

PASTOR'S CORNER



Galatians 5:16-17

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

THE CHRISTIANS MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPON

Until Christ comes back or calls us home, Christians have to live in an environment that is hostile to Christianity. Every day they have to resist forces that war against their very souls. As a result, Christians are constantly trying to find effective ways to achieve victory in this never-ending war. There is one crucial area that is often overlooked in this struggle, and that is the Christian's own spiritual health. Techniques and tips will not work well – or at all – if the Christian is in poor spiritual vitality.

For example, even though soldiers are provided with techniques and tools to wage war, they are also whipped into good physical shape and encouraged to stay fit so they can be the most effective warriors they can be. Sophisticated equipment and skills apparently are not enough for the soldier to be the best he can be. The same is true for Christians. The Christian's general spiritual condition is a vital component in the battle against sin and Satan.

Paul points out in Galatians 5:16 that if we walk in the Spirit, we will not gratify the desires of the flesh. Therefore, as Christians we need to spend more time improving our spiritual fitness and deepening our relationship with the Lord. Good spiritual health sets us on a path that generally avoids unnecessary temptations. The values and desire of the maturing Christian pulls him closer and closer to Christ and further and further away from the pathways of sin. And even when times come that the Christian faces inevitable temptations and challenges, his general spiritual vitality enables him to resist better. His closeness with the Lord gives him a perspective and inner strength that equip him to meet the challenge in a godly way.

So instead of embarking on a never-ending quest to find the "latest" spiritual weapons and strategies, the Christian needs to spend time fortifying himself in his walk with Christ. Of course, there are going to be areas in the Christian's life that require

specific attention from time to time, but most of the Christian's attention and efforts will be invested in developing good spiritual conditioning. He will have a consistent practice of regular, thoughtful Bible study. He will embrace joyful obedience to the Word of God. He will consistently commune with God – even when things are going well. He will focus on deploying his gifts and resources in the advancement of God's purposes on earth. Such a Christian will undoubtedly attract the baleful attention of Satan, but more importantly he will enjoy the protective presence of Almighty God.

Let us start today to build up our spiritual health. Let us commit ourselves to an honest, deep pursuit of the Lord as a way of life. We will discover that this approach leads us away from temptation and empowers us to triumph when we face spiritual challenges.

God bless you,
Pastor James

WHAT'S HAPPENING

CORPORATE PRAYER TUE @ 7 PM

APR 9

Join us via Zoom video

Please contact Pastor James for log on information at rcantio@gmail.com

YOUTH GROUP

FRI @ 6:45 PM

APR 12

In-person at church.

For teens ages 13 and over

Want to become more competent and comfortable sharing your faith?

3 CIRCLES

a Six-Session Training Event
Sundays Mar 3rd – Apr 14th @ 6 pm

Sign up at the Information Center so we can ensure adequate materials are available

KIDZONE & NURSERY SUN @ 11 AM

APR 14

These ministries are available every Sunday during the morning service

Kidzone for ages 6-12 yrs. old.

WORSHIP SERVICE SUN @ 11 AM

APR 14

In-person service and Livestreaming on Facebook, Youtube and our webpage.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Men's Breakfast Saturday at 9am. Invite a friend and bring a dish to share for breakfast if you can.
- 3-Circles evangelism training concludes this Sunday at 6pm.
- Join us as we help with Middle Smithfield Spring Street Pick Up on April 20. We meet at the Park & Ride in front of Price Chopper at 8:30 am. Contact Tom for more details and to volunteer.
- VBS: Save the Date! July 15th -19th.
- Save the Date for Family Fun Day: August 3rd.
- Explore Mountain Stream classes for those interested in becoming members or just finding out more about Mountain Stream continue Sundays at 10am on the lower level.
- Please return your Baby Bottles as soon as you can.
- The Church's Quarterly Business Meeting will be held Sunday April 17th following the Morning Service.
- If you'd like a one-year Bible reading plan for 2024 you may find Pastor Jimmie Van Sant's at PJVS1.blogspot.com.
- Help Needed: If you'd be willing to bring refreshments on a Sunday, speak to Becky or Lori.
- Join us on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 3:15pm at the Garden at Stroud as we sing and share the gospel with the residents. Contact Tom for more information.

WAYS TO GIVE

Traditionally during the Sunday morning service, with a check by mail or through our secured website.

Please remember to hit "SAVE" after you give if you did not set up an account so the church can have a record of who gave for tax purposes.

Thank you!