

1. Welcome & Announcements

- a. Connect Cards & Giving
- b. Spring Break youth event?

2. [1] REACHING OUT WITH MISSION

3. (Putting on our MISSIONS Glasses)

- a. Sam, remember your glasses
 - i. And 9x/10 he comes home from school w/o them on!
- b. Smudges – so annoying
- c. So easy to forget, to take them off when they're uncomfortable
- d. A few wks ago, we talked about how this is like missions
- e. Easy to think of missions like going to another country on a missions trip
 - i. My east asia trips – put on my missionary glasses
 - ii. Coming home, still had my missions glasses on here at home!
- f. But they came off eventually, slowly.

4. But this is a tragedy.

- a. Because we're all called first and foremost to live on mission in our regular lives
 - i. Where we are
 - ii. With the folks we're around
 - iii. **Mission is relational**—it happens best in everyday interactions.
- b. Too often, we think mission is for someone else, somewhere else, for missionaries in other countries.
 - i. But Jesus sends us right where we are—to our neighbors, coworkers, classmates, and even the difficult people in our lives.
 - ii. You are all called to be missionaries!

5. [2] WE ARE CALLED TO MISSION

- a. What is the church?
 - i. The Church – all believers in JC!

b. [3] Greek for Church = Ekklesia = means "the called-out ones"

- i. Called out of the world
 - 1. Gathered and Called outfor a special purpose
- ii. we are also the sent ones

iii. [4] John 20:21-22

- 1. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, **I am sending you.**"
- 2. Called back out into the world with a special purpose, mission.

- a. SENT to everyone else in our world with the good news of Jesus
- b. And the call to make disciples who make disciples
- 3. V 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Sent with the filling and power of the HS!

c. The church is not a building; it’s a movement of people sent into the world.

- i. One of the reasons we don’t call this coming to church
 - 1. Or our church gathering
 - 2. This is our church’s CENTRAL GATHERING
 - 3. The Gathering, for the scattering
 - 4. The huddle, for the game
- ii. [5] Acts 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
 - 1. Jesus calls us to be His witnesses, starting in our own backyard and radiating outward.
 - 2. Starting right where we are...with our neighbors

6. [5] That’s what we’re going to focus on today: Neighboring

- a. This is how we reach out with mission!
- b. Did you know neighbor could be a verb?
- c. In fact, we’re called to reach out with mission TO OUR NEIGHBORS
 - i. By Doing and Being Good News to them – Neighboring!

7. The Biblical Call to Neighboring

a. [7] Scripture: The Good Samaritan: Luke 10:25-37 [CYNDI DONSBACH]

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” ²⁷ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” ²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

[8] ³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he

[9] put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

³⁶ "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" ³⁷ The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

8. PRAY

9. [10] "Who is my neighbor?"

a. Key Lesson: Neighboring isn't about location; it's about intentional loving action.

- i. Neighbor as a VERB
- ii. **Application:** Being a good neighbor means seeing, having compassion, stopping, and serving the people God places around us, starting right where we are.
 1. EVEN when it costs us something.

b. Example: Everyday Neighboring Moments

- i. The neighbor who offers a meal after surgery.
- ii. But neighboring is also who we're around at work
 1. Or at school
 2. Or everything in between!
- iii. The teacher who notices a struggling student
- iv. The coworker who takes time to listen.

c. Mission happens in small, everyday moments. With the people you're already around.

d. Who are your neighbors?

10. But, is this really ministry?

a. [11] Remember, 1 Cor 3:6

- i. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.
- ii. We each have a role to play..... but...

b. God is the one at work.

- i. And he's calling us to good works that HE'S PREPARED in advance for us to walk in
- ii. Works RELATIONALLY in people's lives

c. If you don't have your big picture, missions glasses on, it's hard to see what ministry is. What we have to do. What's needed and valuable.

11. Illustration: The Chain

a. Hold up a long chain

- i. This is someone's life.
- ii. Maybe your life.

b. Have you ever thought about the people God used in your spiritual journey?

- c. Each of us has people who were links in our faith story—parents, friends, mentors, even strangers who encouraged us.
 - i. Each of has various scenes and events that influenced us one way or the other.
- d. Think back, who was with you or helped you choose to surrender your life to JC? When you “became a Christian”.
 - i. Who was that?
 - ii. How important were there in your spiritual life! Thank GOD for red links!
- e. **[point to red link] This is where someone accepts JC.**
 - i. Becomes a Christian!
 - ii. They trust his sacrifice on the cross for them and let his blood cover their sins.
 - iii. They cross the line of faith and move from death to life.
- f. **When it comes to missions and ministry, We tend to be really OBSESSED WITH THE RED LINK!**
 - i. We often think THIS is the link that really matters. AND INDEED IT’S REALLY IMPORTANT!
 - ii. Especially when we’re thinking about mission. Ministry.
- g. **But when it comes to people’s lives, there’s a LOT MORE going on. LOTS OF YELLOW LINKS**
- h. In fact, without ANY of these yellow links, the chain breaks.
 - i. Some links were big, some were small, but all were necessary.
 - ii. **Jesus is in charge of the chain, but we’re called to be a link in others’ lives.**

12. Being a Link in Someone’s Chain

- a. Not everyone will come to faith through one conversation or one moment.
- b. We are called to play our part in their journey, whether big or small.
- c. **1 Corinthians 3:6 – “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow”.**
- d. Our job: Be faithful in our part—God handles the outcome.
- e. Illustration: The Chain Again
 - i. Every act of love, encouragement, or service adds a link to someone’s journey.
 - ii. Examples of being a link:
 - 1. This is the time when you spoke of Jesus in normal conversation.
 - 2. This is the time you responded to a neighbor’s invitation to a party, and broke down a little bit of the barriers they had to becoming a Christian.
 - 3. This is the time you mowed their lawn when they were sick.
 - 4. “This is the link where you prayed for your coworker who was struggling.”

5. "This is the link where you invited your coworker over for dinner and laid the foundation for a friendship."
 6. "This is the link where you listened instead of judging."
 7. This is where you invested in a younger believer to help them grow
 8. All these are when you helped, served, engaged, built relationships that could bear the weight of truth
- f. Point: Small moments matter. Mission is more than preaching—it's loving, listening, serving, and investing in people's lives.

13. How Do We Live This Out?

14. [12] BLESS YOUR FRANCES

- a. The BLESS framework helps us be intentional in neighboring.
- b. [13] B – Begin with Prayer (Pray for opportunities to engage people)
 - i. Ask God to open your eyes to the people around you.
 - ii. Pray for opportunities to be a link in someone's chain.
 - iii. As specific people begin to clarify, pray for them by name
 - iv. Example: "This is the link where you prayed for your neighbor before ever speaking to them about Jesus."
- c. [14] L – Listen (Ask questions, be genuinely interested)
 - i. Jesus asked over 300 questions in the Gospels!
 - ii. Listening builds trust.
 - iii. Example: "This is the link where you asked your coworker how they were doing—and actually listened."
 - iv. We're going to talk a lot more about this next Sunday.
- d. [15] E – Eat Together (Hospitality over food builds relationships)
 - i. Jesus ate with people as a way to connect and show love.
 - ii. Meals open doors for deeper conversations.
 - iii. Example: "This is the link where you invited a new family over for dinner and got to know them."
- e. [16] S – Serve (Meet needs, love in action)
 - i. Look for practical ways to bless others.
 - ii. Example: "This is the link where you mowed your neighbor's lawn when they were sick."
- f. [17] S – Share Your Story (When the time is right, talk about Jesus)
 - i. And parts of your journey of faith in Him
 - ii. When trust is built, share what God has done in your life.
 - iii. It doesn't have to be complicated—just be real.

- iv. Example: "This is the link where you shared how Jesus gave you peace in hard times, and it sparked a spiritual conversation."

15. Who Are We Called to Bless? Use FRANCES

- a. Who should we be neighbor-ing? The people already in our lives!
- b. [18] FRANCES helps us think through our circles of existing relationships:
 - i. F – Friends
 - ii. R – Relatives
 - iii. A – Acquaintances (people you see somewhat regularly but don't know well)
 - iv. N – Neighbors
 - v. C – Coworkers/Classmates
 - vi. E – Enemies (people you struggle with)
 - vii. S – Strangers
- c. Challenge: Who are your FRANCES?
 - i. Write down 3-5 names.
 - ii. Commit to BLESSing them this week.
- d. PASS OUT NEIGHBORING MAP WORKSHEETS

16. We Don't Neighbor Alone

- a. [19] BLESS YOUR FRANCES Together
- b. One of the biggest fears people have about reaching out is feeling alone in the effort.
- c. But Jesus sent His disciples two by two (Luke 10:1)—we were never meant to do this alone.
- d. Neighbor-ing can be a team effort!
- e. Ways We Can Neighbor Together:
 - i. Invite a friend to join you in reaching out.
 - 1. Example: "This is the link where you and a friend started a small group for young parents in the neighborhood."
 - ii. Partner with a fellow believer to serve someone.
 - 1. Example: "This is the link where you and a coworker from church brought meals to a sick neighbor."
 - iii. Introduce your non-believing friend to believing friends.
 - 1. Example: "This is the link where you invited your neighbor to a backyard cookout, where they met other Christians and felt at home."
 - iv. Pray together for your FRANCES.
 - 1. Example: "This is the link where you and your spouse started praying for the same barista at your coffee shop."
 - v. Ask a fellow believer to help you take a step of boldness.

1. Example: "This is the link where you and a friend planned to invite a neighbor to church together because it felt less intimidating."

f. Encouragement: The Church is a Team on Mission

- i. [20] Hebrews 10:24-25 – "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works... encouraging one another."

- ii. We don't just attend church—we are the church, and we are on mission together.

g. Challenge: Who can you invite into your neighboring efforts this week?

17. JESUS MAGNET

- a. [21] Show JESUS magnet from Michelle O.

b. [22] Rev 3:20

- i. 20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

c. Often used in context of accepting Jesus. The red link.

- i. The call to respond to Jesus's invitation to eternal life when he knocks at the door of your heart.

d. But in fact this is spoken not to the unbelieving world, our lost neighbors, but to THE CHURCH

e. Context is Jesus' words to the various churches.

- i. [23] As v 22 makes clear: Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

f. So Jesus is knocking on the door of various CHURCHES

- i. Inviting them to communion with him, where he is.

g. We've got lots of activity going on IN our churches. In our church.

- i. Good stuff!

- ii. But how tragic would it be, if Jesus was outside our church, knocking

- iii. Inviting us to communion with him where he is

- iv. OUTSIDE our four walls

- v. On mission out in our world, in our neighborhoods and workplaces, schools, book clubs

- vi. How tragic would it be if we left him out there

1. In favor of all our focus and activity going on in here.

2. No Jesus, I'm actually more comfortable with our program in here.

h. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear!

18. Hold up the chain again.

- a. THIS IS THE MISSION that Jesus is calling us to.

- b. Some links in people's journey will come through you.

- c. Some will come through others—but you can help make that connection.
 - i. You don't have to stress about which link you get to be
 - ii. God figures that stuff out
 - iii. You're called to go out.
 - 1. Engage your neighbors.
 - 2. And be faithful to the opportunities he gives you for good works.
- d. Encouragement: You don't have to do everything—just be faithful in one small step.
 - i. Jesus is in charge of the chain.
 - 1. We are simply called to be a link.

19.APPLICATIONS

a. [24] BE A LINK in someone's chain

- i. PASS OUT LINKS
- ii. As a reminder of what the mission is
- iii. What we're called to
- iv. That you're called to be the link in someone's chain.
- v. Even if, most often, he's calling you to be a yellow link.
- vi. Whose chain are you a part of?
 - 1. What kind of link will you be this week?
- vii. Encouragement: You are not alone. Look for ways to bring someone with you as you love your neighbors.

b. [25] Keep Putting on your mission glasses

- i. see the world differently.
- ii. Ask God to help you keep seeing your world as your missions field
- iii. And your life as a mission to bless.

c. [26] BLESS your FRANCES – THIS WEEK

- i. Pray for opportunities
- ii. Pray daily for your FRANCES.
- iii. Look for ways to BLESS someone this week.

d. [27] Invite others here to join you in neighboring

- i. Networking together for greater missions effect

e. [28] Fill out your Neighboring Map WORKSHEET

f. [29] Share Stories about what happens.

20.[30] Q&A & Testimonies

- a. How has this sermon challenged or encouraged you to see mission differently?
- b. Who was a key "link" in your spiritual journey and how did they impact your walk with Christ?

- c. Have you ever had a moment when you realized God was calling you to be a link in someone else's life? What happened?
- d. What's a "neighboring moment" you've experienced recently—where you saw an opportunity to love, serve, or encourage someone around you?
- e. What are some of the barriers you've experienced to neighboring well, and how did you overcome them?
- f. What's one step you could take this week to lean into neighboring (on mission in your workplace, school, or community)?
- g. What questions do you still have on this topic?

21.[31] Commissioning as Sent Ones

- a. Ask everyone to stand
- b. Close in Prayer of commissioning: Commission the congregation to go out and love their neighbors as sent ones.
 - i. Intentionally look for divine opportunities to be a link in someone's chain

REACHING OUT WITH MISSION



WE ARE CALLED TO MISSION



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Church = EKKLESIA = “called out ones”



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JOHN 20:21-22

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, **I am sending you.**” And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.



WE ARE CALLED TO MISSION

Church = EKKLESIA = “called out ones”

ACTS 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**



NEIGHBORING REACHING OUT WITH MISSION



LUKE 10:25-37

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²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” ²⁷ He answered, “**Love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘**Love your neighbor as yourself.**” ²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And **who is my neighbor?**”



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LUKE 10:25-37

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³⁶ **"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor** to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" ³⁷ The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, **"Go and do likewise."**



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

1 CORINTHIANS 3:6

I **planted** the seed, Apollos **watered** it, but God has been making it **grow**.



BLESS YOUR FRANCES



BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer



BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer

Listen



BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer

Listen

Eat together



BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer

Listen

Eat together

Serve



BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer

Listen

Eat together

Serve

Share your story



BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer

Listen

Eat together

Serve

Share your story

Friends

Relatives

Acquaintances

Neighbors

Coworkers / **C**lassmates

Enemies

Strangers



BLESS YOUR FRANCES TOGETHER

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HEBREWS 10:24-25

Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works...encouraging one another.



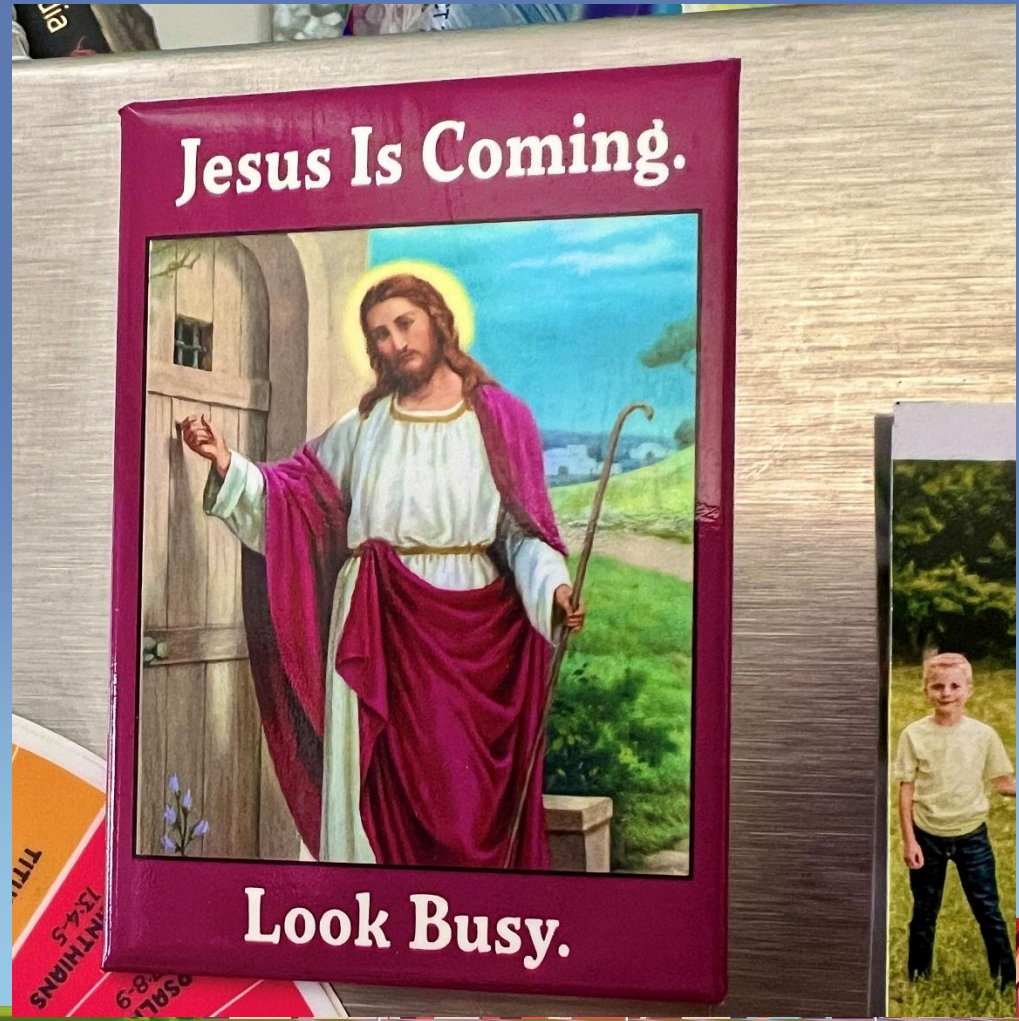
NEIGHBORING



NEIGHBORING

REVELATION 3:20

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.



NEIGHBORING

REVELATION 3:20,22

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. ... Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”



APPLICATIONS

1. Be a link in someone's chain



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1. Be a link in someone's chain
2. Keep putting on your missions glasses



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3. BLESS your FRANCES this week



APPLICATIONS

1. Be a link in someone's chain
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4. Invite others to join you in neighboring



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5. Fill out your Neighboring Map Worksheet



APPLICATIONS

1. Be a link in someone's chain
2. Keep putting on your missions glasses
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5. Fill out your Neighboring Map Worksheet
6. Share stories about what happens.



QUESTIONS. COMMENTS. TESTIMONIES.

1. How has this sermon challenged you to see mission differently?
2. Who was a key “link” in your spiritual journey and how did they impact your walk with Christ?
3. Have you ever had a **moment when you realized God was calling you to be a link** in someone else’s life? What happened?
4. What’s a “**neighboring moment**” you’ve experienced recently?
5. What are some of the **barriers** you’ve experienced to neighboring well, and how did you overcome them?
6. What’s **one step you could take this week** to lean into neighboring?
7. What **questions** do you still have on this topic?



COMMISSIONING



NEIGHBORING MAP

Before we can begin BLESSing our neighbors or the people in our network of relationships, we have to know where our primary calling is and know the people who also exist in those places.

The Relational Map exercise will help us begin to do that. You will need to download the Relational Map or recreate the map in your own journal.

We've borrowed this concept from Dave Runyon and Jay Pathak who wrote *The Art of Neighboring*. It's a great resource that we would encourage you to pick up. Runyon and Pathak demonstrate that less than 10 percent of people who claim to be Christian can actually tell you the first and last names of their eight closest neighbors.

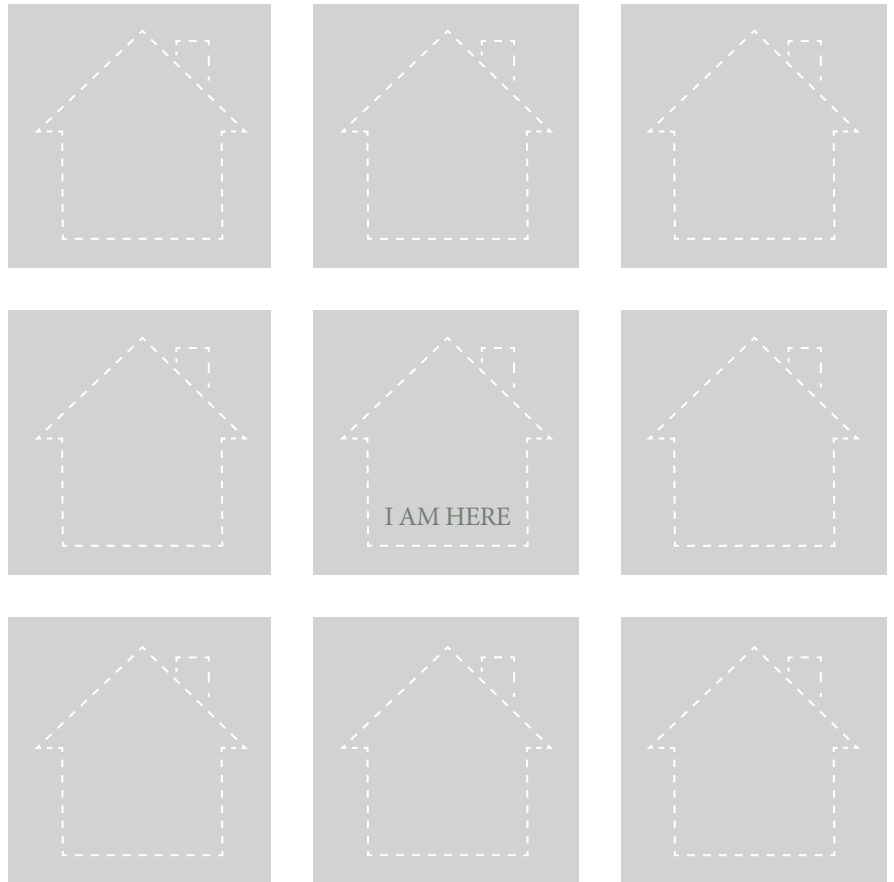
Less than three percent of Jesus's followers can tell you the first and last names of their eight closest neighbors and then some other detail beyond what you could observe from their driveway.

Less than one percent of Jesus's followers can tell you the first and last names of their eight closest neighbors and something you couldn't observe from the driveway, or their greatest hopes or greatest fears.

Those are some sobering numbers. What this is indicating is that we don't know our neighbors. Jesus said to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. How can we love our neighbors if we don't know who they are, or even their names?

Again, if we're going to BLESS our neighbors, we have to know who they are first.

Here are few questions to guide you through this map. You may want to keep it somewhere handy so you can add names and information as you begin to invest intentionally in your neighborhood or network of relationships.



STEP ONE

Pick a primary place of sentness. Where do you have the strongest sense of "sentness" from the Spirit? Is it where you live, work, study, or play? Which one is Jesus highlighting and saying, "Here is where I want you to engage your time and your resources?"

STEP TWO

Fill in the names in the boxes, beginning with yours and continuing with those around you. Who are the people in that relational network? Although the map looks like a neighborhood, it could represent a workspace with cubicles, for example. If it's not a geographically bound location, but a group of people who share a similar story, write the names of those people in the different boxes.

STEP THREE

Describe the people. In each little box, list keywords that describe that person. Think about how much you know or don't know the people. Don't beat yourself up if you can't name many things. You can take intentional steps now to consider exploratory questions to learn their story.

BLESS YOUR FRANCES

Begin with prayer

Listen

Eat together

Serve

Share your story

Friends

Relatives

Acquaintances

Neighbors

Coworkers / **C**lassmates

Enemies

Strangers

STEP FOUR

Describe the place if you can, or describe the spaces where you exist the most if it's a network of relationships. In the margin around the big box, list keywords that describe your neighborhood or network of relationships.

STEP FIVE

Light bulbs. Where do you see openness and invitation? Put a light bulb by those names. If someone seems more interested spiritually, highlight that person. Double down on your prayers for these people.

STEP SIX

What would BLESS look like in relationship to them? What are some ideas that you have about how you might begin to serve these people or share meals with them? Record some ideas.