

Prayerwalking to Birth an APARTMENT CHURCH

Around eighteen months ago, the Lord showed us prophetically that we were to start a church in one of the low-income housing projects, Springfield, about twenty minutes from our home. So we gathered together a team to pray for the area, and for several months, it was a prayer project. From time to time we would actually go and walk the area claiming it for the Kingdom, but most of our praying was done on an individual basis.

One day, Tony and I happened to be driving by, and on impulse, decided to stop and prayer walk again. Tony was specifically asking the Lord that we would meet our 'person of peace.' A torrential downpour surprised us and we ran to take shelter under a balcony with two Hispanic ladies who turned out to be sisters. Conversation started, and they inquired what we were doing there. (We obviously did not fit the local profile!) We explained to them that we were praying for their neighborhood, and as the conversation went on, asked if we could come by occasionally to pray about the needs in their family. They immediately agreed, and so for the next few weeks, once or twice a week we would drop in and pray for them, staying just fifteen minutes or so. It was not long before we were seeing very specific answers to prayer.

One of the sisters, Lily, turned out to be our person of peace. (She has a heart as big as Texas - everyone is welcomed and loved by her.) Our next step was to ask if she would bring some of her friends and family members together, and so a **weekly meeting time was set up at her home. She very quickly became a Christian, and this led to many of her family members also doing the same.** We have touched several other homes in the complex, too. Now a year later, her apartment is crowded out every week with 30 to 40 people jammed in, sitting on the stairs, on the floor, kids everywhere. Neighbors are telling us that the project has begun to change; there is less violence and some of the drug dealers are moving out. We have started a church in the home of another family member in a different housing project as well. (Excerpt from *Getting Started*, by Felicity Dale, House 2 House Ministries, page 100 and 102. Used by permission.)

Neal Hughes teaches laypersons to begin planting churches by Prayerwalking. Volunteers have started 52 such congregation in 5 years. Hughes suggests these simple guidelines:

1. Prayerwalk in the area seven times, or seven weeks.
2. Pray silently or aloud...but don't make a scene.
3. Talk to people...if they are interested ask, "Is there something I can pray about for you?"
4. Take them praying along with you.
5. About week 5, begin to ask, "What do you think about starting a church here?"
6. Keep prayerwalking until God leads you to a person of peace in that location.