

Hebrews 6:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Analysis

The call to 'go on to maturity' (Greek 'phero epi tēn teleiotēta') doesn't mean abandoning basics but building on them. The foundation includes 'repentance from dead works' (works that don't produce life) and 'faith toward God' - the two fundamental responses to the gospel. Reformed theology sees these as inseparable: true repentance flows from faith, and true faith produces repentance. These aren't earning merit but responding to grace.

Historical Context

These basics likely formed the core of early Christian catechesis. The author assumes readers have been taught these fundamentals and should now advance to deeper understanding of Christ's priesthood and the New Covenant.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How do repentance and faith continue throughout the Christian life, not just at conversion?
2. What 'dead works' might you still rely on instead of resting in Christ's finished work?

Interlinear Text

Διὸ ἀφέντες τὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ
Therefore leaving G3588 the principles G3588 of Christ
G1352 G863 G746 G5547

λόγον ἐπὶ τὴν τελειότητα φερώμεθα μὴ πάλιν
of the doctrine toward G3588 perfection let us go on not again
G3056 G1909 G5047 G5342 G3361 G3825

θεμέλιον καταβαλλόμενοι μετανοίας ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων
the foundation laying of repentance from dead works
G2310 G2598 G3341 G575 G3498 G2041

καὶ πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν
and of faith toward God
G2532 G4102 G1909 G2316

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 9:14 (References Christ): How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

2 Corinthians 7:1 (References God): Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Hebrews 12:13 (Parallel theme): And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Acts 26:20 (Repentance): But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

Matthew 21:32 (Faith): For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Hebrews 7:11 (Parallel theme): If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

Ephesians 4:12 (References Christ): For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Matthew 3:2 (Repentance): And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

John 12:44 (Faith): Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

John 5:24 (Faith): Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.