

Bridge Street House of Prayer

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THE BSHOP IS A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY SURRENDERED TO THE LOVE OF JESUS WORKING IN US AND THROUGH US TO BRING TRANSFORMATION TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD THAT WILL MULTIPLY IN THE CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS THROUGH COMMUNITIES OF PRAYER.

DON'T BE RADICAL

I have been thinking about the word "radical" lately. More specifically, I have been reflecting on what it means to be a radical Christian... to live a radical life... to follow Jesus radically. The idea of a radical Christian life is something that I hear often in the church, especially when working with young people. Some would look at our life here on Bridge Street as say that we live pretty radically. Living among the poor. Sharing life together. Working hard and serving faithfully. Enduring many hardships for the sake of God's Kingdom. Many in our community have paid a high price to be here and some would look at our lifestyle and call it radical.

So, what does it take to be a radical Christian? What are the requirements and the qualifications? And is there a non-radical option? Or perhaps more importantly, what would a radical life look like in Jesus' eyes?

As I have thought about this recently, I did a quick word search on my iPod Bible app and ended up with "no results." A few other similar searches turned up the same empty results. None. The word radical, which has become so common in our churches today, is not even found in Jesus' vocabulary.

So, where did the idea of radical Christianity come from? Well, I am not a historian, so I am not going to give you a historical account of the origins of the word "radical" in the church (I would, however, recommend watching the completely unrelated 1986 BMX movie entitled "RAD.") But I wonder if the fact that we use such words tells us something about the current condition of our churches. Could it be that our standard for what it means to follow Jesus has become so low that when we see someone actually trying to live like Jesus told us to live, we call it radical?

Think about it. What did Jesus say about what it means to follow Him?

"Take up your cross daily..." Luke 9:23

"Lose your life so that you can find it..." Matt 16:25

"Renounce all that you have..." Luke 14:33

Yet, when we see someone living this way, we revere them as "radical." So, now there are radical Christians who are willing to give up everything for the sake of the Gospel, while the rest of us are just "normal" Christians. And what is most concerning about this is that many of us are ok with just being "normal" while a few are "radical." I wonder if Jesus is ok with that? I wonder if what we consider "normal" Christianity would be a form of following Jesus that would be very foreign to Him. And if what we consider "radical" is simply the norm of what Jesus calls us into when He invites us to follow Him.

Jesus did not call His disciples into a once a week Bible study. He did not call them into a weekly church service. He didn't even call them to come along for a 2-week mission trip. He called them into an all-consuming, self-denying, Jesus-exalting lifestyle. And then he told His disciples to go out and make more disciples. Disciples. Not just converts. Not just friends. Disciples.

Recently while speaking at our Saturday night gathering, I encouraged a room full of young people to stop trying to be radical. Rather, simply be obedient. Obedient to whatever God calls you to (now, that requires that we are intentionally and regularly listening to God... but that's a whole separate newsletter...) We have no desire to be radical here at the Bridge Street House of Prayer. We are simply striving to be obedient. Obedient to Jesus so that He might be exalted in our lives.

This is how we live and this is what we want to call others into. Not radical living. Simply obedience.

Ryan Waalkes



the BSHOP in Ephesus

24/7 JUBILEE

As many of you know, one of our passions here at the BSHOP is prayer. We believe in the power of prayer to transform our lives and the lives of those around us. We believe that prayer has the power, through Jesus, to transform an entire city.

From this passion has grown a desire to be a part of an unceasing prayer movement in this city. The beginnings of the fulfillment of this desire were realized a little over a year ago when we partnered with our friends at the Stockbridge Boiler Room and Crossroads Bible Church to embark on 6 months of unbroken prayer. We were blessed by so many lives eternally changed as they spent an hour a week for six months drawing near to God.

Earlier this year, we embarked on another 40 day season of unceasing prayer with Crossroads, the Boiler Room, and others from around this city. As we continue on this journey a core group of people with a desire to see city-wide 24/7 prayer is developing. And the circle of friends on this journey is widening as the movement continues.

Starting this past Sunday, June 12, we started a new cycle of 40 days of 24/7 prayer. This round of prayer, called Jubilee, will be hosted at the Upper Room of Crossroads Bible Church. We are following a similar format to the past cycles, with a weekly rotation of one-hour prayer slots, with open worship most evening from 7-9 pm. There may be a few slots available if you would like to sign up. Or you can join in one of the corporate prayer slots throughout the week.

For more information, email 24-7@crossroads-bible.org. Or, to sign up for a prayer slot, visit <http://www.24-7prayer.com/signup/433596>



Speaking of Jubilee, in July we'll have our annual Day of Jubilee, where we invite all of you and our entire neighborhood into a day of giving away all the things we don't need, and allowing others to be blessed as people come and find what they do need! You're invited into the giving and the receiving.

Stay tuned for details, but reserve Friday, July 22 for the Day of Jubilee and if you're going through your closets now, consider hanging onto a few things until we invite you to drop them off here.

prayer

Thank you for praying. Here are some things you can be praying for.

- Pray for grace and wisdom as we steward these ministries.
- Pray for BSHOP staff as we move forward with ministry.
- Pray for grace over our community life.
- Pray for protection of our minds, bodies, and hearts.
- Pray for our neighbors and our relationships with them and for real transformation in our neighborhood.

The Pavilion @ 1056 Bridge is open from noon - 5 pm Monday - Friday

Our Saturday Evening Worship Gatherings begin at 7 pm every Saturday in the Tabernacle @ 1054 Bridge!