

## International House of Prayer of Greater Fort Wayne

...a day and night , city-wide, multi-church prayer and worship ministry

### The Practices of Life

‘Peter and John went to pray, they met a lame man on the way...’ I know, now you can’t stop the song from playing in your head (sorry-lol). As familiar as we might be with this Acts 3:1-10 story and it’s result, ‘ he went walking and leaping and praising God...and the city was filled with amazement and wonder’, do we recognize the context of the story?

I wonder how many sermons and or teachings on ‘what’ Peter and John were doing and ‘where’ they were going have been preached from this text. Beloved, Peter and John were NOT doing a Power Evangelism outreach, they were NOT headed to a ‘worship’ event, they were NOT ‘witnessing’. They were going to do what was a regular practice of every 1st century Jew - ‘**Tefillot**’ (prayer) - 3 times a day! Where would they pray? At the same place they had prayed before - The Temple.

What would they pray? The answer is a bit startling and unnerving. These men who had heard Jesus pray were NOT going to a conversational prayer meeting ( point of clarity here - this is not meant to call conversational prayer invalid ) but they were headed to the same place they had gone countless times before and pray prayers they had prayed countless times! These prayers would have included:

- Dt 6:4-5 ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is One! You shall love the Lord your God with all you heart and with all your soul and with all your might’ ( The ‘Shema’ prayer is prayed by Jewish people to this day in the morning and evening from the cradle to the grave.).
- It would also have included the ‘Prayer book’ of God’s people ( including Jesus ) the Psalms, some of the Laments and the Prophets.

So let’s think about this, Peter and John who walked with Jesus and asked Him ‘teach us to pray’ and heard Jesus’ instruction about prayer - did NOT abandon the ‘Practice’ of prayer. They are on their way to pray prayers they had heard spoken all of their lives! Their ‘Practice’ was just another place to live in connection with Father! Do you see how ‘normal’ the Practice, rhythm, discipline of prayer was in their lives?

Oh how we recoil from those words ‘discipline, practice, rhythm’ -it sounds so ‘religious’ and we don’t want our relationship with God to be ‘ritual’. Yet one of the most powerful events recorded in the book of Acts happens in the context of the ‘Practices’ being lived out in the lives of the disciples of Jesus. Now allow me to be very clear about this - I am not advocating that the practices Peter and John did provided the ‘breakthrough’ of healing ( that conclusion will just make you try harder ). Peter and John make this clear in Acts 3:16 *Faith in Jesus’ name has healed this man standing before you. It is the faith that comes through believing in Jesus’ name that has made the crippled man walk right in front of your eyes! (the Passion translation)*. What I want to point out is that it happened in the context of intentional Practices/ rhythms that were an obvious part of the Apostles’ daily lives.

Out of connection to Father God came life! The Disciples are living out of a Practice of connection to that life! They knew and believed God was present and at work in their lives and the Practice of their lives was to keep their heart present by praying the scripture. This is how they ‘did life’! I doubt there is a one of us who does not long to see ‘breakthrough’ moments of God in our life and yet we recoil at the idea of ‘practices or disciplines’ that might begin to feel routine. Perhaps the intentional decision to pray the Words of God (the scriptures) daily....just might contain the greatest break through individually and corporately we could know. Maybe its time to consider the ‘Practices’ of our lives?

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And the secret is simply this: **Christ in you!**

Yes, Christ in you bringing with him the hope of all glorious things to come. Col 1:27b, JB Phillips



*Real, true religion from God the Father's perspective is about caring for the orphans and widows who suffer needlessly and resisting the evil influence of the world. James 1:27 The Voice*

Last year I had the privilege of accompanying Pastor Louis Alvarado on a journey to El Salvador. Pastor Louis is a man of deep passion and prayer who came to this country as a war refugee from El Salvador over 30 years ago. For the past several years he has hand carried 'love' offerings into El Salvador to the poorest and most needy in the community from which he came, San Pablo Tacachico (north of San Salvador).

Last year we carried a mercy offering totaling over \$4000 and had the privilege of helping over 32 families! Half of the families receiving fertilizer - affording them a secure hope for a cash crop of grain, the other half receiving enough maize, beans and rice to feed a small family for 6 months. These simple gifts made the difference between being able to survive another year or not for these 32+ families.

I want to ask for your prayers as Pastor Louis and a mutual friend in ministry take the trip to El Salvador this year. The dates are not yet confirmed as of this printing but it will either be late April or early May. I love the sheer simplicity of this partnership that reaches into the lives of the poorest of the poor. Please pray for Protection - if you know anything about gang violence in El Salvador you know prayer is needed. Provision - while tickets, food etc. will be covered by personal funds we would love to see the current love offering of \$3000 increase to bless the extreme poor. If you would like to give towards the 'Love Offering' please indicate it on your gift - we are hoping to see many families blessed and encouraged again this year.



**Join Us As we Pray for our City**

- Thursday 6—7 am
- Friday—7pm
- The 1st and 3rd Friday @247 Pearl St.
- The 2nd and 4th Friday @ 1400 W. Washington Center Rd

Refreshing unrehearsed times with the Lord and with other Jesus lovers! We look forward to being with you together in the presence of our beautiful Father.

With gratitude and integrity we steward your gifts. Thank you for partnering with the mission the Lord has given us in this hour as we partner with Him for His kingdom to be established.

Please make your **tax deductible** contribution to:

**IHOP Fort Wayne  
5907 West Wallen Road,  
Fort Wayne, IN 46818**

Ben and Denise, Please agree with us over these prayer needs for the next month...

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