

Pastor's Pen

Baby Food!

"I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are still not able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?" 1 Cor. 3:2-3

Have you ever wondered why you are not growing and maturing in your faith? Paul addresses the church in Corinth about their lack of spiritual growth. Paul says he had to treat them like infants in Christ. They had not grown spiritually as they should have. Though they had been Christians for some time, they were still acting like new believers, unable to handle more profound spiritual truths.

Imagine going to a fancy steakhouse with your family. Everyone orders something delicious, such as a juicy steak, roasted vegetables, and maybe a baked potato. But then you look over and see a baby in a highchair with a bib, holding a bottle of milk. Now imagine if that baby started crying for a steak like everyone else. You laugh a little—because even if you gave them a steak, they couldn't chew it! Their little body isn't ready for solid food yet. Milk is what they need at that stage. But here's the thing if that same child is still drinking only milk 10 years later, something's wrong. Growth hasn't happened. That's what Paul is saying to the Corinthians.

Paul uses the word ***"fleshly"*** to describe their behavior. Instead of being led by the Holy Spirit, their actions were still governed by human desires and emotions. The church in Corinth had a maturity problem. Despite their gifts and knowledge (1 Corinthians 1:5-7), they were not growing in Christlike character. Their attitudes and actions—like jealousy and division—revealed that they were still thinking and acting like the world, not like Spirit-filled believers.

We often think of fleshly in terms of external sins, materialism, immorality, or pride, but Paul digs deeper. He says that when we envy others or stir up conflict, we're acting like the world, not like Christ. These things divide the church and grieve the Spirit.

It's sobering to realize that spiritual immaturity isn't always about knowledge, but about character. You can be part of a church, know Scripture, and even serve, and still be ruled by self-centeredness. The true mark of maturity is love, humility, and unity in the Spirit.

Your shepherd,
Pastor Mark

Grace Gems

A Religious Problem

"There are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers ... They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works." Titus 1:10, Titus 1:16

Sometimes our greatest problems come from within the church, not outside it. Such was the case in Crete, where Paul had left Titus to place the churches on solid foundations with godly leadership (Titus 1:5). Paul's primary concern in his letter to Titus was not the rampant atheism, agnosticism, syncretism, or humanism that was present in the surrounding culture. A careful reading of Titus, and indeed of church history, indicates that the greatest threat to the church emerges from people inside the church who claim to know the Lord but deceive both themselves and others. Paul describes some people within this church as those who ***"profess to know God, but they deny him by their works."*** They had a creed, but their conduct did not match it. They could say the right words, but there was no fruit to be seen in their lives.

Cretans as a whole had a reputation of being ***"liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons"*** (Titus 1:12). And the problem appears to have been that several who professed faith within the Cretan church and who had some influence over others looked no different from the surrounding culture. And when professing believers have a lot of "God talk" but very little godly living, their behavior not only matches that of the society outside but undermines the witness of the church to the society outside.

Quote of the Week

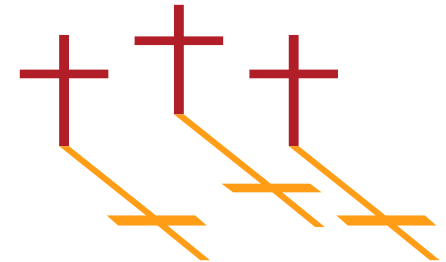
"Spiritual maturity is not reached by the passing of the years, but by obedience to the will of God."

-Oswald Chambers

A church can be a dangerous place. If we're not careful, churches can provide opportunities for people to make a few superficial changes while continuing to live just the same as everyone around them. They may believe that they have given their lives to Christ but in fact they are not willing to accept His lordship over any area of their life where change would be socially costly. In Crete, perhaps it should have been truth-telling, working hard, and moderation with food that would have set the church apart. For us, perhaps, it will be not making an idol of our kids' education, eschewing materialism, and refusing to treat politics as the solution to everything.

We can easily go from being irreligious to being religious without actually being transformed by God's grace. The danger is that religion itself may actually be what keeps someone from fully embracing the truth about Jesus. We ought to ask ourselves: Do my works give credence to my profession of faith in Christ? Or are they indistinguishable from those of my neighbors who make no claim to be Christians?

What is the antidote to such empty religiosity? It is to recognize that true Christianity not only gives us a new creed but will also change our conduct. And it is to understand that our lives are transformed from the inside out rather than the outside in—not necessarily all at once but certainly in a way that, over time, cannot be mistaken. It is as we look at God's mercy in Christ that we are moved to offer our lives in worship (Romans 12:1).



Weekly Gatherings



Sunday Bible Classes

Elders- Old Testament (Sanctuary A)
Bereans- New Testament (Sanctuary B)
Ladies- (Downstairs B, Gray Room)
Young Adults- (Downstairs B, Red Rm.)
Youth and Surge (5th-6th)- (Upstairs C)
Children & Nursery (Downstairs C)



Weekday Meetings



Family Groups

All Family Groups on hiatus until September



Build the Body Teams

If you would like to serve on a BtB Team and need to sign up, please contact the team leader at the appropriate email address on the back of this bulletin.



Youth Study

Wednesdays @6:30PM
Youth Study & Surge!



Service Times

Sunday School 9:00AM
Children's Church 10:30AM
Sunday Services 10:30AM

Giving from service on 07/13/2025

General Offering	\$11,117.36
Building Fund	\$1,387.00
Uganda	\$210.00
Benevolence	\$95.00

Total.....\$12,809.36
Attendance..... 241

Build the Body Ministries

Women's Ministry-women@ghbcva.org
AWANA-awana@ghbcva.org
Outreach Ministry-outreach@ghbcva.org
Worship Ministry-worship@ghbcva.org
Men's Ministry-men@ghbcva.org
Children's Ministry-children@ghbcva.org
Youth Ministry-youth@ghbcva.org
Prayer Team-prayer@ghbcva.org
Maintenance-maintenance@ghbcva.org
Fellowship-fellowship@ghbcva.org
Communications-communications@ghbcva.org
Front Line-frontline@ghbcva.org
Security-security@ghbcva.org



GRACE HARVEST BIBLE CHURCH

GO GATHER GROW GO

ghbcva.org | 804.561.3742
9821 South Redfield Drive, Amelia, VA 23002

Grace Harvest Bible Church

July 20, 2025

Welcome