

## THE VALUE OF PRAYER WALKING IN COMMUNITIES

Over the years, the SBC has seen many churches and mission teams embrace their Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost with what has become known as prayerwalking... praying on site with insight. Great spiritual dividends have resulted in the efforts of God's people touching a community through corporate intercession.

When I prayerwalk, John 20:19-20 comes to mind... *“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord”* (NIV). Most of my church planting efforts have been in multihousing communities. Many of these are gated neighborhoods, restricting access to any “door to door” campaign. Yet the people who live there are similar to the above scripture. The doors of their heart are locked for fear of something... people, crime, life issues. When prayerwalking, I am praying the resurrected Christ through those locked doors. Jesus is announcing peace. He is showing His hands and side. They become overjoyed when discovering the Lord!

### IS THERE VALUE IN PRAYERWALKING?

The answer is an emphatic yes! Not only is there a sense of God's people being obedient through prayer to the Great Commission, one also discovers the very heart of those who live in the community as you pray with them. In my background as a church planter, it has been my experience that a lot of the intensive preparation done for starting a church can be done through prayer walking. You meet the community, they get to know you, people of peace (Luke 10:5-7) are discovered, and an indigenous work is rooted for a future bible study or church. You are going as a missionary, in the name of Jesus and in a spirit of prayer. God will use you and bless this effort.

Let me suggest what has become known as **“The Jericho Prayer Walk,” Seven Intentional Weeks of Claiming a Community for Jesus Christ through Prayer.** During this seven week season of walking and praying, ask God to raise up leaders from the community who would feel the same ownership of the dream that God had led upon your heart. It's amazing how He always does! The plan is simple...

**WEEK ONE:** Walk the community, praying the resurrected Christ through the locked doors, and ministering to others through prayer.

**WEEK TWO:** Enter the community at the same time as last week, praying and ministering to the people in prayer (you will be amazed at the curiosity and increasing interest).

**WEEK THREE:** Same as week two. Almost always on this third week, people of peace will appear, wanting to join in your prayer walk and participate with you in reaching their community for Christ.

**WEEK FOUR:** Same as week three. Begin to talk with the people of peace about what God is saying to your heart regarding their community. Welcome any feedback as well as their desire to be a part of this new work. Ask them to become your prayer partners.

**WEEK FIVE:** As you pray, walk a little slower and stay a little longer. God is seeding into the community not only their need for Christ, but the church or bible study being birthed in their backyard. Become more public with your intentions.

**WEEK SIX:** Same as week five. Begin announcing the dates (with flyers) of any harvest event or kick off rally that your team and the local leaders have planned.

**WEEK SEVEN:** As you prayerwalk the community, continue to give out flyers, announcing the kick off rally with time, place, etc. During the prayerwalk, ask the community to follow you back and join your team for prayer at the place you intend to start the new church or bible study (i.e. a person's home, community center, club house, under a tree, etc.). Almost always by the seventh week, a cluster of people you have been praying with would have committed their hearts to Christ, and are ready for a new beginning.