

Week of November 4-10

DO, RE, MI

Scripture Reading: Read Hebrews 5

“Let's start at the very beginning; A very good place to start.” So, Maria (played by Julie Andrews) declares as she launches into the song, “Do, Re, Mi,” in the movie, *The Sound of Music*. In this portion of the film, Maria is attempting to teach the von Trapp children how to sing. Because of their lack of knowledge of music, she has to take them back to the beginning, to the elementary principles of music, to Do, Re and Mi. But those first three notes are not the finished product, as Maria notes (pun intended). They are only tools used to build a song. If the children stopped at learning just the basic notes, then they wouldn't reach the goal to which the notes point. On the other hand, without that foundation of basic notes, the children would have trouble progressing to the song also.

According to the rebuke at the end of Hebrews 5, similar problems were erupting in the spiritual realm in the early church. Notice what the author says in verses 11-12: *“We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, 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!”* These believers should have been producing spiritual symphonies by now but they were having trouble remembering what note came after “fa.” They should have been able to teach others the deep truths of God's Word but they kept tripping over their “A,B,C's.” To use the author's analogy, they needed milk, not solid food.

“Milk” teachings are the elementary truths of Scripture; what we could call the basics. In the opening verses of the next chapter, the author of Hebrews provides a sample of some of these “milk” truths: repentance, faith, baptism, etc. Now, there is nothing wrong with milk. In fact, when a person is a baby, whether physically or spiritually, milk is an appropriate nutritional choice. The apostle Peter confirms this when he writes: *“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation”* (1 Peter 2:2). The danger, though, is when believers never mature to solid food because they were stunted in their spiritual growth. Such a condition existed in the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 3:1-3) and it was happening again here in Hebrews.

So, how do we as believers progress from milk to solid food? It doesn't come simply by learning more doctrinal truths (although it is important we do so). Rather, it comes from acting on the truth we already have until it becomes a matter of godly habit. This is the author's point in verse 14: *“But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”* As we hear and act on the truth by faith, God's Spirit transforms our lives until eventually we incarnate the truth as a matter of habit and practice. In doing this, we place ourselves in a position to receive even more solid food from God's Word. It's like moving from “Do, Re, Mi” to a beautiful symphony!

Action Step & Prayer Focus: If you're a new believer, keep drinking in the milk of the Word and learn the basic truths of the gospel. If you have been a Christian for years, is it time to exchange a baby bottle for a steak knife? You can by applying the truths God has already shown you in the Word. Pray for his direction and application as you read.

Take-a-way: *Healthy Christians drink milk AND eat solid food.*