

Session 1

Neighbor Isn't Just a Metaphor
week starting February 26



OPENING PRAYER

Lord, thank you for the gift of other people. Guide us as we grow relationally and spiritually with our group members. Inspire us as we learn more about neighboring. Help us to see others as You do. Encourage us as we take consistent small steps to get to know our neighbors better, and to shine your light in our neighborhoods. Amen.

OPENER

- If you have anyone new to the group, share your name and something unique about yourself.
- Where do you live now, and why did you choose to live there?

Discuss, review, and agree on your group covenant including schedule, logistics, hopes, and expectations. sov.church/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Covenant-Member-Website.pdf

REFLECT ON SUNDAY'S SERMON

- What stood out or inspired you from the message this week?
- Do you have questions? What did you learn?

READ & DISCUSS

Read aloud Luke 10:25–37, the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

1. What do you think factored into the priest and the Levite not stopping for the injured man? What would keep you from stopping to help someone like a stranded motorist?
2. Why did the Samaritan stop? What does his example teach us about loving others?
3. How does this story answer the question, "And who is my neighbor?" (verse 29)
4. On a scale of 1–10, how well are you doing at wholeheartedly loving God? At loving others? Explain.

VIDEO

Optional View Session 1 from the 6-week study at artofneighboring.com/resources.

WHO ARE MY NEIGHBORS? THE BLOCK MAP EXERCISE

Magnets of the block map are available at the Connection Center. This makes it easy to keep your map visible and on your mind. If you prefer, you can print a paper copy at artofneighboring.com/resources.

The point of the Block Map Exercise is not to shame anyone; it's to move the Great Commandment from a theory into a real-world context. Imagine the middle box is your house, and the other boxes are the eight neighbors/families nearest to you—eight households God has placed closest to where you live. Use the Block Map magnet or paper chart to do the exercise below. The goal is to keep taking steps over time and filling in more details as you better get to know those around you.

1. Write your name in the middle box
2. Write the names of your closest neighbors (first and last names, if possible) in the eight other boxes. Leave blank if you don't know.
3. As space permits, and as you are able, add information you've learned about each person from speaking to them (not just observations)—such as grew up in Idaho, is a teacher, plays pickleball, was born in Germany.
4. Add in-depth information you know from interacting meaningfully with people—such as their challenges, what they fear, believe spiritually, aspire to, or hope for.

Discuss (if your group is large, subgroup into threes or fours)

- How much of your block map could you fill in?
- On a scale of 1–10, how connected is your current neighborhood? Explain.
- Generally describe your neighborhood and your relationships with your neighbors.
- Do you have any invisible neighbors? Neighbors with needs that you know of?

LIVE IT OUT

Live out the Great Commandment by choosing a step to take this week. Find more ideas at sov.church/neighboring. Be ready to share about the step you took at your next meeting.

- Learn the name of one of your unknown neighbors and fill in your block map.
- Pray for or act on an opportunity to get to know a neighbor better.
- Pray for or help a neighbor.
- Other: _____

CLOSING PRAYER

Ask each person to identify the first name of a neighbor they will pray for during the next week. As a group, pray for these people, as well as for the group members to courageously take the Live It Out step they have committed to.

RESOURCES

- Visit sov.church/neighboring for resources and practical ways to reach out to neighbors.
- Find block maps, videos and additional discussion questions at artofneighboring.com/resources.
- Want to dig deeper? Read and discuss *The Art of Neighboring* by Jay Pathak & Dave Runyon.