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## rovoking Love & Good Works

## Truth is free, but not pain free

" And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple... But who can stand the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap."  
(Mal 3:1-4)

Youth, my friends, is a mixed bag of blessings and a time when we are courted by few concerns for consequences. At the same time the lessons we learn in the effervescence of youthfulness are lessons that not only linger, but shape who we are throughout our lives. One of the time when we, with an unabashed spirit, encounter the reality of our world and its harsh and frightful, though simple, lesson that the truth often hurts.

Allow me a moment to illustrate. When I in the fifth grade my sister came home from school with what had to be the best souvenir ever – a real bullwhip made of leather. Her lack of wisdom, she brought home one whip for two brothers. Immediately the whip was spinning out of control in the mechanism of our minds. Oh! What we could do with a whip! Yet, my ideas did not match those of my brother and pretty soon a tug-o-war broke out. I was holding the handle of the whip and my brother holding the opposite end. Now, if you have any years of experience you can see where this is going. If not, read on. After several minutes of pulling and lodging of insults and arguing about who had what first, the battle came to a head. **Conclusion when I flicked the whip, the end shot out of my brother's hand and sounded a sharp crack as it undulated and met my brother's face, neck and chest, leaving one of the worst looking welts you have ever seen.** I had won! The celebration, however, was short lived. Smacking your brother with a whip comes with a price tag as well.

**The truth hurts. However, we also understand that the truth, as the Bible says, is free.** Oddly enough, what we fail to realize is that this latter statement does not mean a pain free one. Freedom, even spiritual freedom, comes with shed tears, pain and heavenly discipline. All one really has to do is consider the path of the Israelites to freedom from bondage. Even with all the provisions of God they had to fight. They lost loved ones. **They received correction. They were oppressed by surrounding nations that acted as God's discipline them. They were put through, as the prophet Ezekiel tells us, the refining fire.** The name of finding this freedom so they could bring spiritual freedom to the rest of the world (Eze 22:20).

**In life I have been in the refiner's fire and had some placed in me through the wounds I have learned at the hands of people who knew I should know better, and loved me enough to go through the agony of placing me in that fire. God does the same for you today. Let's face it, the fact that He is the "ancient of days," you and I, no matter how old we may be, are still in His eyes and still in the process of learning.** Those days are never gone, though we fight hard against it. Such, my friends, is the way of freedom. It is the way of learning through pain. May we never forget that sting of pain and the lessons it brings.

Today is the anniversary of 9/11 and the atrocious attack that took place on our lives. Those days with anxiety and trepidation, thinking often of the lessons we have learned and how they have changed our world. I do wonder, however, if we have not lost some of that deeper understanding that should have been seared into us by the stinging pain of death and resurrection. When I read about how prayer will be forbidden at the memorial and that first

# Study Opportunities

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asparkcoc.org

cations  
daily devotion  
ease sign up at  
@gmail.com.



Marching for the Masters

MFTM is an outreach group of the Pinnellas Park Church of Christ meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays in the church library following morning services.

## ONE - Daily Living That ONE Thing

This coming Wednesday our adult class will begin a new series of lessons simply called **ONE - based on Paul's charge to focus on that "ONE thing...pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."** Each week we'll focus on a different aspect of the Christian journey. In class we will learn about His expectation with regard to each facet and then issue a challenge to spend the next week focused on that one thing, offering practical tools to help you achieve success.

## September

- **18 - Elder's / Deacon Meeting**
- **20 - Men's Meeting**

## Our Family Prayer Requests

- Paul Brown, friend of Kathy R. brain cancer.
- Brian Stover, Needing prayers
- Charlie B., Ongoing health issues
- Marion Brule, pneumonia
- Violet (D. Lampe friend) very ill
- Rick Woods, back problems
- Timothy Hicks, cancer in remission
- Co-worker of Beth Martin Asks for prayers for premature twins
- Audrey Young, declining health
- Tom Horis, friend of the Gentry's, has had surgery for cancer.
- **Dana And Bobbie Faulkner's** relative in Iraq, along with other soldiers
- Donna Lampe, Will need to have outpatient surgery on her foot

We are looking for those artists who can help by giving their su for graphics for our new bus.

## Visitor Packets

Available in our foyer are information packets for those visiting looking church to attend. These may be asking the member managing the table in the foyer or the preacher.

## Mission minded Givers

Thanks for all who have "filled the cup" for the Disaster Relief Fund for the people of the Gulf of Mexico and their efforts to help cover from this years extreme weather. This effort continues on the front pew for those to donate.



surgery and will need further procedures

- Christine Martinez asked for a sister in Christ in Iowa, Mazak, who has cancer.
- Valerie Jones, **Michael Gri** aunt, had surgery for cancer
- Barbara Hanson, **Ed Benesh** Texas will have surgery
- **Carol Axe's sister Doris**, congestive heart failure
- **Del Hollingsworth**, pneumonia
- **Gertrude Robert's daughter**, a side in serious condition
- **Stacey Camp's mother**, recovered from stroke
- John Bohn, heat stroke
- Anna Grace Poteet recovering from surgery for an perforated ulcer
- Pat Duffell, will have oral surgery

Ezek. 28-31  
 Ezek. 32-34  
 Ezek. 35-37  
 Ezek. 38-39  
 Ezek. 40-41

and answers for  
 near Bible Reading  
 e available at our  
 online at  
[sparkcoc.org](http://sparkcoc.org)

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 (Ps. 95:2)

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on  
 understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and  
 direct your paths.”* (Proverbs 3: 5-6, NKJV)

In movies of the American Old West, it is commo  
 the rough and ready cowboy ambling down a  
 sidewalk, tipping his broad  
 brimmed hat to passing la-  
**dies. The hat isn't really lifted**  
 off his head, just slightly tilted  
 as a show of respect, an ac-  
 knowledgement. No relation-  
 ship is initiated, nor is one in-  
 tended.

It is this display of somewhat  
 superficial acknowledgement  
 that we often exhibit in our  
**relationship with God. We “tip**  
**our hat to Him”each morning,**  
 before meals and at the end  
 of the day. We mentally rec-  
 ognize His ?presence and  
 promises, but we seldom stop  
**long enough to “look full in**  
**His wonderful face.”**

While the basic meaning of  
**the word acknowledge as used in the book of Proverbs**  
**or know”, within the word lies the meaning of comp**  
 perception and understanding. Another translator e  
 with the word submission.



Am I sometimes guilty of passing God on the sid  
 my life, giving mental assent to Him, but not truly  
 the circumstances of that moment into His care? An  
 prayers perfunctory instead of laced with heartfelt gra  
 I tip my spiritual hat to God instead of graciously reco  
 sovereignty and love? I ask for His direction; now I m  
 submission.

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@gmail.com  
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Statistics  
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- P. Martin, E. Benesh  
Missions
- C. Axe, T. Hargis, M. Drake, K. Sabiel  
Sonshine Day camp
- T. Martin  
WWCC
- G. Duncan, P. Martin  
Youth Ministry
- D. Folks  
Young At Heart
- B. Perry  
Worship Coordination
- T. Hargis, D. Folks  
Weds. Eve. Speaking
- W. Robinson  
Benevolence
- D. Folks, H. Gentry,  
W. Robinson  
Transportation
- T. Martin  
Bldgs. and Grounds
- H. Gentry, K. Sabiel, T. Walden  
Education
- B. Perry, D. Folks  
**Women's Studies Ministry**
- N. Gentry, A. Jucknath  
Financial
- H. Gentry, P. Martin

space just how blessed we feel by havin  
with us today. You will, no doubt, fin  
small welcome address will be followed up  
conversation with our members, as they  
themselves and personally welcome you.  
friendly group who cherish our time to  
are always looking to adopt new folks int  
ily. We want you to feel welcomed and y  
ize that visiting a church can be overwhelm  
You can expect us to not only make y  
home and a part of what we do, but also  
ingness on our part to help you understand  
do and why we do it. Some things that  
our worship may be different than wha  
used to, just as some of the things you he  
different than what you are used to. Re  
we welcome all your questions and wil  
than happy to explain our reasoning an  
God. We do hope you have enjoyed be  
and come back again soon.

Edward Benesh, MI

I call upon you, for you will answer  
God; incline your ear to me; he  
words.  
(Psa 17:6)

Pinellas Park church of Christ

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Pinellas Park, Fl 33781

To: