

The Rec-Connection

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

The Paradox of Tomorrow

February 2007

I was never a very good football player. I started playing in the 8th grade because all my friends were doing it, and truth be told I wasn't excited about it. Somehow I made the team and ended up starting at Tight End. The following year I moved to Guard and there I stayed through the completion of my senior year. Each year I had doubts about returning, but always came back due to coaches' and friends' encouragement. After hiding it for so long, I can admit now, I was totally lost. I had no understanding of the big picture and how all the players fit together. I just hit the guy in front of me and I guess that was good enough.

Being a successful athlete requires more than just physical talent. It requires the ability to see beyond your next step, "sense" where the other players are, and anticipate what is going to happen next. Being a great athlete requires vision.

I started thinking about this idea of vision and realized it is a skill that is both necessary and dangerous. The more I explored vision, the more I was led to the natural conclusions of preparing, setting goals, and looking ahead. In fact, if you read last month's Rec Connection, you will find that I encouraged you to set goals for the upcoming year. The more I thought, the more Exodus chapter 16 returned to me. In the story, God has led the Israelites out of Egypt and they are wandering in the desert. God provides for their daily needs, but nothing more. God is teaching them to rely on him everyday, and to not worry about tomorrow. Jesus teaches this lesson again in Matthew 6:25-34 when he teaches us that God will provide, and to not worry about our lives.

But life has taught us that a successful human being sets goals and prepares for tomorrow. So the question becomes, how do we balance this life-proven concept with the wisdom of the Bible? Especially when they seem to so contradictory

The Bible is full of stories where people "prepare." Countless prophets and heroes warn of the future and the perils of not preparing. Joseph prepares the country for the coming famine (Genesis 41), Moses builds an ark for the coming flood (Genesis 6), and Jesus himself teaches the importance of investing and saving for tomorrow (Matthew 25: 14-30).

Clearly we have a conflict. On one hand we learn the importance of relying on God, and on the other we learn the importance of preparing. So which is it? Trust in God or take matters into our own hands?

We don't have the time or the space to examine every instance mentioned above but we can draw out two general similarities. The first is that in each story, the "preparing" is ordained by God. God basically says, "get busy 'cause trouble's comin." So in preparing we are obedient to God. Now the second point, illustrated by the parable of the talents (Matthew 25: 14-30), is the initiative of the servants. This parable has multiple lessons available but I want to focus on this one. The successful servants took initiative and multiplied what God had entrusted them with. They were pro-active, took matters into their own hands, and used the "talents" the Master gave them.

Now what about tomorrow? In Matthew 6: 25-34 Jesus teaches us to not "worry about our lives." What if we focus on this idea of worry? Worry does two things. It cripples action and signals a lack of faith. Jesus wants the reader to understand that God cares for you the human being far more than he cares for his other creations. I think the point of this story is more about how much God loves you, than not being concerned for tomorrow. Worry can be crippling. Worry is not pro-active, it is sedentary and wastes resources. I believe the parable of the talents (Matthew 6: 25-34) teaches this same lesson, only more straightforward. The master gives "talents" to his servants who then either multiply them, or bury them. The servant who buried, was so worried about losing his talent, he wasted it. The servants who put their resources to work were rewarded.

Tomorrow is important, but not at the expense of today. If we spend all our time worrying about tomorrow, we sacrifice the fullness of life God has in store for us today. Being pro-active is a good thing, just make sure you are doing it for the glory of God, and not yourself.

During my high school football career I had no vision. I "just hit the guy in front of me" and that was good enough to be a totally average starter. I had no vision on the field or off. I could not see how a little effort today would pay dividends tomorrow. I have since learned that real vision is the ability to see tomorrow, and the ability to see the steps necessary today to get there.

Chris Jones

Director of Recreational Ministries

Playing with a Purpose

Featured Program

Men's Basketball

Registration is now open!

Choose from the following divisions:

- Monday: Open Recreational
- Tuesday: 40+ Recreational
- Thursday: Open Competitive

All games will be played on your selected night at either 6:00, 7:00, or 8:00 PM.

All new players, Free Agents, and team captains must attend the orientation session February 28th at 7:00 PM.

News & Events

Spring Golf League

Registration is now open

- April 3rd - June 5th
- Ridgeview Ranch
- Tuesdays at 5:30 PM
- Shotgun Start
- Prizes available for the top 3 finishers in each flight
- Men and Women are encouraged to participate

Summer Camps

The CUMC Summer camp offering will be available in March, and will include multiple opportunities for your children. Additional details will be posted on our Summer Camp page when they become available.



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