



The Forgotten Foundations of the Faith

“Christian Maturity”

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1 *the coming age, ⁶and who have fallen away. This is because, to*
2 *their own harm, they are recrucifying the Son of God and holding*
3 *him up to contempt. ⁷For the ground that drinks the rain that*
4 *often falls on it and that produces vegetation useful to those for*
5 *whom it is cultivated receives a blessing from God. ⁸But if it*
6 *produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and about to be*
7 *cursed, and at the end will be burned.*

8 *⁹Even though we are speaking this way, dearly loved friends,*
9 *in your case we are confident of things that are better and that*
10 *pertain to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not unjust; he will not forget*
11 *your work and the love you demonstrated for his name by serving*
12 *the saints—and by continuing to serve them. ¹¹Now we desire*
13 *each of you to demonstrate the same diligence for the full*
14 *assurance of your hope until the end, ¹²so that you won't become*
15 *lazy but will be imitators of those who inherit the promises*
16 *through faith and perseverance. (CSB)*

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18 1. WHAT MATURITY IS NOT.

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20 2. WHAT IS NEEDED FOR REAL MATURITY?

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22 3. WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY?

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24 Hebrews: 1-5:10 → (5:11-6:12) → 6:13-13

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26 Expository → Hortatory (aiming to exhort) → Expository

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1 The exhortation comprises four connected paragraphs:
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3 (a) In 5:11–14 the author issues a call for an attentive hearing
4 as he tells them that they are spiritually immature. Although
5 they have been engaged in the Christian walk long enough now
6 to be teachers of others, they show a dullness as learners of
7 God’s truth.
8

9 (b) 6:1–3 is an exhortation to the listeners to correct their
10 present course and move on to spiritual maturity. The challenge
11 is expressed both positively (v. 1a) and negatively (vv. 1b–2),
12 with a concluding statement of resolve (v. 3).
13

14 (c) 6:4–8 warns of the devastating consequences of apostasy.
15 The author provides an extended rationale for pursuing the
16 course proposed in 6:1–3. Where else can men and women go
17 for repentance if they reject the only one who can provide true
18 forgiveness of sins? The agricultural imagery of vv. 7–8 reinforces
19 the negative message. Destruction is inevitable for those who
20 are like unresponsive crops and do not produce good fruit.
21

22 (d) In 6:9–12 the author balances his severe warning with a
23 word of encouragement that expresses confidence in his
24 listeners. He expects that they will show the better things that
25 are related to salvation. Their past works show that they love
26 God and his people. What they need now is to overcome their
27 laziness through diligence, and to imitate those who through
28 faith and perseverance inherit God’s promises.¹

¹ O’Brien, P. T. (2010). *The Letter to the Hebrews* (p. 204). Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.