



Daily Verse and Comment

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

(1) And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—even as to babes in Christ. (2) I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able to *receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, (3) For you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human ways?

A Faithful Version

Despite their having become Christians through [baptism](#) and the laying on of hands, these Corinthians had retained their pre-conversion natures. How do we know this? It exposed itself in their carnal behavior! As Paul says, they were acting just like other people who had not received God's grace.

Their conversion had never really left the starting gate because they had failed to continue in the process of spiritual transformation. The author of Hebrews explains what must occur:

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the [oracles of God](#); and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. ([Hebrews 5:12-14](#))

Conversion, then, is the process of exercising our senses, not the five senses, but the mental and spiritual faculties of reason, understanding, and judgment. If we are not making judgments about events that are happening in our homes, in our communities, in our workplaces—if we are not determining whether they are right or wrong, and if we are not endeavoring to correct

those that are wrong, then we are failing in our conversion. We are, in fact, in danger of neglecting our salvation and drifting away.

The writer, however, is not finished with his instruction. In the next chapter, he shows them what they need to do:

We are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For [God](#) is not unjust to forget your work and labor of [love](#) which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through [faith](#) and [patience](#) inherit the promises. ([Hebrews 6:9-12](#))

Notice what he encourages them to do: to show *diligence*, that is, "earnestness," "zeal," "deep commitment with eagerness." He advises them to dedicate their lives to this spiritual transformation and to stick with it to the end, as this is what those who will inherit the promises do. In other words, they need to launch zealously into a campaign of regaining all their lost ground. As he implies, Christianity is not a religion for the lazy.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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