

# New York: City Fest brings good news to the big city

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When you think of New York what comes to mind? Glamor? Fame? Maybe a picture of 42nd Street, Times Square, huge screens, stores and recognized famous brands. Perhaps Broadway shows with the best plays and performers. Possibly being surrounded by multitudes of all nations, walking the streets, experiencing the “American life.” The world thinks of this city and hopes one day to walk streets of lower Manhattan.



Alexandra Granda In all honesty, that is how Manhattan looks every day and at any time of the day. There are concerts, pride parades and famous people coming to this city continuously. There is something to do every day and at any time of the day. It is hard to get people’s attention in such a distracting city.

However, thousands of people walking 42nd Street and 7th Avenue recently heard the gospel, and hundreds stayed to hear the greatest message. The heart of New York heard the gospel, many of them for the first time. Times Square screens no longer were advertising brands or glamour but pastors and worship leaders praising God through an event called City Fest.

A good friend of mine invited me to be part of the counselor team for City Fest. I volunteered to give guidance to people at City Fest who felt led to make a decision to follow Christ. It was a beautiful experience to be part of this event. I had the opportunity to see people from all nationalities gathered and led into the performance area because of the sounds and the screens advertising the good news.

As we distributed “Good News in the City” cards inviting people to join the event, I found it interesting that people didn’t know what the good news is. Many thought we were hosting an event for a local news program. Through



conversations, I learned people didn’t know what ultimate satisfaction looks like. They were surely not going to find it in a week of visiting and experiencing Times Square and Manhattan. People didn’t know ultimate satisfaction is free and available for anyone though Jesus Christ.

At the same time, it was interesting to see how many people were looking for joy. It’s funny to say many of them found it at Times Square that day. Although I don’t fully support the invitation to what many think is a “ticket to heaven,” I am confident God calls his people through the gospel, and an invitation for people to respond was necessary. I was reminded of the sower parable from Matthew 13. The sower was scattering the seed. Some fell along the path, some fell on rocky places, other seed fell among thorns,

still other seed fell on good soil where it produced a crop—a hundred, 60 or 30 times what was sown.

Many of the people I know who follow Christ have prayed a prayer to follow Jesus after their first encounter with Christianity. They ask God to change their hearts. They have been discipled and transformed by the Holy Spirit. I was one of them.

Many other volunteers have been working on following up with hundreds of people who made a decision during City Fest and are now being plugged in a community of Jesus followers.

Pray for these people as they are growing and learning what it is to be a disciple of Jesus. Pray that the Spirit of God will transform the lives of many of the people who heard the good news.

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