

FREEDOM!

"So if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free."

EACH JANUARY UPI hosts a men's retreat in the mountains of Overgaard, AZ. This year nearly 60 men came up to join in communion with one another as we looked to draw nearer to the King and each other. William Paul Young, the author of *The Shack*, spent the weekend with us. He shared his story of shame and how Jesus has healed him in so many areas of his life. We were blessed by his story and God's grace.

There were many neat things that took place, and a few stood out for me. Tim Cash has been with UPI for almost 20 years, and we took time to bless him and his love for Jesus. What a special time that was as men shared how much of an impact Tim has been and continues to be in their lives. I know Tim was blessed, and we all have been blessed by Tim. Thanks my brother! Another blessing was when the group took communion Sunday morning. Cash shared a word and I got to serve each man! I have never really

done that before and it was an emotional experience for me. I felt like I was washing their feet as I gave them the elements. I am so privileged to be able to serve Jesus and the people He loves. How often do we miss the joy of serving and loving others because we are preoccupied with our lives!

"So if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free." (John 8:36 NLT) If I could use one word to describe the retreat, it would be "FREEDOM"! I am reminded of one of my favorite movies "Braveheart" and the line from the movie, "What would you do without freedom?" Painful things will happen to us all whether it's pain from someone else, or if we bring it upon ourselves. With that pain comes guilt and shame. Paul Young did a great job of sharing how shame can really jack up our view of God, others, and ourselves. Paul used an example of shortly after he was married, his



2009 ARIZONA MEN'S RETREAT

wife told him that he couldn't mix whites with colors when doing the laundry. But all he heard was, "you are worthless!" Jesus has come not just to deliver us from Hell, but to conform us into His image and one day take us to dwell with Him in eternity!

Blessings,
Brian Hommel

Thanks for your prayers and support.

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SCRIPTURE

"Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace."

—Ephesians 4: 2-3 NLT

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Coming in next month's newsletter, UPI's November 2008 trip to Iraq.

Schedule

- Feb. 7*Tim* – Wild Game Dinner in Bethlehem, GA with Ned Yost
- Feb. 13-16*Hommel* – Youth Retreat in Flagstaff, AZ
- Feb. 18-25*Tim* – Arizona Spring Training
- March 1-7*Tim* – Florida spring training.

As you pray for our scheduled events (see above), please remember that each of our staff is involved in discipleship, Bible studies, leading chapels, visiting, writing, etc., throughout the entire year. Please pray for each of them.

Prayer... Praises

- PRAYER**
- Arizona and Florida Spring Training Bible Studies begin this month and continue through March. Please pray for the leadership as well as the many players and their families who will be attending.
 - Spring training travel for UPI staff, players and their families.
- PRAISE**
- God's faithfulness to UPI.
 - Unity of the UPI staff.
 - Off-season Bible studies.

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