



# Neighbors

## *Extraordinary Prayer & Its Role in Kingdom Advance*

BY **HANNAH & SADIE**

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**W**e, the women behind this article, are your fellow travelers. We are sisters, friends, and neighbors, asking the Lord to show us how to find persons of peace and love our neighbors as ourselves—to find ways to share the love of Jesus in the daily rhythms of our lives.

To start, let's define some terms. A Person of Peace (POP), according to Luke 9, 10 and Mathew, chapter 10 is someone who is spiritually interested and one who opens a door for a community (household/affinity group) to hear about Jesus. A POP is not always highly respected in their community nor are they necessarily a peaceful person. Consider the Samaritan woman in John 4. She was shamed in her community, but after hearing the truth, she ran back to her town and shared, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" The whole town came to see Jesus, and many of them repented and put their faith in Him. What sets a POP apart from others is their link to influence in a community. They share with others what they are hearing and learning.

How do we find people like this, especially in our ordinary daily lives? When Jesus sent out the 72, he told them to start with prayer: "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers

into his harvest field" (Luke 10:2, ESV). Pray for opportunities and for increased awareness—kingdom eyes to see where the Spirit is guiding you. Maybe a first step for you could be praying with a friend once a week for a POP to share with. This is a prayer our Father delights to answer! This week, a friend of ours was praying and asking God for opportunities to share the gospel and to love people. As soon as he finished praying this, a woman came up to him and asked him to borrow a cell phone charger. Her cell phone had died, and she had run out of fuel. Because of his increased awareness, he saw this as an opportunity. He didn't have a cell phone charger, but he offered to help in other ways. He learned that she had recently fallen on hard times and he was able to serve her. He was also able to share the gospel with her, and this woman put her faith in Jesus in a fast food restaurant! So pray and believe that God will give you kingdom eyes.

You may read that story and think, "I can't be like that person." You may feel inadequate, unsure, or just busy. However, the beauty of God's command to bring the gospel is that God equips us and empowers us to obey in our daily rhythms. This is huge. Jesus has placed you where you are because He plans to come there. He plans to come to your work, your neighborhood,

# of peace

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your grocery store, your kid's school, your local park, and your favorite coffee shop or bar. The world apart from Christ is in chaos, and people need the peace that Jesus has to offer through us. So, let's season our speech with "Peace be to this house," in the form of testimony, praise, and prayer. The Psalmist says it like this, "Sing to the Lord, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples." (Psalm 96:2-3, ESV) Speak aloud about the goodness of Jesus. We women naturally speak about things that we love and that we are proud of. Let's talk about Jesus as openly and excitedly as we talk about our favorite clothing boutique.

Speaking about Jesus with strangers might seem uncomfortable at first, but with practice, it can become a natural overflow. Here are some ways we have loved Jesus out loud and met a POP:

- Sharing our testimony
- Telling stories of answered prayers
- Asking about hopes, dreams, fears, and hurts
- Praying for people on the spot

Take time to practice these things. What are a few of the most common questions you get asked? How can you answer them in a way that

transitions conversation from casual to spiritual? If someone asks how you are, you could say, "I am really well. God answered a prayer of mine today. Is there anything I can pray for you about today?" This is a comfortable way to transition a really basic conversation into one where you are talking about spiritual things. A person of peace would respond to this with interest, asking more about your answered prayer or how you know it was God that answered it. Another person would just ignore the opportunity for spiritual conversation, which is fine (and happens to us all the time). Practicing these things before they come up helps you capitalize on opportunities the Lord brings. The idea is to walk in obedience and keep speaking about God until we meet those POP's who will open gates for Jesus to enter their communities.

We are continually learning what it means to look for people of peace and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We want to invite others to follow our example as we follow Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). You likely have a busy life and you may feel like you can't squeeze anything else in. Maybe the Lord would ask you to rearrange or reprioritize. We pray God uses you right where you are to find people of peace, neighbors of peace, who will introduce their spheres of influence to Jesus. 