

Neighboring: Answering the “Why?” before the “How?”

sermon series: *Won't You Be My Neighbor*, pt. 4

Mark 12:28-34, Proverbs 16:2 and Jeremiah 17:10

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Thought Questions¹

1. Are you comfortable sharing your story and telling people about the impact Jesus has had on your life? When did you last share your story with someone? What makes it hard to do this?
2. Reflect on this statement in the book, The Art of Neighboring: “We don't love our neighbors to convert them, we love them because we are converted.”² How does that perspective strike you? Talk about the distinction we made between our ultimate motive of neighboring compared to our ultimate motive for our neighbors.
3. How can you focus on listening and create a safe place for honest two-way sharing among your neighbors? What kind of questions help people share their story at a deeper level? What's a special moment you've experienced when you truly heard another person's story?
4. What are your thoughts regarding BLESSing your neighbors?

Something to think about:

- Isn't it true that sometimes we become fearful because we are too focused on sharing and not enough on listening? If we would simply ask someone to tell us their story or spiritual journey, they are likely to tell us. If we are a safe friend, they are also likely to ask us about our story. This is not manipulation; it is simply how normal conversation happens in real relationships. We are interested in the other person and what we can learn from them and vice versa.

Moving Forward

1. Do the Block Map - Write the names of your neighbors by listing out the names of the adults and children of the 8 closest houses or apartment units next to you and pay attention to the blank spaces. Decide if you're neighbors are a stranger, acquaintance, or relationship. What progress have you made in moving your neighbors from being strangers, to acquaintances, to relationships.
2. Identify one neighbor that you are going to pray for over the next week. Take time to pray in the group for the neighbors that were mentioned.
3. Share one small “next step” that you feel God is calling you to take in the next 7 days. Options might be:
 - Learn a specific neighbor's name
 - Invite a couple over for dinner
 - Ask a neighbor for advice on how to take care of your lawn because their's is nicer ~ Have everyone share that step out loud and write them down so that everyone can be praying throughout the week.

On Your Own

- Reflect on the biggest obstacles that exist for you to share your faith. Journal some of your fears and prayers regarding sharing your faith. What are you learning about neighboring? What applications are you making?

¹ Most of these thought questions and action steps come from the book, The Art of Neighboring by Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon. I plan to glean insights from their book throughout this sermon series and share them with you . . . and take them to heart myself! :)

² Pathak and Runyon, The Art of Neighboring, page 102.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



YOU ARE HERE

