

## Tending Ancient Paths

### The Paradigms, Posture, and Practices of Jesus

#### The Real Picture

Over the past year Denise has been writing stories about her life from ‘prompts’ sent to her from a company that will then published those responses into a book for our children and future generations. The goal of this book is to tell our stories and share pictures of our lives. She read this story to me last week and I asked if I could share it in our newsletter. It is real, raw, and incredibly hopeful. We pray it will awaken your imagination for the kind of ways that Jesus meets us in our individual path. Peace to you.

#### *What photograph do you most regret not taking when you had the opportunity?*

In today’s world, taking pictures is much easier. In my childhood years I don’t recall my folks taking many pictures although we do have some. It was a big deal when they bought the latest gadget, a Polaroid camera. Sadly, many of those pictures have faded. We even have some home movies that my parents took that I had transferred onto DVD a couple of years ago. In high school I was pretty good at photography and also learned my way around the dark room. I really enjoyed those days and had several photos published in the school yearbook and newspaper. In our early years of marriage, we didn’t think to take lots of pictures but when our children were growing up our camera was a constant accessory. Back then, when we finished a roll, we sent it off to be developed and had to wait a couple of weeks to get it back. Often there were pictures that didn’t turn out or were poor quality, but it was a fleeting sadness as there were always more experiences and more opportunities for memories to be captured on film. Then technology made it so we could get them developed and printed in one hour at the local store. There were even video cameras however, we never had the extra money to purchase one. We borrowed one from time to time and/or tried to use some older hand me down machines but we simply didn’t get a lot of home movies. Now it is fun because we can take as many pictures and videos as we want, see them right in the moment, and cull out the ones we don’t like before getting them printed -right on the spot if we want. The annoying part is, with so many we don’t always sit down and take the time to go through them and get them printed in a timely fashion. Back in the day, as soon as we finished a roll, we would drop it in the mail or take it to the store to be processed. The new ways have some disadvantages for which I am trying diligently to make up for by being disciplined with staying on top of our pictures, getting them printed, and into books with labels so our family can have them to enjoy. Is there a photograph I regret not taking? There is really only one that comes to mind. I have often wished I would have taken a picture of our son, Dylan, as soon as he was born and before his body started to deteriorate. He was so beautiful when he was born with his wrinkly olive colored skin and black curly hair. I wish I would have thought to look at his eye color. I know most babies are born with blue eyes, but I wish I would have looked just so I knew. He was such a big guy. I remember holding him and thinking how perfect he was and begging God to just breathe life into his little body, wishing with everything in me that he would just ‘wake up’ and wrap his tiny fingers around mine. By the time the nurses came to take him away, his skin was starting to shift and sluff, and the ‘bruising’ look was setting in. It was then that we thought, oh we should take a picture of our little guy. Currently, hospitals have a plan in place to take pictures and keep mementos for a stillborn but not so with Dylan. We have a couple of him in the casket but those are unpleasant to look at because his body had started to do what dead bodies do. We do have this one picture, one that I have cherished over the past 30 years. I held him, drinking in his features, hoping to burn them into my memory and thinking in the moment that there is no way I could forget the shape of his eyes, or the round of his face, or the softness of his cheek. No way could I forget the wave of his curls or the size of his hands and feet.



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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

But the clarity of those mind pictures fade the further away you get. Time isn't the healer; it steals away the sharpness of the memory and in so doing the sting of the wound. Love is the healer, who is the person of Jesus, who sat with us in the pain of loss, who met me in the night as I sobbed myself to sleep, who listened as I screamed out my pain to Him in the light of day. Love is the healer who gave me a dream about our little boy playing hide and seek in a field with Jesus so my mother's heart could rest in the peace of knowing Dylan was seen, loved, and cherished in the place where he is now. Love is the healer. So, yes, I regret not taking that picture in the moment because, unlike my other children, I have had no other opportunities to capture the memory of him on film. But I have this one, and those in my head, and those that my body holds from carrying him for nine months, and I have the one Father God gave me in a dream. I just wish I had more pictures to share with others so maybe he wouldn't be forgotten. But some things simply cannot be.



***Change is not a threat, it is a chance...if we embrace it, we can begin again.***

I recently heard this quote shared in a show we enjoy and it struck me because truth be told—I am not a fan of change, yet life is filled with unending change isn't it? As of this writing we are anticipating the birth of another grandchild in Florida - Denise will be traveling to come alongside Devin and Monica in just a few days. Some change is good in the moment, like a new grandbaby. Other change may take us a minute to recognize goodness in it. But, change is a constant and for a guy who does not like change its a constant reminder of the invitation of the Father to look for where He is working and revealing new life. A couple months ago we announced a change of name in our ministry to more align with where we see the Father working. We do want to clarify that we continue to operate on faith support with a passion to invite the body of Christ to Tend the Ancient Paths - paradigms, posture and practices of Jesus. We are excited for this change and for all that Father is revealing to us in this hour. Thank you for your continued support, for standing with us, for believing in us. As is stated below gifts can continue to be made out to IHOP Fort Wayne Inc. We look forward to sharing more of Father's revelation to our hearts in this hour. He is on the move, always speaking, always rallying to support those whose hearts are committed to Him. Sometimes, often times, change is not a threat— it is simply an opportunity to see where God is moving.

**El Salvador Outreach—2023**

- We will again be sending a team to El Salvador in April of 2023!
- Over the last several years we have partnered with Pastor Louis Alvarado to minister to some of the poorest and most needy of El Salvador.
- Our annual offering has helped to rebuild homes, pay medical expenses, pay funeral expenses, provide seed, fertilizer, and food for some of the most needy people of San Pablo Taco Chico.
- As a result there are regular monthly gatherings in San Pablo Taco Chico that have reached hundreds.
- Last year we were able to help over 55 families and continue our on-going monthly work.
- The Good News is Preached to the Poor...
- Please pray about participating in El Salvador this year as we send a team—this offering is a combined effort of Praise International—IHOP Fort Wayne and Pastor Luis Alvarado.
- Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

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 expansion.

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...