
Words of Truth

Hebrews 5:11

By: Brian A. Yeager

This letter has given much to the reader to help in understanding more about Jesus. We have been reading about the priesthood of our Savior in our recent studies. There is much more that could have been written. Yet, we are about to have a pause in the subject matter of the priesthood of Christ. There is a problem that needed to be addressed. The Holy Spirit had these words penned: *“Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing”* (Hebrews 5:11).

The point we are looking at in this study is very important. The focus of teaching is often on the message. The message is certainly important (Psalms 19:7 and Romans 1:16). The truth has to be taught for people to have the opportunity to be saved (John 8:31-32, Romans 6:17, Colossians 1:5, I Thessalonians 2:13, II Timothy 2:24-26, James 1:18-25, and I Peter 1:21-25). The Scripture that we are studying is also important when it comes to the hearer. Is the hearer ready to hear? Is the heart of the hearer properly prepared?

The word of God can be readily available to someone so that person or persons can obey it (Deuteronomy 30:14). Yet, if the heart of that person or persons is not prepared, the word of God will not be effective. Think about Jesus’ Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23, Mark 4:1-20, and Luke 8:1-15). When the word of God was able to take root and bear fruit, the heart of the hearer was prepared to learn. Notice: *“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience”* (Luke 8:15).

Under the Law of Moses, Israel was told to set their hearts unto the words that were taught to them (Deuteronomy 32:46). Yet, future generations failed in this. In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, we see that the children of Israel obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked every one in the imagination of their evil heart (Jeremiah 11:8). They had become an evil people that refused to hear the words of the Lord (Jeremiah 13:10). The hearts of the people were not properly prepared to hear the word of God (II Chronicles 20:33 and Zechariah 7:12).

The preparation of the student of the word of God was significant when Jesus was the teacher. Notice: *“And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he*

expounded all things to his disciples... I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (Mark 4:33-34 and John 16:12). When the erring in Corinth were being addressed, Paul wrote: *"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men"* (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)?

Besides those points that we have just covered, let's think about the phrase "hard to be uttered." If you take the time to open up Strong's dictionary, you find that part of the definition of this phrase is: "difficult to explain" (Strong's # 1421). Things concerning Jesus were hard to explain because the people being addressed were dull of hearing. The word translated "dull" is defined as this: "sluggish, i.e. (literally) lazy, or (figuratively) stupid: — dull, slothful. Slow, sluggish, indolent, dull, languid" (Strong's # 3576). That Greek word is used in the next chapter of this letter and is translated "slothful" (Hebrews 6:12).

The idea being conveyed here is similar to one wherein Jesus was teaching two of His disciples after His resurrection (Luke 24:13-35). In specific, notice Jesus' statement from the aforementioned context: *"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken"* (Luke 24:25). Unfortunately, this was not an isolated problem in the first century. Even after the disciples of Christ had witnessed His teachings, works, and such things; they were slow in believing our Lord (Mark 16:1-14).

Think of this statement as being something like the writer saying, "I cannot explain this to you because you are foolishly slow in believing the truth." Remember, the churches of Galatia were soon removed from the Gospel of Christ to a perversion of said Gospel (Galatians 1:1-9). Among their problems was their reluctance of letting go of things contained in the Law of Moses. They held on to things of old, such as circumcision (Galatians 5:1-12 and Galatians 6:11-16). When Paul was attempting to correct them, he penned these words that illustrate the principle of being dull of hearing: *"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith"* (Galatians 3:1-5)?

Whether under the Law of Moses, the days of Jesus on earth, the time the Apostles taught, or even today; some people are just bent on being dull of hearing. Their hearts are not ready to learn. A willingness to hear the word of God just simply is not met with a willingness to believe it and act upon it. Don't be that person!