



## Engaging the Conversation on the Streets

**P**articipating in a 5 day *World Street Experience* mission trip (see pp. 2-3) in downtown Vancouver, we go out to the streets on a prayer evangelism outing. We approach Corey\* hoping to engage in a conversation. He seems sunken into the space, half-lying, half sitting in a narrow alcove along Granville Street. He is unkempt, clothes ill fitting, hands unwashed, and nails blackened. He has a kind face, not permanently gnarled or etched by drugs and alcohol.

We see him drawing on an old piece of cardboard, sketching a person reaching upward from a circle of waves. "I'm working on perspective," he says. He continues to draw throughout our conversation, except when he looks up to better hear what we are saying.

We mention that we are Christians and that we are interested in finding out about the spiritual practices of people in Vancouver. We ask Corey if he has a few minutes to answer a few questions. With some enthusiasm, he replies, "Sure, I could use the conversation."

Speaking matter of factly, after pondering each question, Corey answers. Listening to his beliefs and views, we are drawn into his story. During the conversation we find out that his mom had faith and that he has been through a Teen Challenge recovery program in the past.

"I used to go to church once in a while. I really like the gospel music." He tells us his favorite quote is from Jesus, "Birds have nests and foxes have holes, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

Afterwards, he listens to us share our experience of God through prayer and even welcomes our offer to pray with him. We bring our hope of eternal life into the conversation, contrasting our hope with the sadness of what we have been taught today, that there is no afterlife, that we just cease to exist when we die.

With a distant look, he ponders, "I feel okay if there is no after life. I'd just like to rest and for it all to be over." I've never before heard anyone say they were willing to perish.

*\* Names have been changed to protect privacy*

We return later in the day with a person in our group who works in public housing to meet with Corey to see if we can help in any way.

Meanwhile another pair from our group finds another conversation. Jim approaches Dave\* who goes open and deeply quickly, "My mom was a believer, she died from dementia 3 years ago, and I'm really angry at God." The conversation goes on at length. "I've tried prayer before but after awhile I get so upset, I abandon it. I guess I'm indifferent." He oscillates between anger and apathy.

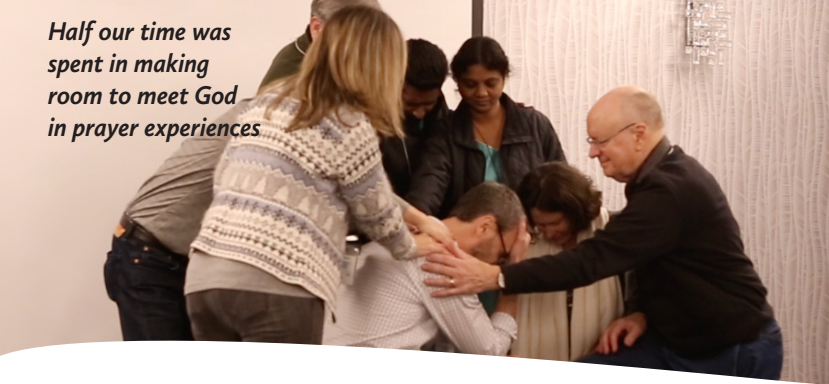
We encourage him to run to God instead of away, that he can find peace, forgiveness, and healing in Jesus. We offer to pray for him.

How many Coreys and Daves are out there? How many would be willing to talk and be prayed for? With your help, we can train more leaders in prayer evangelism to reach more like these.

*Father, we thank you for divine conversations with each person. Draw each one to know Jesus through prayer. Amen*



*Half our time was spent in making room to meet God in prayer experiences*



## World Street Prayer Experience Bears Fruit

In our plugged in, online world we live life at a thousand miles per second. *World Street Experience* is a 5-day opportunity to unplug from the conflicting and chaotic voices of the world to go offline and plug in to God, as we enjoy deep fellowship and engage the city in prayer.

*World Street* is a world experience. We met in the world city of Vancouver, with 40 mission and prayer leaders from Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Victoria, Halifax, New York, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Kansas City, including a bishop from India representing 4000 congregation, 4 leaders representing 30 churches in Moscow, a Korean leader of 300 churches, and a Hispanic mission director.

**World Street Experience is a mission trip, not a conference.** We did not merely talk about prayer and mission—we prayed half our time together and followed God into the city.

**We engaged in 20 prayer experiences. We prayed Jesus' priorities.** We practiced leading one another in dynamic prayer experiences. We pleaded to be men and women of prayer, crying out for the church to become a joyful house of prayer, calling out to God for Vancouver and all our cities.

**God answered our prayers even as we prayed.** Momentum grew as we received news of answered requests from our relationships and ministries back home.

**We met the city and her people, face to face,** taking two afternoons to prayer walk the streets, looking to see her through God's eyes. **We engaged in over 40 fruitful prayer conversations** with a splendid variety of people; no one was hostile or rude. Prayers paved open doors for us to hear a variety of ideas about prayer and spirituality.

We prayed with an atheist and his son, a practitioner of the occult, and a devout couple from Brazil. We engaged with a gregarious panhandler around the corner, a young woman suffering from mental illness, and a homeless young man weary from life.



*Engaging the city through prayer walking, conversations, and praying with and for people on the streets was a key part of our time together*



Thankful for a wonderful teaching team with good unity and chemistry



Both seasoned and new ministry leaders from diverse backgrounds enjoyed learning from each other in conversation, prayer, and group work.



We spoke with protesting hotel workers and a single mom seeking to make policy change. We prayed for a man who just lost his mother to cancer and an aunt who became an advocate for the homeless after losing her niece to an overdose.

Our people came back and reported some tearful and deep interactions. Many were open to hearing our testimonies about how prayer connects us to God.

**We did not just talk about God, we walked with him, keeping in step with his Spirit,** as he opened our eyes and hearts. In a word, we actually experienced God, grew in prayer fellowship, and engaged the church and the city from morning to night.

*Father, thank you for your rich presence with us that refreshes and fills us with Christ's compassion. Send us as laborers. Give us open doors, boldness, and deliverance as we reach seekers and train believers for prayer evangelism. Grow the seeds of our prayer conversations so that people would come to know Jesus through prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen*

## When we create space to meet Jesus and pray, he bears good fruit

One church planter, just beginning his work said, *"I'm ashamed I've forgotten my love of prayer and evangelism."*

Another leader shared, *"God has changed my life here. I think I'm called to be an evangelist! Praise be to God!"*

A church planting intern, passionately asked us to pray, *"that I will not forget what I have learned here; I want to be 'presbycostal', believing in the power of God through prayer."*

One leader promptly put to practice his new prayer leadership skills, *"I totally revamped my original plan in training minority leaders to be more prayer focused. They embraced our commitment to pray throughout the workshops. One of them said, 'Good content and fellowship, great prayer time!' I also want to engage in more street prayer conversations in my city."*

A pastor led his team to go deeper through prayer, *"In our staff meeting we normally report what is happening, staying more mechanical and on the surface. I adapted a prayer exercise that led to discussing hopes, disappointments, and challenges. It created great dialogue as we prayed and praised our way through. It was personal and powerful."*

Vijay, a bishop from India, is trusting God to raise up 24 prayer warriors from 24 presbyteries to each train 20 others. Their bigger vision is to **train 10,000 prayer leaders** (which he thinks is modest in the context of India's population of 1.4 billion!).

Four leaders returned to Moscow resolved to implement a 2 year plan to **train the 30 churches they work with**. They are already translating our materials to help toward that vision.

Join us for the next World Street Experience

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