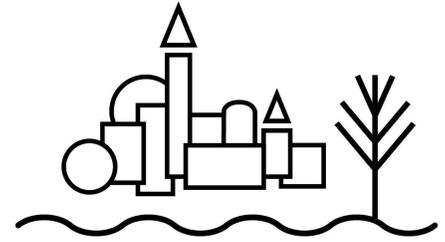


My Unchurched Neighbor

Luke 10:29-37



Because I have a heart for reaching our unchurched neighbors, TEA (Teach Empower Accept) women's outreach - GO OUTreach Ministry, was birthed out of the burden the Lord placed on my own heart years ago, to go out and reach our sisters outside the church walls. The first step was to create an environment for reaching our unchurched neighbors, sisters, families. It was decided, after much prayer and research, that we did not have a need for another meeting because churches have enough "meetings" already. In TEA, we go out into local communities to share a free meal weekly with others and extend the hand of friendship in God's love to our unchurched neighbors. TEA welcomes all women, who for whatever reasons, feel uncomfortable walking into a church building. It is our desire to walk with our TEA friends into the church fellowship when they feel ready to take that step. We sit by them in Wednesday night Bible study and/or Sunday morning worship. We allow Christ to touch hearts. TEA welcomes prayer warriors, pastors, and the unchurched to join us in the simple act of fellowship, sharing Christ's love while hearing the Word in a relaxed environment where what is said around the café table, remains at the table without judgment. All questions are treated with respect and are encouraged during our TEA lunch with friends. We have a Facebook group for prayer request/praise report (closed site for privacy reasons), which connects TEA members across the USA to request prayer and to join in lifting others in prayer. We go out with intent and purpose.

Reflections/Call to Action

1. How many people do you meet on a weekly basis that you do not know (gym, school, work, grocery store)? Set a goal for yourself to reach out to someone new and learn something about them. Are you waiting for your lost neighbors to change before you can establish a relationship with them? If so, you are interested in reaching more people like yourself and not the lost. (Matt. 9:12-13)
2. If you have a heart to reach your unchurched neighbors, prayer is the first step. Who will you commit to pray for? Plan with a friend who will join you in prayer as you begin this new journey of outreach. Ask God to give you a compassionate heart for others and to give you the words to speak when the time is right. (Philippians 4:6)
3. The second step is to establish a relationship with them. Invite them to share a meal or a community event. Learn what they like, what is important to them. Cookouts offer great opportunities for unchurched neighbors to see Christianity in action as you give thanks and share your real-life experiences. They want to know if Jesus is real and if the Bible addresses the problems of today: health, finances, family, relationships, community concerns. Our lost neighbors are listening, watching, to see if/how Jesus can make a

difference in the lives of others as well as their own. Jesus walked, talked, ate with, and got to know others. Why did he hang out with sinners? (Mark 2:17).

4. Introduce Bible stories or verses in your conversation. Sharing the story of your own walk with Jesus is easy; you can't mess up telling your own story because—it's your story! (Matthew 28:19)
5. The unchurched do not speak fluent, "Church" and they do not share an understanding of the Christian language or church community yet. What do we mean by speaking "Church?"

Resources

Send Out, vol 1, Rev. Keith Mariott @Amazon.com

(This is a resource for anyone interested in reaching lost neighbors. *Send Out*, vol 2 will be available soon. Rev. Keith Mariott is a pastor in Grace Presbytery)

Prayer

Lord, your word says that it is good and pleasing in the sight of God who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and man, Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all. Give us the hearts to reach the lost. Give us eyes that see all people as you do. Send us where you will have us to go. Give us the words we are to speak as we go out to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ABOUT THE WRITER:

Rev. Joy Graham is a devoted wife to her husband of over twenty years, Coy Graham, Jr., loving mother of three grown sons and two teen daughters, grandmother of three perfect grands! Their small home is nestled in the foothills of Alabama. Joy serves as outreach pastor within the highly mobile community of the construction industry, currently on location in Central Florida, serving Crystal River, Inverness, and Bartow, Florida. She is the founder of, GO OUTreach Ministry, TEA (Teach Empower Accept) Women's Outreach of Alabama and Florida serving 179 women. Joy is a strong advocate for the education of special needs students, actively involved in establishing new educational opportunities for special needs students within private Christian schools.