



**Sermon Title: BACKYARD MISSIONS: Your Neighbors are Waiting**

**Date: March 6, 2022**

To be on a mission for Jesus isn't only international - the mission starts in your backyard. God's missional calling for your life starts here where He has placed you.

Jesus lays out the missions' strategy for us in the book of Acts. Right before His ascension to heaven, He appears to His followers giving them overwhelming proof that He had defeated death. At this point, they are expecting that He's going to march into Jerusalem, overthrow the Romans and set up His eternal kingdom; but Jesus instead lays out for them a different game plan that involves them and us bearing witness to what He just went through. **Acts 1:6-8**

**Big Idea: Live As A Witness Of Jesus Christ Wherever You Are, And Wherever You Go.**

Our calling as Christians is to bear witness and tell others about the gospel we have heard, believed, and experienced.

Four locations where you should live daily as a witness of Jesus Christ.

### **1. Live As A Witness In Your "Jerusalem"**

Jerusalem represents the place where spiritual discussions are the norm and people are expecting spiritual things to happen. Jesus' strategy for missions is to start where you are with the people around you. God has strategically positioned you where you live right now because it is where He wants to use you to be a witness of the Gospel. **Acts 17:26-27**

Being a witness to your close circle of family, friends, and neighbors and workers may not always be easy because most of them have dirt on you. Some very practical things you can do to be a witness to your neighbors is to host a party and invite them. Show them the love of Jesus through hospitality.

### **2. Live As A Witness In Your "Judea"**

When Jesus says in **Acts 1:8**, "...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." He's talking about bringing the Gospel to people in our socio-economic and ethnic

group that are not in our immediate network of relationships and are distant geographically.

This could be any missions-related activity in the inner city, across stateliness, or even telling people about Jesus internationally in a place that is culturally familiar to you. Being a witness of the Gospel in your “Judea” could also refer to people from around the world whom God has brought to your doorsteps.

Most of the world's unreached people are located geographically in what some scholars call the 10/40 Window. The 10/40 Window is a rectangular geographic area stretching from North Africa through the Middle East to Asia, covering 68 countries. It is estimated that there are 900,000 international students in the U.S each year, and 62% of them are from 10/40 window countries. In other words, JUDEA IS HERE!

God has brought the nations to your doorstep. God has presented you with a training platform to prepare you through your neighbors. If there has ever been a moment in history when Christians have been strategically positioned to impact the world with the Gospel, it is here and now in New Jersey!! You can do this through the power of an invitation.

### **3. Live As A Witness In Your “Samaria And To The Ends Of The Earth”**

If you know your Bible, then you know that Jews and Samaritans are like oil and water, they didn't mix. It is into this region where there is fierce and long-standing hostility that Jesus now instructs His disciples to go and be a witness of the Gospel. That assignment has not changed. It is still Jesus' command to us today!

So, if Samaria represents the people group and nations you would prefer to avoid, then the “Ends of the earth” represents the unreached people that you may not even know exists yet. Whoever they are, and wherever they are in the world, whether locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally – Jesus says, as His follower, you are to be a witness of the resurrection and forgiveness of Jesus to them.

Ask yourself, what ethnic people group or nation has God burdened your heart for?

### **Discussion Questions:**

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **Many Christians have a desire to be missionaries but never follow through. What is it that holds them back?**
- **What would make it so the unreached people in the 10/40 window hear the gospel?**
- **Have you ever been on a short term mission trip? How did it affect you?**
- **Who do you interact with on a daily basis where you serve in a missionary role?**