

Channel Surfing

Watch and Pray

Mike Bickle's worship-driven prayer movement partners with GOD TV.

In July, GOD TV moved its cameras into the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in Kansas City, Mo., transmitting to more than 200 countries live footage of a worship-fueled prayer room that has burned day and night since September 1999.

"Our vision with GOD TV is to [work together] to establish 100,000 houses of prayer [worldwide]," says Mike Bickle, founder and director of IHOP. "We are not establishing an IHOP network. ... We do not want them to be called IHOP, but rather to use whatever name the Lord gives them."

Bickle's partnership with GOD TV formed after the network's founders, Rory and Wendy Alec, interviewed him last October during GOD TV's initial U.S. launch. He now heads GOD TV's global division of prayer and hosts a daily one-hour devotional program. GOD TV also airs three hours of IHOP's prayer room live every day and streams it 24-7 over its Web site, .

Bickle's vision for nonstop prayer began in 1983 when prophetic minister Bob Jones declared Bickle would spearhead a "24-hour house of prayer in the spirit of the Tabernacle of David." Bickle says that at the time "the Lord promised we would eventually have 5,000 full-time staff."

Today IHOP is nearly halfway there, due in large part to its

distinctive “harp and bowl” model of prayer–worship music mixed with intercession. “You can’t imagine how powerful it can be to mingle songs with spoken prayers and proclamations,” said Rory Alec, GOD TV’s co-founder and CEO, after he visited IHOP.

The harp and bowl model of prayer is sustainable, Bickle says, because it’s both powerful and enjoyable. “[Without intimacy in Jesus] it is much more difficult to motivate people to pray [for hours]. The war cry in prayer is best fueled by love songs.”

Bickle says some Christians find it difficult to accept the idea that aside from training and outreach, the primary responsibility of IHOP’s 1,300 full-time staff and students is worship and intercession.

“We believe that the most effective way to evangelize and care for people is in the context of night-and-day prayer, which releases more of the power of God in our labors,” he says. “This is a new paradigm for many in the church today. The New Testament presents the missions movement as deeply connected to continual prayer.”

Over the satellites of the fast-growing GOD TV, Bickle hopes thousands of believers will tune in and catch IHOP’s latest vision for 100,000 houses of prayer worldwide.

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