

obey. The moment I walked in obedience God really ministered to those women. God even went so far as to give me the ability in that moment to speak a language that I didn't even know.

It is very obvious from the Scriptures that God sends people out with a purpose. When Jesus called each of His disciples, it is evident that they were not only following Him for themselves, but were also being called to minister to people. It struck me this week that the moment I asked Jesus to be my Lord and Savior, I was sent. The whole point of salvation is not to keep it for ourselves but to give. So, how are we able to share this salvation that God so freely gives? Even the thought of approaching someone on the street scares some people. The fact is that there are many different ways to share the love of Jesus with others. I believe that Jesus sees the potential in all of us and has gifted each of us differently. He has given each of us a special way to share with others. Some have the gift of boldness, while others can share the love of Jesus through hospitality and friendship.

Currently at the SEND House we are trying to reach out to our neighbors. In our neighborhood there are two different kinds of people, the middle-class white male and the lower-class African American community. It is impossible to reach the middle-class white male population in the same way as the African American community. Knocking on the door of a white male and explaining the gospel to them would be a complete turnoff; instead another approach is necessary. We have started inviting them over to dinner, visiting with them and building a relationship in hopes of one day soon presenting the gospel to them. On the other hand, our African American neighbors love it when we knock on their doors and share with them, and there is evidence that it really has touched their hearts.

It is important when sharing with people to be sensitive to their background. Evaluate how they will respond. God has given us the Holy Spirit to speak to us and give us the sensitivity that is necessary. The key to evangelism is obedience to the Spirit. 1 Peter 3:15 says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have." If we are prepared, it will be less nerve-racking to give an answer when the time comes.

While the initial step of sharing with people is very important there is another step that is equally important—if not more so. It is the step of discipleship. Discipleship simply means walking beside. When each of us entered into a relationship with Jesus we began walking and there were probably people that directly influenced those early years of our walk with the Lord. Relationships aren't meant to stay in one place. In the same way the people you lead to Christ need to flourish in their relationship with Him. It is important that new believers recognize that they are also being sent, and they need to be surrounded by people that can encourage and challenge them. In Central Asia many churches are growing this way. The missionaries there realize that in order for the church to expand there needs to be a dependency on God and not them. As the missionaries begin to disciple and send national believers they become the best missionaries to their own people.