfilled that promise, but then told Abraham to sacrifice him.
       1. This presented a dilemma. God said Isaac would be the one through whom the nation came, and the Seed came.
       2. ***God had to fulfill the promise. But Abraham could not disobey God even though killing Isaac would nullify the promise.***
       3. The solution: Abraham had faith in God.
       4. **We must have such faith/trust in God that places obedience to Him above all else.**
11. Patience
12. Patience is a God-like quality.
    1. **Galatians 5:22** – It is one of the fruits of the Spirit.
    2. **2 Peter 3:9, 15** – It is a quality God displays continually toward us, and we benefit greatly from it.
13. Patience in Relation to the Promises
    1. The patience in the context of Hebrews 6:12 is related to the promises of God, and more specifically the hope of those promises.
       1. **It is the temper of spirit which tolerates the delayed fulfillment of promise.**
       2. It is not that God will not fulfill His promise, but that He will do it in His own time.
       3. **This can be hard for us considering God’s eternal nature (cf. 2 Peter 3:8).**
    2. **Isaiah 40:31** – Waiting upon the Lord produces strength and faith. It draws us closer to God, and allows us that which we need to attain the promises.
    3. **James 5:7-8** – We should be patient like the farmer.
       1. The work that needed to be done was done. (We are continuing to work.)
       2. **The desired end had not been seen, but he was patient, for he knew without doubt that it was coming**.
14. Consider the Patience of Noah.
    1. **Genesis 6:3, 13, 17-18** – God saw the evil of man and made the decision to flood the earth, destroying mankind.
       1. He told Noah this, and gave him instruction to build the Ark.
       2. From the time God determined to destroy man, to the time the earth was flooded was 120 yrs (**v. 3** – *during this time Noah built the ark. Although, this does not mean it took him the full 120 yrs.*).
       3. **2 Peter 2:5** – During these 120 years, Noah preached righteousness by word, and deed. (***Consider the mockery he experienced. He had to be patient, they would see.)***
    2. **Genesis 7:10-12** – *The flooding commenced on the 600th year, 2nd month, and 17th day of Noah’s life*.
    3. **Genesis 8:13-16** – *The earth dried completely, and God told Noah and his family to leave the ark on the 601st year, 2nd month, 27th day of Noah’s life.*
       1. ***For 1 year and 10 days, Noah and his family were on the ark with all the animals.***
       2. **Along with Noah’s faith was patience. Without it, Noah would not have succeeded.**

**Conclusion**

1. The promises of God are real. They will be fulfilled, as He swore they would.
2. However, they are conditional, thus we must continue to be pleasing to the Lord.
3. **In order to attain the promises, we must have faith in God, and patience until the promises arrive!**