

The Rec-Connection

April 2005



Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important, for it promises a reward in both this life and the next. 1 Timothy 4:8

Religion vs. Spirituality

The recent death of Pope John Paul II has received a large amount of media coverage, and thus it should. However, during this time I have heard several reporters say that even though they are not Catholic, covering this story has made them more aware of their own spirituality. Along those same lines, I was asked recently if someone could be religious but not spiritual, or spiritual and not religious, and what's the difference between the two.

When I hear the word *religious*, I think more about the rituals involved with church. The robes, the organ music, the standing up, the sitting down, the repeat after me's, etc. I associate *religious* with the activities associated with religion. When I hear *spirituality*, I think more about the intangibles - The feeling I get when I see a brilliant sunset, the vastness of the night sky, or the sheer amazement at the intricacies of nature. I often look at the world around us, shake my head in wonder, and just know there is a God in heaven. These two approaches to God, while popular, are incomplete. Yes, it is possible to be *religious*, but not be *spiritual*; however, we can very easily be caught up in all the committees, volunteer opportunities, or rituals that we never really understand what God is all about. Far too often people become consumed by the "activity" of church and miss the message. On the flip side, we can also be *spiritual*, but not *religious*. Spirituality is such a vague term that almost anything can be seen as spiritual, taking the focus off of God. Don't fall into the trap of "worshiping the creation, not the Creator."

If I had to choose my favorite place on the planet it would be high in the mountains. I enjoy the sound the wind makes in the trees, the fresh air, and the absolute peace. Coincidentally, I would say this is also when I feel closest to God, or *spiritual*. I personally associate rejuvenating my faith and my body with being outdoors. There is Biblical basis to this fact and if you have ever read "Wild at Heart" by John Eldredge you know what I am talking about. However, my faith would soon suffer if I lived every day away from humanity. As the classic children's song goes, the church is not the building, it's the people. We as the Body of Christ must spend time together to truly have a complete faith. Being in the peace of nature is great for refreshing the soul, but just as the "activity" associated with church, it too is incomplete.

A complete faith means you must have elements of both. James 2:17 from the NIV reads "*In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*" Spirituality is not enough. We must spend time within the church serving the body of Christ, fellowship with other believers, and spread the word of God. Now it gets tricky. The Message version of Romans 9:31 reads "*Because instead of trusting God, they took over. They were absorbed in what they themselves were doing. They were so absorbed in their "God-projects" that they didn't notice God right in front of them.*" So don't miss the forest for the trees. Being active in the church alone will not develop a relationship with Jesus Christ, which is the true heart of the matter. *Spirituality* and *religion* are just words, and how you react to them depends on your own perception. What really matters is developing a relationship with God. How you do that is up to you. Light a candle, repeat a prayer, hammer a nail, teach a class, whatever. It really depends on your motivation and what that "activity" is doing for you. Just make sure your activity is done out of love and joy, and is not an attempt to justify yourself.

Galatians 2:16 "*Convinced that no human being can please God by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right before God by trusting in the Messiah, not by trying to be good.*" The Message

Chris Jones

Director of Recreational Ministries

Upcoming Events

Summer Camp Registration has begun!
Sign up today for any of the following summer events.

Kinder Fit: Motor Skills Development

Tuesdays. May 31 - Aug 2

2-3 Years Old: 10:00 - 10:30

3-4 Years Old: 10:45 - 11:15

Kid Fit: A Fun and Active Fitness Class

Wednesdays. June 1 - Aug 3

1st - 3rd Grade: 10:00 - 10:45

4th - 5th Grade: 11:00 - 11:45

Adventures in Art

Daily. June 6 - 9 (Mon - Thurs)

7-12 Years: 9am - Noon

Drama Camp

Daily. June 20 - 24

Completed 3rd - 5th: 9am - Noon

Dance Classes: Jazz and Ballet

Saturdays. April 16 - May 21

3 & 4 Years Old: 10:00 - 11:00

5-7 Years Old: 11:00 - Noon

Upward Indoor Soccer

Daily. June 27 - July 1

Pre-K and K: 10:00 - Noon

1st and 2nd Grade: 1pm - 3pm

Upward Basketball

Daily.

A: Pre-K: July 5 - 8 10:00 - Noon

B: K-1st: July 11 - 15 1 - 4pm

C: 2nd & 3rd: July 18 - 22 1 - 4pm

D: 4th & 5th: July 25 - 29 1 - 4pm

Golf League

Recreational Ministries is excited to announce the addition of a Golf League at Ridgeview Ranch set to begin in June. Call today for more details

Christ United Methodist Church
3101 Coit Road Plano, Texas 75075
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