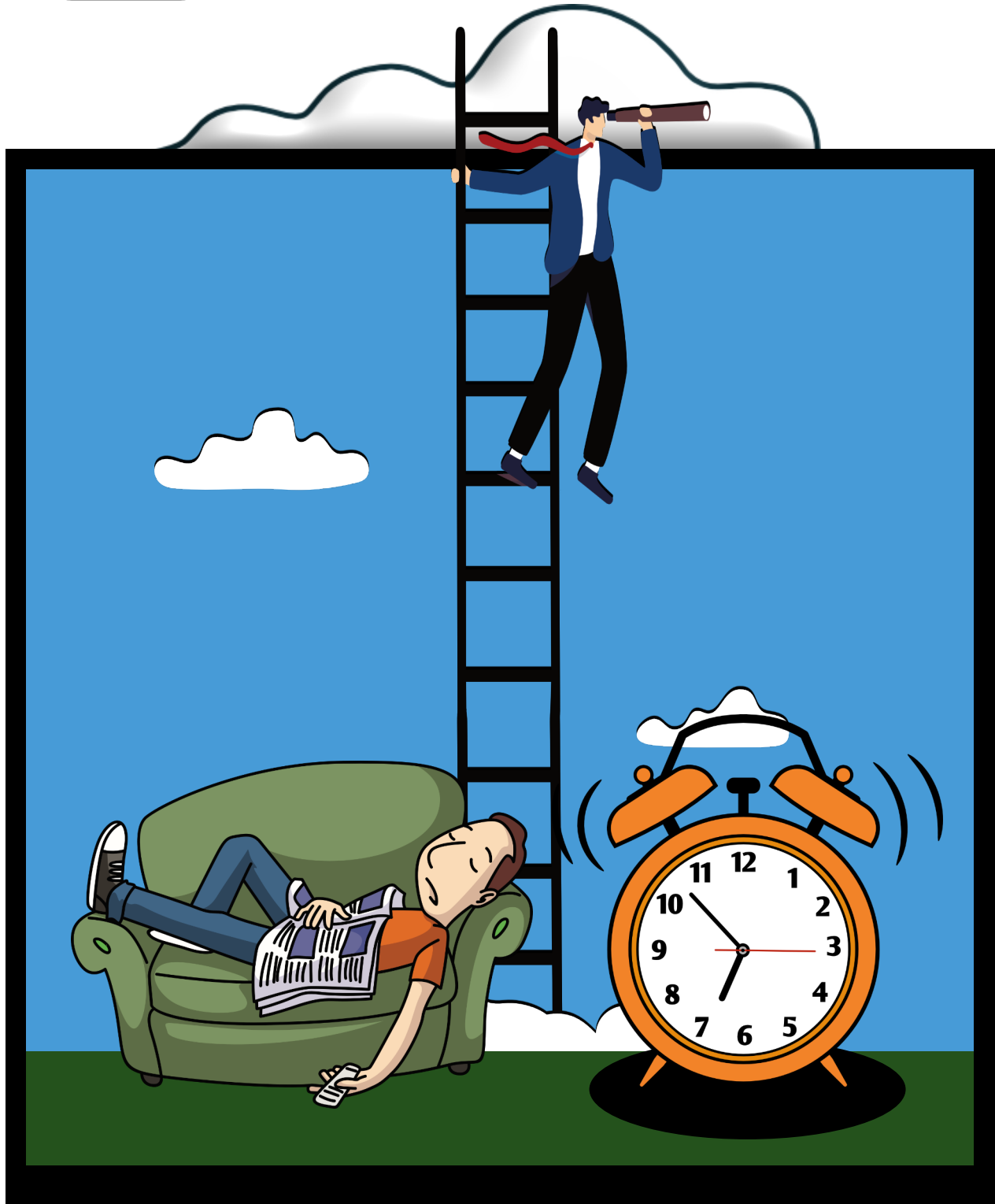




MOVING ON TO BETTER THINGS ...

—MAYBE IT IS TIME TO WAKE UP, STOP PLAYING AND LET THE LORD MOVE US ON TO THE BETTER THINGS THAT BELONG TO SALVATION—



! 1. It is time to press on to maturity, 6:1-2.

- (Hebrews 6:1–2 LSB) Therefore **leaving** the elementary teaching about the Christ, **let us press on** to maturity, **not laying again a foundation** of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of teaching about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

The phrase, "Let us go on," should be translated, "**Let us be carried forward.**" It is God who enables us to progress as we yield to Him, receive His Word, and act on it. [Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 295). Victor Books.]

"Press on" ... φέρω [phero] ... means to be borne along; to move along while one is being sustained, supported, propelled, or driven; of a gust of wind. **The NIV captures this concept.**

- (Hebrews 6:1 **NIV**) Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ **and be taken forward to maturity.**

A. The spiritual person presses on by presenting his life to God to be carried on to maturity and godliness through obedience and transformation.

- (Romans 12:1–2a LSB) Therefore I exhort you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a sacrifice—living, holy, and pleasing to God**, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.**

B. Leaving and pressing on are simultaneous—it is in effect the same decisive action.

- i. He abandons his dull, sluggish approach to the elementary teachings about Christ.
- ii. He pays much closer attention to the Scriptures regarding the gospel.
- iii. He moves on to maturity understanding the life and death implications of those teachings.

C. The person who presses on does not play with the building blocks of the elementary teachings—"laying again" the foundation.

D. He builds on the foundation and finds clarity regarding the "so great" salvation of God of which we are to not neglect (cf. 2:3).

Clarity ... clearness or lucidity as to perception or understanding; freedom from indistinctness or ambiguity; the state of having a full, detailed, and orderly mental grasp of something.

- i. He finds clarity in regard to the significance and meaning of the foundation.
- ii. He finds clarity in regard to the supremacy and centrality of Christ as our foundation.

E. We are to build carefully on the true foundation.

- (1 Corinthians 3:10–11 LSB) According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. **But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

F. The person who has become dull of hearing is like a child who merely plays on the foundation.

- i. He undermines his understanding of and confidence in the foundation—Jesus Christ.

Undermine ... erode the base or foundation of; to subvert or weaken insidiously or secretly; to ruin by degrees; to wash away supporting material from under.

- ii. His understanding of the elementary teachings has been so eroded that he needs to be taught these basic principles again.

- (Hebrews 5:12a ESV) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, **you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God.**

G. The person who does not build regresses and is left to rely only on what he thinks he has and that also will eventually be taken from him.

- (Luke 8:18 LSB) **So beware how you listen, for whoever has**, to him more shall be given; and **whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.**

H. He does not practice the word of righteousness and so foolishly builds his spiritual house without giving proper attention to the foundation.

- (Hebrews 5:14 LSB) But solid food is for the mature, **who because of practice have their senses trained to discern both good and evil.**
- (Matthew 7:24–27 LSB) **Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and does them**, may be compared to **a wise man who built his house on the rock.** 25 And the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blew and fell against that house; **and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.** 26 **And everyone hearing these words of Mine and not doing them**, may be compared to a foolish man **who built his house on the sand.** 27 And the rain descended, and

the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; **and it fell—and great was its fall.**

2. We press on to maturity by the will of God, 6:3.

- (Hebrews 6:3 LSB) And this we will do, **if God permits.**

The author and the readers will press on into the full comprehension and experience of the whole range of Christian doctrine. **But this will occur only if God is permitting. That is, any arrival at maturity by readers or author depends in the last analysis upon the sovereign enabling of God.** [Hagner, D. A. (2011). *Hebrews* (p. 88). Baker Books.]

- A. Pressing on by the will of God (“if God permits”) agrees with the use of the Greek as discussed earlier—**φέρω [phero] which means to be borne along; to move along while one is being sustained.**
- B. We obey and press on to maturity as God does his good work in our lives and we do his good pleasure.
- (Philippians 1:6 LSB) **For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it** until the day of Christ Jesus.
 - (Philippians 2:12–13 LSB) So then, my beloved, **just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

3. Some will not be moved along by God to maturity but will fall away, 6:4-8.

- (Hebrews 6:4–8 ESV) For it is **impossible**, in the case of those who have once been **enlightened**, who have **tasted** the heavenly gift, and have **shared** in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have **tasted** the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 **and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance**, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.

I used the ESV here to show the word order in the Greek text. **Impossible** precedes the participles that describe the people in this group who fall away.

6:6 ... fallen away ... παραπίπτω [parapipto] ... to fall beside a person or thing; to slip aside; to deviate

from the right path, turn aside; to fall away (from the true faith); to leave a certain state or condition.

A. This is speaking of a particular group of people who fall away and do not receive God’s blessing.

B. They had already been warned to not be like their ancestors—the ancient Israelites who fell away after the exodus from Egypt.

- (Hebrews 3:7–12 ESV) Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, **“Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,** on the day of testing in the wilderness, 9 where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. 10 Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, **‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’** 11 As I swore in my wrath, **‘They shall not enter my rest.’** 12 **Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.**

C. Falling away does not mean losing their salvation as many other Scriptures clearly teach that a person cannot lose his salvation.

- (John 10:27–29 LSB) My sheep hear My voice, **and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish—ever; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.** 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; **and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.**
- (John 6:38–39 LSB) For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 **Now this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.**

D. None of the phrases identifying this group definitively address the status of their salvation.

E. Good ground drinks the rain, yields useful fruit and receives God’s blessing.

- (Hebrews 6:7 LSB) **For ground that drinks the rain** which often falls on it and **brings forth vegetation** useful to those for whose sake it is also **tilled, receives a blessing from God.**
- (Isaiah 55:10–11 LSB) **For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,** And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And giving seed to the sower

and bread to the eater, 11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what pleases Me, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

F. Bad ground yields thorns and thistles because it is unfit (as in unapproved and not standing the test) and receives God's judgment.

- (Hebrews 6:8 LSB) But if it yields thorns and thistles, it is unfit and close to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.
- (Matthew 13:20–22 LSB) And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the one who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

G. It is impossible to restore them because their view of a lesser Christ than the Christ of Scripture holds him up to contempt by rejecting his sacrifice.

- (Hebrews 6:6 LSB) And having fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

H. It is impossible for the person who falls away to change his mind about who Christ is and the salvation work he has accomplished.


I. They never come to grasp “on Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.”

J. They never come to understand the depth, finality and completeness of Christ's finished work on the cross.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 LSB) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

K. They do not obey Christ and enter by the narrow gate but instead choose the wide gate to destruction.

- (Matthew 7:13 LSB) Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.
- (Matthew 7:21 LSB) Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.

 4. Through diligence we avoid becoming dull and realize the full assurance of the hope of the better things that belong to salvation, 6:9-12.

- (Hebrews 6:9–12 LSB) But we are convinced about you, beloved, of things that are better and that belong to salvation, though we are speaking in this way. 10 For God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and continuing to minister to the saints. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you may not become dull, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

A. The writer/pastor of Hebrews is convinced of better things for most of them.

B. But he warns—“*speaking in this way*”—because of his concern for the salvation of some in the church.

C. God is righteous and fair in his evaluation of our lives and will not forget our work and love in ministering to the saints of God.

- (Galatians 6:10 LSB) So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

D. It is by faithful diligence that we realize the full assurance of hope until the end of our lives.

E. So do not become dull but become imitators of those who faithfully endure in the promises.

- (Ephesians 5:1–2 LSB) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.