

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. 1 Timothy 4:8

Immune

November 2007

Sometime back I was asked to give a brief presentation about developing a relationship with Christ. I'll first say that I am not an expert on this subject, but for some reason was asked to share my thoughts anyway. Around the same time I was very busy, busier than normal, and giving this talk was low on my list of priorities. Consequently, I did not spend much time preparing. I justified my lack of preparation by reasoning that public speaking is a natural strength of mine and the topic was one I was relatively comfortable with. It was not a lack of time that prevented me from preparing, but simply that I did not NEED to. You can probably guess what happened next. I bombed. I bombed big. I was uncomfortable, tripped over my words, and gave what I consider, my worst presentation ever. I learned a valuable lesson that day. Doing something once, hearing something once, or experiencing something once, does not guarantee future success.

I have heard different pastors say many times that spiritual renewal at churches in the Bible Belt is more difficult than other places. This seems very counterintuitive but think about it for a minute. The Bible Belt has 2 important characteristics at play. 1: We hear the message all the time. We are inundated with it, and we often gloss over it, simply because we have heard it all before. 2: We hear the message all the time. We are inundated with it, and we are tired of hearing it. Point number 1 creates a person who has been given just enough of the Gospel to think they never need any more. They know the message, they have heard it their whole life. So now they sit in church on Sunday and think about others who would really benefit from the message, instead of asking, "how can I apply this to my own life?" Point 2 is the cynic. They have heard the message over and over, yet see so much hypocrisy, the message is perceived as fake.

Matthew 13: 1- 9 is the familiar story of the seed scattered on various types of soil. The paraphrased version goes something like this. A seed on hard soil is quickly eaten by birds, a seed on shallow soil grows quickly but also dies quickly, and a seed in the thorns is choked out. It is only when the seed falls on good soil that it is able to grow, ultimately producing a bountiful crop. Like all of Jesus' stories, they have several meanings. But for us and the purpose of this discussion, we want to know, how can we be good soil? How can we prepare ourselves to receive the word of God? How can we deepen ourselves so when the message does sprout, its roots can penetrate deeply into our lives?

For me, it means never being satisfied. I failed to prepare for my discussion because I had been down that path before and thought I knew all the answers. Now, I am never complacent. I question everything, and seek to always grow and improve. The moment we stop asking questions and take life at face value is when we switch off. I believe that God is truly sovereign and will stand up to whatever questions we pose. Questioning our faith moves us deeper, churning the soil, preparing our hearts AND minds for new and exciting revelations. Don't be immune to the Gospel just because you have heard it before. Question it. Study it. You might be surprised at what you find.

Chris Jones

**Director of Sports and Recreation
Playing with a Purpose**

News & Events

Upward Basketball and Cheerleading

Sign up before Sunday November 18th and save \$30.

All basketball players must attend one evaluation. Cheerleaders may attend for uniform sizing. Evaluations are:

- Friday November 30th: 6:00 PM
- Saturday December 1st: 10:00 AM:
This is also the player Registration
Deadline

For more information and a complete schedule of events, please see

<http://www.cumcsports.com/upward/basketball>

All registration will be done online



The holidays are here! Consider having your holiday event at the Christian Life Center. Visit www.cumcsports.com and click on Party Planning

**Christ United Methodist Church
3101 Coit Road Plano, Texas 75075
www.cumcsports.com**

**Christian Life Center
972-596-6073
Recreation@cumc.com**