

## Sunday School Lesson for the Month of June 2019

### **The Church's Biggest Problem:** **Stunted Christians!**

(Hebrews 5:11-6:1)

**Sunday, June 2, 2019**

The writer of Hebrews in this text pauses in the midst of a discussion of the priesthood of Christ to direct a warning to those who claim Christ as Savior and yet resemble an army that does not care. He addresses those whose actions fail to indicate a dedication necessary for victory in the name of Christ. The Church's greatest foe has never been the forces of evil but rather the weakness and immaturity of its own membership. This word stunted means normal growth hindered.

#### **I. Stunted Christians shun Christlikeness (Hebrews 5:11)**

The word shun means to avoid deliberately. One might assume that any Christian would enjoy a discussion about the priesthood of Christ, but such is not the case. Rather, the writer of Hebrews finds it difficult to continue the discussion when he realized that a great number of Christians had no ear for it. He indicates in his writing that although he has many things to say, "it's hard to say things to a crowd of people who are dull of hearing" (v.11). How tragic it is that Christians could be described as being "dull of hearing." The word translated "dull" literally means "no push." Christians who shun Christlikeness have a sluggish mind when Christian doctrine is being discussed. It is like a limb of your body numbed when circulation is cut off. The mind can be numbed when the spiritual leadership of the Holy Spirit is smothered (cut off). Jesus often reminded his disciples that ears were to be used to hear: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The language of Hebrews 5:12 indicates that the people involved are personally responsible for this sluggish condition. It has been brought on by neglect. They are like people at church who are on their cell phones while others are worshipping and listening to the Gospel message. The imprint of Christ on such people is often difficult to recognize. There are some Christians who purposely shut God out when it comes to complete commitment. They want to be counted among the Christians, but they have a fear of being too much like Christ.

## Sundays, June 9, 16, 2019

### **II. Stunted Christians refuse responsibility (Hebrews 5:12)**

Any person that constantly refuses responsibility will produce a stunted Christian. The purpose behind being taught is that one may himself someday become a teacher. “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” (v12NIV). The writer of Hebrews is saying that, because of the length of time involved, the people to whom he is addressing should be teachers. This does not necessarily mean that every Christian should at some time teach a Sunday School class. What it means is that all Christians should become grounded in the faith to the extent that by their words and actions, they are indeed teachers. Every young Christian goes through a period of time when he needs to be spoon fed, but it was never intended that he should be spoon fed all of his life. Some people because of the length of time they have been Christians, should be mature in the faith, yet, they have an improper understanding of “the elementary truths of God’s word.” They are still dealing with the ABC’s of the Christian faith. Some people have been Christians for twenty years and still do not feel ready to assume responsibility. Such people still “need milk not solid food.” As long as such people remain bottle babies, they are “not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness” (Hebrews 5:13 NIV).

Christians who are still in the baby department are dependent on others to prepare their food for them and place it in their mouths. This stops them from ever being able to weigh matters for themselves and take a consistent stand on moral issues. Babies have no teeth and cannot chew the solid food of an adult diet: Solid food is for the mature (Hebrews 5:14 NIV). **The ultimate testament of one’s maturity is always one’s behavior.**

## Sundays, June 23, 30, 2019

### **III. Stunted Christians promote stagnation (Hebrews 6:1)**

Christians who shun Christlikeness and refuse responsibility are promoters of stagnation. The truth is that Christians who are unhappy in their life are Christians who have never discovered that Christ intends life to be an exciting journey into new areas of service.

One of the main themes of the book of Hebrews is that of Christian growth. Every Christian should have the desire to grow up in Christ. The Old prescription for stunted Christians is the one prescribed in Hebrews 6:1, “Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity (NIV). In order to reach maturity, we must surrender ourselves to the active pull of the Holy Spirit, allowing ourselves to grow on towards the goal to which God intends.