

A New Sunday Tradition...

Basically all my life I have had a Sunday tradition...
September through January anyway... **NFL FOOTBALL!!!**

And that my friends, has not changed. I love watching football, I really enjoy almost every aspect of the sport. Every Sunday in the fall my heart is pounding strong!

More recently our family has started the tradition of going to breakfast together. We have done this (almost) every Sunday for the past 2 years and it has been a great way to connect as a family and enjoy even more of the bonding time with the "fam" that I love. Breakfast with the family on Sunday is even sweeter than football...

Getting to sit down to a relaxed meal together and share our week is just a delight. We get much more family time than most other families to begin with, but more is always welcome! And, the Sunday breakfast time is extra special because it is a fixed time – it is our time. Much like Tuesday nights have become a Lisa-&-I tradition of "date night". Yes, Tuesdays are equally cherished.

Anyway, back to Sunday...

Our new tradition is one that has been in the works for some time now... What is it? *To go to church!*

For a while my wife and I have been contemplating regularly attending Sunday service and getting involved with a church. But this is a decision we did not take lightly. We wanted a church that felt right for us. One that was inviting and open – not judgmental and condescending.

I had a **terrible** experience with the (Catholic) church growing up – one that left deep wounds and filled me with much doubt. Not doubt about God but doubt about religion. And, not about

the message of religion but of it's messengers. There are good people and not-so-good people in this world and unfortunately the same is true everywhere – even in the church. I met many good people I am sure in my childhood with the church. But it was the bad one(s) that filled my mind with an incurable pain.

However, for the past several months I had been carrying a terrible burden. Someone *I am not at all close with* had (unintentionally?) confided something to me – **something absolutely HORRIBLE** – and I did not know what to do with the knowledge I had been “forced” to receive. I was losing sleep and filled with an awful feeling of uncertainty as to what was the ‘right’ thing to do.

This was not the kind of thing you gossip and it was not the kind of story I wanted to pass-on or burden any of my friends with... Only [Lisa](#) knew what was on my mind. However, one other name kept coming to mind – very oddly it was the name of someone who I did not have a close relationship with...

Mark Pittman was one of the cast members in School House Rock Live! A show which I directed with my lovely wife. All casts bond, but I had no particular closeness to Mark; in fact he and I didn't really seem to gel. Not that he wasn't nice and not that he-and-I didn't get along... I was just much closer to other cast members.

Anyhow, Mark's name kept coming into my mind whenever I would think about this ‘event’. I do not know why... So, finally after discussing it with Lisa, we decided to just go with it. I called Mark who is a pastor at [New Hope Community Church](#). we arranged to meet at his office the following day.

Mark admitted to me that he was as surprised to get a call from me as I was to have been calling on him. Nonetheless, here we were.

I had a lengthy discussion with Mark about the burden I was

carrying and the solutions (in terms of faith). I had an almost immediate feeling of comfort come over me – even with the emotional/intense nature of the issue at hand. Mark gave me advice from the perspective of the bible; which in fact was exactly what I was seeking. I had confidence in what I had to do and a peace about the situation I had not been able to find on my own.

Mark also talked very briefly about church in general. I made a comment on my past experience and the fact that I just wasn't sure about my comfort level with the church concept – because of what had happened in the past.

Although he made the assumption (incorrectly) that my wounds were related to the teachings or the interpretations of the Catholic faith – I still felt healing occur as we engaged in a discussion about the church.

Afterwards my wife and I talked about the experience and both agreed that we should attend a service at New Hope.

The service itself was amazing. Full of energy, music, emotion, and message. The highlight of the service was a group of individuals coming on stage each with a cardboard that on one side they had written their personal struggle and on the other side their newly found saving... For example, one read "Addicted to Drugs" and then was turned over to reveal "Addicted to God's Love". This was all done to music and was very dramatic and moving. *Both Lisa and I had tears flowing from our eyes.*

So, yep. I think we've found a new Sunday tradition. *Or maybe I should say a new Sunday tradition found us...?* But I am happy to say that along with football (GO BEARS!!!), and breakfast, we will make attending Sunday service a part of our day.

THE IMPORTANT NOTE:

The kids also had a blast. Both learning about God's message

and playing with other kids their age. Each child was in a separate room with other kids in their age group. I felt this was a much more productive way for the kids to be introduced to church (through fun interaction) – versus when I was young and basically sat BORED and listened to sermon after sermon that I did not understand nor did I care about... ***I WAS A KID; SITTING THERE WAS BORING!!***