

# THE PULSE

1031 Youth Ministry Newsletter

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Recently while working out, I found myself trying to push through and finish. I was struggling a bit and trying everything I could to finish. I found myself trying to turn up the volume on my headphones numerous times. They were already as loud as they could go. Truth is, I was not wanting to hear the music more; I was looking for a distraction. I was looking for something to get my mind off of the struggle I was in.

Many times in life we look for distractions. When times get tough, we want something to take our mind off of it. Now don't get me wrong, sometimes distractions are ok. Sometimes distractions are even needed. However, we should never seek distractions from the things the Lord is teaching and doing in our lives, even when they are hard. God has recently been convicting me in a certain area of my life. Through His Word, conversations with other people, and books I'm reading, I have had to look at some areas I really need to work on. It's not easy. It's flat out hard. My initial humanistic instinct was to avoid it, to divert my attention to the areas I feel like I'm doing pretty well in. I was trying to distract myself from my flaws with my strong points. When it comes to God working in our lives, we can't do that.

In terms of discipling teenagers how does this translate? Often I find myself working with and leading young adults that have no idea how to endure difficult trials. They have no idea how to let God refine them. The Bible tells us that God refines us through fire (Zechariah 13:9).

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Fire is hot and uncomfortable. Fire is not fun. Fire is hard, but that is how God grows us and makes us more like Him. That is how God uses us and makes us more effective for Him. So what does this mean for us as parents and pastor? First, we have to teach and train our students that life is not always easy. We can't always run to their aid at the first sign of trouble or discomfort. We can't always shield them from hard and painful things. We can't let them develop bad habits and characteristics because we are afraid of upsetting them or affecting the harmony with them. Second, we have to show them what it looks like to endure struggles faithfully. We have to let them see our vulnerabilities. Show them that we can only survive and progress through full reliance on God. This is not easy. This is down right hard. Trust me, I know. I have 3 little girls who think I am the most amazing man that has ever walked the face of the earth. They believe that I am the strongest, fastest, and smartest guy that has ever lived. They think I can beat up every single person in the entire world! I like that. I like seeing the look in their eye of admiration and pride. I like knowing that they feel safe and comfortable when they are with me. But those things just aren't true. Only Jesus can do those things. Only Jesus can provide their every need. Only Jesus will never let them down. Only Jesus will love them perfectly every single second of their lives. I have to show them that. I have to teach them that. I have to prepare them for the reality of life in this sinful world. As parent and pastor, we have to do that for our students. Will that always be easy? Absolutely not. Will it always be fun? No, no, and NO! Will it be worth it? More than we could ever imagine. The only way our students will be prepared for the difficulties of life as a Christian and the refining fire of Christ is by letting them experience some of that on their own while still under our guidance and protection and by letting them see what that looks like in our lives.

### Weekly Schedule

Sunday School:  
Sun. @ 9:30am  
(Resumes 2/7)  
1031 Worship:  
Wed. @ 6pm  
(Resumes 2/10)

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## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



**DATES:**  
**JUNE 28-JULY 2**  
**LOCATION:**  
**LINDEN VALLEY**

\*More details to come soon!\*