

Reaching the World ...

Beginning in Your Neighborhood

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And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Much of our society is insular, separated from the rest of world. We live on social media and many of us can google anything at any time from any place. Global information is easily available, but what about our neighbor's needs? We may know who lives next door, but do we really know our neighbors? Are we close enough to share struggles or only enough to share a quick wave, "hello"?

How did we become so insulated from our own Jerusalem? God tells us to go into all the world with the Gospel of Jesus, and yet we hesitate to go into our neighborhood. Do your neighbors know you are a Christian? Have you invited them to attend church with you? We can go into our neighborhoods with the greatest news in all the world: the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The mission field is right outside our doors.

We receive encouragement from Saint Paul: *How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ (Romans 10:14, 17).* Who will go to your neighbor to proclaim the forgiveness of sins and the conquering of sin, death, and the devil if not you? Christians know our vocation is a calling from God. We understand we hold an honorable position because of God's calling to fulfill this vocation as if serving Him (Colossians 3:23-24). Part of our vocation is to share Christ with our neighbors.

Unless I speak, how will my neighbors hear the true Gospel? It is my privilege to go and share the hope found in Him, instead of letting them believe a message from a corrupt world, filled with more lies than truth.



Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). That is the Gospel message, simple and profound. Barely two lines in my Bible, it is the message of hope which we have: Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and raised on the third day — proof His sacrifice was accepted and we have been justified — fulfilling the Old Testament promise. That is the simple message of eternal hope.

Let's encourage one another to meet our neighbors and speak the Gospel to them. Let's share the joy of knowing we are not alone. Our sins, and those of all people, have been paid for; forgiveness is offered in His name. Invite them to attend church and Bible study with you, or offer to take their children to Sunday School or VBS. Go into your neighborhood, fulfilling the Great Commission: *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20).* Q

Nancy was born and raised in New York City. She has earned her B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. in Theology and Apologetics, and taught World Religions at the university level. She and her husband, Roberto, live in Mountain Home, Idaho, where they attend Faith Lutheran Church.