The Art of Neighboring: Building Relationships Right Outside Your Door

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1. Who is My Neighbor (15)

"Have you ever wondered about the invisible family that lives in your neighborhood? You've never actually met them but you know they exist because you've glimpsed signs of life around their house." (17)

"Jesus is a genius! He is asked to pick one commandment that is more important than all the others. And he shares something that would change the world, if only every person who believes in Jesus would actually do it." (20)

"Vicky said, 'From the citiy's perspective, there isn't a noticeable difference in how Christians and non-Christians neighbor in our community." (20)

2. Taking the Great Commandment Seriously (27)

"It's common for churches to host big events and ask people to invite their friends. This is not a abd thing and, in fact, had been an effective way for people to share their faith with friends and neighbors who don't know God. But at the same time, there are many people around us who will never attend one of these events." (29)

A Simple Invitation (29)

Now imagine what happens when we don't love those who live next door. Odds are good that we will experience the following:

- Isoloation

- Fear

- Misunderstanding

The Implications of an Invitation (30)

"I needed to make a conscious effort to adjust my thinking to accommadate my neighbors." (31)

"If we say, "Everyone is my neighbor," it can become an excuse for avoiding the implication of following the Great Commandment. Our "neighbors" become defined in the broadest of terms. They're the people across town, the people who are helped by the organizations that receive our donations, the people whom the government helps. We don't have to feel guilty, we tell ourselves. After all, we can't be expected to really love everybody, can we?

The problem is, however, that when we aim for everything, we hit nothing. So when we insist we're neighbors with everybody, often we end up being neighbors with nobody." (35)

Picture the locations of your eight nearest neighbors - however they might be situated. In the middle of the chart, simple write your hoome address. In the other boxes, fill in the three subpoint wihin each box - a, b, and c.

a - Name of the people

b - Write some relevant information, data or facts that you couldn't see by just standing in your driveway (more than drives a red car)

c - Write down some in-depth information you would know after connecting with people. (37)

- About 10 percent of people can fill out the names of all eight of their neighborhos, line a.

- About 3 percent can fill out line b for every home.

- Less than 1 percent can fill out line c, for every home. (39)

3. The Time Barrier (43)

Lie #1: Things will settle down someday (45)

Lie #2: More will be enough (46) - one more purchase or achievement

Lie #3: Everybody lives like this (46)

"Time spent surfing the internet, playing video games, or just watching reruns of our favorite sitcoms won't amount to anything of value." (51)

"Author John Ortberg has coined the phrase "hurry sickness." As he says, "Love and hurry are fundamentally incompatible. Love always take time, and time is the one thing hurried people don't have." (53)

"Following these three life-balancing principles that will help you do just that: 1) make the main thing the main thing, 2) eliminate time stealers, and 3) be interruptible. (54)

"Do I live at a pace that allows me to be available to those around me? And if not, are all of th things I am doing more important than taking the Great Commandment literally?" (57)

4. The Fear Factor (59)

"And keep in mind that most of us have been conditioned to be afraid of our neighbors, and they've been conditioned to be afraid of us. Someone has to break the cycle of fear." (66)

5. Moving Down the Line (73)

Stranger --> Acquaintance --> Relationship

"Then is the last time you were accused of doing something like this? Has your character ever been questioned because you ate or drank with sketchy people? Not everyon e in the neighborhood is cleaned up and easy to be around. We need to be willing to follow Jesus and choose to be with others in uncomfortable situations, because we can't always expect people to come onto our turf; we must also be willing to enter their world." (80)

6. Baby Steps (85)

- Baking/cooking

- Playing sports

- Watching sports or other shows on TV

7. Motives Matter (99)

\*To Transform a City by Eric Swanson and Sam Williams

"Ulterior means somthing is intentionally kep concealed. An ulterior motive is usually manipulative. It's when we do or say one thing out in the open but intend or mean another thing in private. (101)

Ultimate means the farthest point of a journey. An ultiamte goal is an eventual point or a longed-for destination. Examples are when a person begins college hoping to become a physician one day or when a kid starts playing basketball with dreams of one day playing in the NBA." (102)

"We don't love our neighbors to convert them; we love our neighbors because we are converted." (102)

8. The Art of Receiving (119)

9. The Are of Setting Boundaries (129)

Embrace the Mess (131)

- Difficult Crises

- Neediness

- Dependence (132)

The Difference between To and For

"Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership.

Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for gives me freedom. If I know where my yard begins and ends, I am free to do with it what I like. Taking responsiblity for (133) my life opens up many different options. However, if I do not "own" my life, my choices and options because very limited." (134)

"There is a vital difference between responsibility to and responsibility for someone. We are responsible to live, to encourage, to bless, to pray and to help. But we are not responsible for outcomes for consequences, for emotions, for reactions, for feelings, or for someone else's choices." (135)

10. The Art of Focusing (143)

Some Reasons People Don't Respond

- Too busy

- Wary of you

- Already relationally full

- In a difference stage of life

- Afraid of exposure

11. The Art of Forgiving (155)

- Identify the issue and assess it severity.

- Choose to obey Jesus's command to pray for those who are your enemies.

- If you're convicted by God of wrongdoing, look for an opportunity to apologize for you part in the matter.

- Go the extra mile

- Find an indirect way to bless people

12. Better Together (169)

Study Guide (185)

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Recommended Resources (201)