

Pastor's Pen

Work Before Sin!

"Then Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." Genesis 2:15

Did you know that God created man to work? Long before thorns appeared, sweat dripped into eyes, or the word 'burden' was used—work existed. In Eden's peaceful beauty, God put Adam in the garden, not for relaxation, but to serve. The Reformers regarded this as essential to understanding our purpose: work is not a punishment but a gift.

John Calvin observed that God intentionally placed Adam in the garden, not by chance or as an afterthought, but by appointment. Adam's work in the soil was an act of worship, and his tending of the garden declared that all belongs to God. Calvin emphasized that our work is a form of worship because labor represents stewardship.

Martin Luther applied this principle to daily life, emphasizing that God does not separate work into "spiritual" and "ordinary." Since Christ is Lord of everything, all work performed in faith is sacred. Whether a pastor preaching, a mother caring for her children, or a farmer working at his plow—everyone is engaging in worship when they labor for the Lord.

Martin Bucer reminded the church that, despite the Fall making work difficult, it did not render work evil. Through the Spirit, God continues to sanctify our tasks. The calling persists, even amid toil: what God originally created as good, He can still redeem.

What does this imply for us? It means your purpose is intentional. The desk you occupy, the home you manage, the people you serve—God deliberately places you there. Work itself is not the adversary; the curse is. The frustration, exhaustion, and feeling of never completing are echoes of the Fall. However, the calling itself remains blessed. God is honored not by our output but by our faithfulness.

Our hope is that, where Adam failed to "keep" the garden, Jesus succeeded. The Second Adam never left His post. He completed the work the Father entrusted to Him (John 17:4), and through His obedience, He redeemed ours. Now, in Christ, our everyday efforts are meaningful—they are part of His kingdom

Your shepherd, Pastor Mark

Grace Gems

A solemn sham and an impudent mockery!- Charles Spurgeon

"Rend your heart, and not your garments!" Joel 2:13

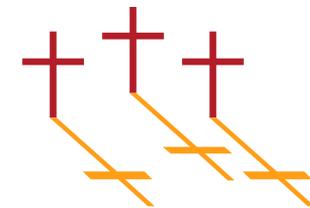
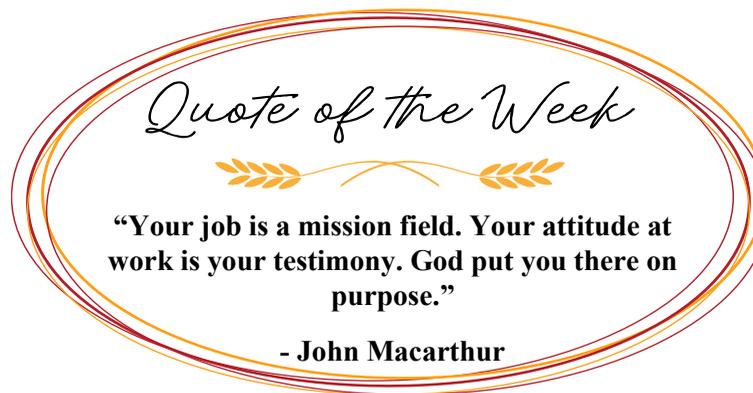
Garment-rending and other external signs of religious emotion, are easily manifested and are frequently hypocritical. True repentance is far more difficult, and consequently far less common. Unsaved men will attend to the most multiplied and minute religious ceremonies and regulations, for such things are pleasing to their flesh. But true godliness is too humbling, too heart-searching, too spiritual for the tastes of carnal men! They prefer something more ostentatious, flimsy, and worldly.

External religious rituals are temporarily comfortable; eye and ear are pleased; self-conceit is fed, and self-righteousness is puffed up. But they are ultimately delusive, for at the day of judgment the soul needs something more substantial than religious ceremonies and rituals to lean upon.

Apart from vital godliness, all religion is utterly vain! When offered without a sincere heart, every form of religious worship is a solemn sham and an impudent mockery of the majesty of God!

Heart-rending is divinely wrought and solemnly felt. It is a secret grief which is personally experienced, not in mere form, but as a deep, soul-moving work of the Holy Spirit upon the inmost heart of each believer. It is not a matter to be merely talked of, but keenly and sensitively felt in every living child of the living God. It is powerfully humiliating and sin-purging! But also, it is sweetly preparative for those gracious consolations which proud unhumiliated souls are unable to receive! This heart-rending distinctly belongs to the elect of God, and to them alone.

The text commands us to rend our hearts—but they are naturally as hard as marble! How then can this be done? We must take them to Calvary! A dying Savior's voice rent the rocks once, and it is just as powerful now. O blessed Spirit, let us effectually hear the death-cries of Jesus—and our hearts shall be rent!



Weekly Gatherings



Sunday Bible Classes

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



Weekday Meetings

AWANA—Wednesday's 6:30-8:00 pm
Trail Life—Monday's at 6:30 pm



Family Groups

All Family Groups began **Sept 25th**
Host Families: Tom & Penni Cox, Jesse & Deborah Royall, Larry & Gina Covington, Jeff & Bridget Brown, Alan & Leigh Anne Chambers and Mark & Trisha Keffer



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



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 02/22/2026	
General Offering	\$10,805.11
Building Fund	\$710.00
Uganda	\$130.00
Benevolence	\$173.00
Total	\$11,818.11
Attendance	230

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
- Widows-admin@ghbcva.org
- HH-HomeschoolHub@ghbcva.org



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Grace Harvest Bible Church

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