

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

Good morning. Please turn in your Bibles to I Peter Chapter 1. My name is Andy Barker and I am one of the elders here at Life Fellowship, and I am honored to be up here with you today to close out our Art of Neighboring Series. Would you please pray with me.

Heavenly Father, thank you for your Word which says the things that we need to hear. I pray, God, that you would give us ears to hear what you have to say, and that you would use this time that we have set aside to open up your Word together, and show us more of who you are that it might shape who we are. In Jesus name. Amen.

I remember one Sunday morning I was sitting over there listening to a sermon, but the sermon that I was listening to was not the sermon that was being preached up here. I don't know what triggered it, but Matthew Chapter 6 came to mind. That is where Jesus says to not lay up treasures for ourselves on earth, but to lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven. And my mind started racing thinking about how much our culture values investments and planning for retirement, yet how short term our long term planning is. If we know that we should be planning for 40 years from now, how much more should we be planning for 40,000 years from now?

I began to think about scenarios of what I could say if the topic of investments came up if I should meet someone, and how I could use that to point them to Jesus' words and their need for Him. And I continued to think of that for a while, but then I tried to tune back into the message I was supposed to be listening to.

After church that day we got a call from some friends from Life who had a pretty unusual offer. A neighbor of theirs was having a birthday party for his daughter, but because of some recent family troubles the guest list was pretty low and there weren't many coming to the party. So they called us to see if we would come to boost the guest list. And they were hoping that there might be an opportunity to minister to this neighbor in his brokenness. So the thought of an opportunity to share the gospel was on our minds.

We arrived to the party a little late, and the dad offered to throw on some hotdogs for us. And as I waited with him the rest of the party gathered in another part of the yard for gifts. So it was just me and this one other guy named Brian. We started to chit chat, and he shared with me that he had had a very successful business and had invested a ton of money, and then get this - he lost it all in the financial crisis of 2008.

I couldn't believe it. This was the exact conversation that I had been fantasizing about that morning. This was clearly a moment prepared by God. By this time the hotdogs were done, and the gift opening had begun and Brian and I continued to chat.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES Andy Barker, Elder

And you will not believe what happened next. When I was done putting the hotdogs in the buns, I stood there holding the plate and I looked over at the birthday party crowd where my family was, I looked at the hotdogs, and I looked at Brian. And I could feel the heat of the hotdogs through the plate in my hand, and that's when it happened - I walked away. I told Brian that I had to take those hotdogs to my family- and I walked away. You couldn't have had a more perfect setup - and I walked away.

What happened? Fear is what happened. Even though it was clearly a God orchestrated interaction, the fear of potential awkwardness, the fear of rejection, and the fear of being thought of as weird was ruling my heart. And so I used hotdogs as an excuse and I walked away from what that opportunity that God had given me.

As you remember we are in a series called, The Art of Neighboring, which we along with many other churches are going through to focus on taking the commandment to love your neighbor seriously. And the design of the series is for this third week to be the fear factor. When Pastor Ben invited me to preach he told me about the series and asked me if I would be willing to preach this week's message on fear in evangelism. And I told him that is something that I know a lot about. And I shared that story with you so that you would believe me when I say that I need this message just as much as you do.

In fact I know that I need it probably more than some of you do. I know all too well the debilitating effects of fear in evangelism. But I don't want to stay that way. I want to hear what God has to say about this, and I want to be rescued from myself. And I want to be a faithful witness for Christ to those that God has put around me. So I am up here hoping to faithfully proclaim what God has to say so that I and you might be changed.

I recently read a book called, 'Evangelism As Exiles.' In it Author Elliot Clark addresses the fear that keeps so many of us unengaged in evangelism. But Clark points out that it is not the elimination of fear that we need; rather a redirection of our fear to a greater fear, namely the fear of God. That insight was very helpful for me in battling my own fears. So I want to develop that thought for this message which I have entitled, The Fear That Fuels Evangelism. And we will be focusing on I Peter Chapter 1 and verse 17.

So if you would, please look with me in I Peter Chapter 1 and verse 17 which says this: "***And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile.***" Now this verse is not about evangelism specifically; it is a general command about our lives as believers, which would certainly include evangelism.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

The main command in the verse is “*Conduct yourselves with fear,*” and Peter points to three things to make his point. He talks about God as judge, God as Father, and the Christian life as exile. So we will look at each of those three things to see the fear that fuels evangelism. We will look at how the fear of God as judge, the fear of God as Father and how the fear of God as exiles fuels evangelism.

But before we do that, we need to ask - what is the fear of God? To understand what it means for believers to fear God there is a scene in Exodus Chapter 20 that I find very helpful. This is the giving of the Ten Commandments, and when the Ten Commandments were given, God spoke audibly for all of the Israelites to hear. And when He spoke there was thunder and lightning and the sound of a trumpet and smoke. And this is how the people responded in Exodus Chapter 20 starting in verse 18.

“Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, ‘You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.’ Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of Him may be before you, that you may not sin.”

The sights and sounds that accompanied God’s voice terrified the Israelites. It is reminiscent of the Wizard of Oz, but this is not a show of anything; God is actually holding back. And His intent is not to scare His people away, which is why Moses says, “*Do not fear.*” But what does Moses say the response should be? Moses says after that, “*God has come to test you, that the fear of Him may be before you, that you may not sin.*”

Moses is basically saying, ‘*Do not fear God, but fear God.*’ It sounds contradictory, but don’t dismiss it as nonsense; but rather embrace the nuance, because we understand what He is saying, right? Do not fear God in a way that makes you run away from Him, but do fear God in the way that keeps you from sinning against Him.

Whenever the fear of God is discussed, we are quick to point out that first part that God does not want us to run away from Him, to be terrified of Him. And that is good because I John Chapter 4 and verse 18 says, “*Perfect love casts out fear.*” But if we then define the fear of God as simply reverence and awe or respect, then the urgency of that second part, *fear God that you might not sin*, seems to be lost. And as believers we need to have a fear of God that keeps us from sinning, without losing sight of that first aspect, and knowing that it is only by the grace of God that we do not have to be terrified of Him.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES Andy Barker, Elder

Years ago I came across a great definition that captures this well. And so I want to share it with you. This is from Ed Welch's book 'When People Are Big and God is Small.' In it he says this: "*Fear of the Lord means reverent submission that leads to obedience, and it is interchangeable with worship, rely on, trust, and hope in. Like terror it includes a knowledge of our sinfulness and God's moral purity, and it includes a clear-eyed knowledge of God's justice in His anger against sin, but this worship fear also knows God's great forgiveness, mercy and love.*"

We must have a clear-eyed knowledge of who God is and live our lives accordingly. We know that He is terrifying, but we also know that we are safe with Him because of Jesus. And for both of these reasons, His voice is the one that matters most in our lives so that we conduct ourselves with fear that we might not sin against Him. This is what Peter is calling us to.

What that in mind let's look at how the fear of God fuels evangelism. First let's look at how the fear of God as judge fuels our evangelism. If you have your Bibles still open, look again at I Peter Chapter 1 and verse 17. It says, "***And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile.***" Here Peter refers to God as judge as a simple reality of who He is. But in our context the thought of God as judge is not a given.

In our day the judgment and wrath of God are casually dismissed as mythological, or outdated, or over exaggerated, or even manipulative scare tactics to keep people in pews and money in the offering plates. As a result even Christians sometimes find themselves embarrassed at the thought of the wrath of God. But God is not embarrassed by His judgment and wrath, and He does not need us to apologize to others for it. Rather He needs those who know Him to be sober minded and honest about these weighty realities.

No one wants to find themselves as falling under judgement, but that is the message of the Bible. In I Peter Chapter 4 and verse 5 Peter says, speaking of nonbelievers, "***They will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.***" This is something that every single person must face, so it is better to face it now before it is too late.

And then in Acts Chapter 10, Peter, as the author of this book, says this: "***God commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is judge of the living and the dead.***" If we won't tell those that God has put around us - who will? The world may scoff at the thought of God as judge, but it being unpopular does not make it untrue. God is the judge and all His judgements are just. God's judgment is no more and no less than what is deserved.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

In our text Peter says God is the judge who judges impartially according to each one's deeds. His impartiality means that things like race, status, and wealth do not sway Him in His judgements. And for His judgment to be according to each one's deeds means that the punishment fits the crime. Let's not beat around the bush, in the Bible hell is ultimately the punishment for sin. The Bible is clear that there are degrees of punishment, so Hitler's punishment will rightly be more severe than others, but it is also equally clear that hell is a dreadful place for all who find themselves there.

And we are left wondering how can that be? How can it be that hell is what everyone deserves? How can that be right? Well, consider this, what would happen if after the service today one of you out in the lobby came up to me and slapped me in the face? Hopefully someone would see it and would restrain that person to keep it from escalating from there. But that's probably about it. Now what would happen if instead of me being slapped, that person slapped a police officer in the face? For that he would get arrested and maybe charged with assault of an officer.

Now let's take it a step further. What would happen if you slapped the president of the United States in the face? I don't know for sure what would happen, but I know that if you did, and then a Secret Service agent shot you, I would not be surprised. The point is this, in each instance the action is exactly the same, a mere slap in the face. But the consequence is drastically different based on who it was done to.

So what would be the consequence for slapping God in the face? Hell is the punishment for sinners, not because we're all as bad as Hitler, but because even what we think of as the smallest of sins is a slap in the face of an infinitely holy and good God. We all fall short of the glory of God. Our problem with hell is that we don't understand the glory of God. What we might think of as a mere slap in the face is worthy of hell because of God's infinite worth. And all of us are guilty. This should create in us a humility and a sombreness at the thought of every individual that we encounter one day standing before God as judge. And when we are faced with that our fear of man should be replaced with a fear for man.

I sometimes imagine an end time judgement scene that is probably not how it will play out, but I imagine a line for believers and another line for nonbelievers. And I imagine that I look across and I catch the eye of someone in that other line that I knew but I never mentioned Jesus, I never shared Jesus with them. And I imagine the look on their face when they see me, and they are surprised that I am over there. And they mouth the words to me, *'Why didn't you tell me?'* With that in mind, let the fear of God as judge fuel your evangelism. Pray for opportunities to have important conversations with people who need to hear that God is judge.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

But if God is judge and we are all guilty does that mean we are all doomed? If we could imagine God's judgment as a courtroom scene where God is the judge and we are the defendant and everything we have ever done wrong is the record that stands against us, we would realize that we have no defense. And all we can do is plead guilty. How can anyone hope to escape that?

And it is against this backdrop that we can understand the gospel, because this is where Jesus comes in. But how will He enter the scene? God is the judge, is Jesus the innocent Son who is sitting in the courtroom and God says, *'I will punish you for his sins so that he can go free.'* Is that right? That sounds horrible. That is not the gospel. Rather it is this - it has been established that you are guilty and right when the judge is about to announce the sentence, the judge stands and He says, *'I will take your punishment for you.'* And in the mystery of the Trinity, and in the mystery of the incarnation, the judge Himself steps down and takes the punishment for your sins upon Himself. And then the judge does not say you are free to go; rather He says, *'I will adopt you as my own. Come and live with me.'* That is what God, the judge, has done for us in the gospel. And it is by this that we have God as our Father.

Which brings us to our next point - let the fear of God as Father fuel your evangelism. If we go back to the text we see that Peter's emphasis is on God as Father. He says, ***"If you call on Him as Father."*** Now the 'if' in that verse isn't meant to cast doubt on whether or not God is our Father; rather Peter is making the connection between the fact of God being our Father and who should follow after it. If God is your Father then conduct yourself with fear. Our conduct before God is inseparably related to our relationship to God. To those who have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, we have been given a new life in right relationship with God, and have been adopted into His family so that now we call on Him as Father.

And with God as our Father, we desire to obey Him. In fact we see the importance of obedience to our Father in verses 14 through 16 in I Peter Chapter 1. Peter says this: ***"As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"***

Did you notice the repetition of the command regarding conduct? In verse 16 he said, ***"Be holy in all your conduct."*** And in verse 17 he says, ***"Conduct yourselves with fear."*** So Peter is making a connection between holiness and fear. Now if I told you that we are going to be talking about evangelism today, and we are going to be in I Peter you probably assumed that we would be in Chapter 3, where the classic evangelism verse is found. That is in Chapter 3 and verse 13.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

Let's look there now and we will see that Peter again picks up this same theme of holiness and fear. So watch out for that as I read I Peter Chapter 3 and verses 13 through 15. ***“Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”***

In Chapter 3 Peter says to not fear man in view of Christ's holiness. And in Chapter 1 Peter says to fear God in view of the Father's holiness. So putting it together we could say to have no fear of man, because it doesn't matter what they think, or it doesn't even matter what they do. Fear God because it only matters what He thinks. And always be prepared to speak of the hope that you have in Him to those who do not know Him. In other words let the fear of God as Father fuel your evangelism.

Having said all of that, it is important to know that having God as Father does not remove the role of God as judge. But as His children what does it mean to have God as our judge? The courtroom analogy from before captures the truth of our justification, but the timing is off. The analogy shows how it is that we can have a right standing before God, but that is not how judgment day will play out in the future. Jesus' life, death and resurrection happened in the past, and the gift of salvation is available to all who will receive it now in the present. For the Christian the price of sin has already been paid at the cross so that we now live under the truth of Romans Chapter 8 and verse 1 which says, ***“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”***

So does that mean that we will just bypass judgment all together? That can't be because in our text Peter doesn't separate God as Father and God as judge; he is applying both of them to the believer, because we will all stand before God as judge. Consider Matthew Chapter 16 and verse 27 where Jesus Himself says this: ***“The Son of man is going to come with His angels in the glory of His Father and He will repay each person according to what He has done.”*** So what does that mean for the believer?

It means this - God's judgment isn't only for condemnation; it is also for commendation. For many God's judgment will be *'depart from me,'* but for believers it will be *'come inherit the Kingdom.'* We will all stand before God as judge and the criteria for judgment will not be what did you believe, but what did you do, because what you believe shows itself in what you do, not in what you say.

Now, this does not mean that you are saved by what you do; it means that those who are saved will show it in what they do. If you say you are a follower of Christ, but there is nothing in your life that shows it, you are lying. But if you really are a follower

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

of Christ, your life will show that this is true. And this is how God judges the reality of saving faith, and it is in that sense that God repays even the believer according to each one's deeds. The good that we do in obedience to God demonstrates that we have saving faith through which we have forgiveness for our sins.

So because of all of this, we need to let the fear of God as Father fuel our evangelism. Jesus has commissioned us as His chosen vessels for the spread of the gospel to those He has put around us. With God as our judge we are accountable to Him. With God as our Father we must obey Him, and because God our Father is the judge let the fear of God as Father fuel your evangelism.

Lastly, let the fear of God as exiles fuel your evangelism. The idea of being an exile is simply that of being in a place without citizenship, or living as a foreigner. Over the summer my wife and I went to France. While there we visited our lifelong friend who is a missionary over there. Being in a foreign culture and seeing my friend's mission field made an impression on me that I was not expecting. Because of the foreign language and culture I was keenly aware of the fact that I was not home, but I expected that. What I was not expecting was how much the feeling of being a foreigner, while walking around among the people that my friend was trying to reach with the gospel, heightened my awareness of the fact that I am an ambassador for Christ. With everything else stripped away, it was plain to me that the most important thing was that I was someone who had Christ, and those around me were those that needed Christ.

That is just as true here, but why don't I feel that way? It is because I feel like this is my home; I don't feel like a foreigner, so I don't feel like an ambassador. My fear of man is rooted in my desire to be accepted by those around me. And my desire for their acceptance is rooted in the desire for the comforts of home. Now acceptance and comfort aren't wrong, but those desires are misdirected if we are seeking to find them here.

Throughout this letter Peter uses the language of exile as a figurative expression for every believer, no matter where they are, to communicate the truth that this world is not our home. We need to embrace our identity as exiles. And the verses that surround our text help us to do that. Would you look back in I Peter Chapter 1 and verse 13 where Peter says this: ***“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”***

Our hope is to be set fully on a future day when Jesus returns and we will experience the fullness of our salvation and obtain the imperishable inheritance that awaits us. That is our hope for when we arrive in our true home. And that fact ought to have an impact on how we live here.

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

Look also at verse 17 and what comes after it, because Peter tells us exactly what he has in mind, when he tells us to conduct ourselves with fear throughout our time of exile. He says in verse 18 and 19, ***“Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”***

This is where we’ve come from. We have been ransomed; we have been bought out of bondage to the futile ways of the world and into fellowship with God. And so to conduct ourselves with fear in our time of exile, that time in between where we have come from and what we are waiting for in the future, we have to live a life that shows that the blood of Christ is precious to us because all of it has been made possible through what He has done. And we do not cast aside the precious blood of Christ as if it was worthless.

At the very end of Star Wars, The Force Awakens, Rey goes alone on a long journey to find the legendary Jedi, Luke Skywalker in order to return to him his lightsaber. The movie ends in dramatic fashion with Rey holding the lightsaber out to Luke with her arm fully extended, and Luke looking at her. That is the cliff hanger that ends the first of the most recent Star Wars trilogy, and it leaves us wondering what will Luke do now that he has been found, now that he has been reunited with his lightsaber - will he join the resistance?

For two years we waited to see what would come next and then the next movie, The Last Jedi, picks up that scene right where it left off. Rey is there with Luke and his lightsaber, and the hope of the galaxy hangs in the balance. Luke slowly takes the lightsaber, he looks at Rey, and then he throws the lightsaber over his shoulder and over a cliff and walks away. For some of you Star Wars nerds, I mean purists, that epitomizes all that was wrong with the last Jedi, because it took what was precious and tossed it over his shoulder as if it were meaningless.

Unless we conduct ourselves with fear throughout the time of our exile, we run the risk of doing the same thing with the precious blood of Christ, by which we were ransomed and because of which we have a living hope. If there is anything that should guide our lives it is this. And we should tremble at the thought of how easy it is for us to live our lives as if what we have been saved from, and what we have been saved to, were of no value to us.

This world is not our home. And so we must stop living as if it is. Our true home is yet to come, so we must be prepared for action, sober-minded, obedient, holy and we must conduct ourselves with fear, because the galaxy literally hangs in the balance. You are God’s chosen messenger to carry the good news that is our only hope. Are you

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

engaged in that mission? Why not? I will tell you why I am not - fear of man. Oh how I need the fear of God as an exile to fuel my evangelism.

Back in August a team from Georgia came up here for a few days to train our Mooresville church plant team. A basic premise of that training was that God is at work in people around us, and He desires to bring us together so that they can hear and receive the gospel. We tend to think that the problem is that no one wants to hear what we have to say, but in Luke Chapter 10 it says that the problem is not that no one wants to listen but that no one wants to tell them. Luke Chapter 10 and verse 2 says, ***“The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”***

And so after months of our team praying along with many of you, we went out seeking to be those laborers into the Lord’s harvest and that began by simply praying for those that we met. On the first night of the training, my wife ran into my neighbor, Chad. He shared some recent struggles, and so she offered to pray for him. The next week I too saw Chad and I had the opportunity to pray for him. And then I asked Chad if Melanie and I could come to his house to share an encouraging story, and he agreed. We sat Friday, August 30th, as the date. When that date came I was in the middle of thinking and praying through what I would be sharing with Chad that night, and I was full of doubts and fear. And that is when Pastor Ben called to discuss my preaching about fear today.

Melanie and I did go to Chad’s home that evening, and we shared the story of Nicodemus and the gospel message, and we invited Chad to receive Christ - and he did! (*Applause.*) I invited him to pray and express his heart to God and this was his prayer. He said, *‘I want to obey you. I want to tell others about you. And I want to know that you are with me.’* Does that sound familiar? That is the Great Commission. And that is the exact verse that I was going to be sharing with him after he prayed.

And as we did that I was talking to him about baptism and he just about interrupted me to say, *‘I have a bathtub, why don’t you baptize me now?’* And that reminded me of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch from Acts Chapter 8. Never had it been so clear in my life that God was at work and I was just along for the ride. It was a surreal experience and I couldn’t believe it. The Holy Spirit was already at work in Chad and God brought us together. All He required of me was this - obedience.

By our obedience we don’t cause God to work; it is by our obedience that we are brought into God’s work that is already going on around us. But when we are not obedient we don’t see it. God’s work is like a flowing river. God is moving, but we stand on the bank of that river doubting God’s work because we don’t feel the movement of water. We occasionally have those moments where we dip our foot in and can feel the

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

rush of water propel us forward but we bring it back to regain our footing on the bank. And over time we forget that moment and we convince ourselves that it was just a fluke, and that we are not seeing God move, because movements of God only happen in other times, or in other places. But that is not true, God is moving.

So what we need to do is stand on the bank of that river and say, *‘God, there is nothing I fear more than to stand before you ashamed of how little I have done with what you have given me. And so I will show my faith in you by doing what you say no matter what the cost.’* And then you jump into that river trusting that you will not drown and that by His love He will keep you afloat. And that the current of God’s good purposes for the lives of His children will carry you to places that you never thought you would go, but that God has prepared for you.

Will you jump in? Or better yet, will you take the hand of someone else who is walking in obedience and ask them to lead you in? This is what happened to me. Mine was a weak obedience, but by the grace of God He surrounded me with others who took me by the hand and jumped in and pulled me in with them, and I was carried along to see the amazing work of God around me in ways that I had never seen before.

To close out this Art of Neighboring Series I only have one question for you. The first week Pastor Dan asked if you would learn the names of your neighbors. Last week Pastor Ben asked if you would plan a time to get to know your neighbors. And this week my only question is this - will you pray with your neighbors? As you seek to build relationships with the neighbors that God has put around you, you will get to know them. And you will get to know the struggles that they have and that they are going through.

And when someone shares a struggle with you, just ask them, *‘Can I pray for you?’* And if they say ‘yes’ right then and there, just pray a brief genuine prayer asking for God’s help. And if you do that, and you start to feel the current of God’s work, but you are unsure of the next step, you can come talk to me, Pastor Ben, or Pastor Brad and we will get you linked up with someone who can take you by the hand and jump into that river so that you too can feel God move. Would you pray with me.

Heavenly Father, these are weighty topics that we have seen today. I pray that you would work in our hearts to feel that weight, and not just in this room, but also when we leave this room. It is easy to be bold here; it is hard to be bold out there. And God, you are gracious to us, you know our weakness, help us God, help us to see who you are and see that what you are calling us to is an invitation to joy. It is not a difficulty, not a struggle, not a burden, all your commands are easy, your burdens light. God, let your love compel us to be the ambassadors that you have called us to be and to look for opportunities to share you with those around us. Give us eyes to hear and a willing heart

THE FEAR THAT FUELS EVANGELISM
THE ART OF NEIGHBORING SERIES
Andy Barker, Elder

to reach out, and then the fear to follow through and to do what you have called us to do. And then, God, show yourself faithful in that, I pray. Help us to see you, and lead us in this way. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Now is the time for us to respond to what God is working in our heart in light of His Word. And there are a few ways that we can do that. In a few moments we will be singing a couple of songs. Songs are God's gift to the world and as believers He has given us something to sing about, so offer up your praises for what God has done, what He is doing, what He will do, and who He is, and be encouraged by those that are singing around us.

We also have communion in the front and the back of the room on both sides. Communion is for believers, and God would have us to examine ourselves and to confess any sins, and then take the bread and the cup to proclaim Christ's death and remember that He died for us for the forgiveness of sins.

If this message is as convicting to you as it has been for me, then we need to pray. You can pray where you are, you can come forward and pray up here by yourself, or I will be standing over here and I will be glad to have you come and we can pray together. Would you please respond and pray with me as we transition to song.

God, in the time that we have remaining, I pray that you would glorify yourself through us. We know that you love us, and help us now to show our love for you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.