

The 40 Day Neighboring Experiment

“Loving Your Neighbor By Sharing Your Faith”

1 Peter 3:15 – January 31, 2016

New Years Sermon Series

THE 40 DAY NEIGHBORING EXPERIMENT		
A 6-Week Sermon Series on Loving Your Neighbor		
Date	Message Title	Bible Text
Jan 3	Loving Your Neighbor By Knowing Him	Luke 10:25-37
Jan 10	Loving Your Neighbor By Respecting Her	Leviticus 19:9-18
Jan 17	Loving Your Neighbor Who is Hard to Love	Matthew 5:43-48
Jan 24	Loving Your Neighbor By Loving Yourself	Mark 12:28-31
Jan 31	Loving Your Neighbor By Sharing Your Faith	1 Peter 3:15
Feb 7	Testimony Sunday	Open mic

The 40 Day Neighboring Experiment

For the first 40 days of 2016, I will pray the following prayer:
 (1) Lord, how do You want me to love my neighbor today?
 (2) Lord, please give me the courage and power to act on what You are showing me.

Preparing For Next Week's Testimony Sunday

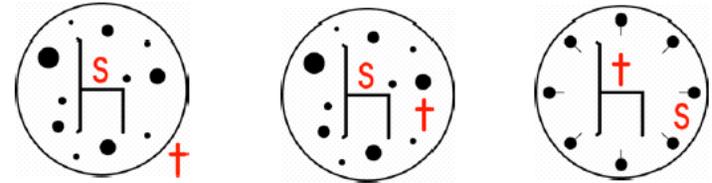
- Regardless of whether you share on a microphone or not, let's all post a story on the “My Neighboring Story” wall next Sunday.
- Your neighboring story does not have to be grand and over-the-top. We just want to hear your story. What happened?
- Please consider sharing your story on the mic. As you do, please follow the ABC's of microphone sharing:
 - A – Audible: Speak clearly so we can understand.
 - B – Brief: Keep it to 60 seconds or less so others can share.
 - C – Christ-centered: What did God do?
 - D – Don't sell anything: This is a time for testimonies not promoting.

How to Love Your Neighbor By Sharing Your Faith (1 Peter 3:15)

- Set apart Christ as _____ in your heart
 - 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) – *In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.*
 - Wayne Grudem: “The word used here means ‘treat as holy, regard reverently’ (as in ‘hallowed be Thy name’). Thus the sense of fear or reverence for the Lord rather than fear of men is reinforced. To reverence Christ as Lord means really to believe that Christ, not one's human opponents, is truly in control of events. To have such

reverence in your hearts is to maintain continually a deep-seated inward confidence in Christ as reigning Lord and King, who even now has angels, authorities, and powers subject to Him.”

- “There is a Throne” – Who is on it in your life?



- Application – Which circle represents your life right now?

Jesus, I confess that I have taken control of the throne of my own life. I am sorry. I step off of the throne, and I ask You to sit there and to take complete control of my life.

- Your best witness to your neighbor is living a life where Jesus is on the throne. Because when Jesus is on the throne, He loves people through you (John 15; Galatians 5:22-23).
- Bill Bright's definition of successful faith sharing: “Successful witnessing is taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the _____ to God.”
- Pray first: Talk to God about people before you talk to people about God.
- Application – Develop a “Ten Most Wanted” List and pray over it daily.

2. Share the reason for _____

- The word “defense” (*apologia*) is the word from which we get “apologetics.” What are we to give “apologetics” for? The reason for the hope within us. Thus, apologetics is our story. We are to tell our story.
- This verse says we are to share when we are asked. The implication is that because we are living with Christ on the throne and because of what they are seeing in our lives, they will want to know. They will ask.
- Jesus uses the picture of salt: “You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). Salt creates thirst. When we are loving our neighbors in the power of the Spirit (Christ on the throne), this creates a thirst, and people want to know. They ask.
- Application – Three ways to share the reason for your hope:
 - Your Own Story: “Let me share my story with you.”
 - Describe life before Christ
 - Describe how you came to know Christ
 - Describe life with Christ

- (2) The Romans Road: "Let me share with you a short summary of the whole Bible that someone shared with me and that changed my life."
- **Romans 3:23** – *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
 - **Romans 6:23** – *The wages of sin is death.*
 - **Romans 5:8** – *But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
 - **Romans 10:9** – *If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- (3) Invite to a Safe Place to Investigate: "Let's go to Alpha together the first night (Feb. 9). I'll pick you up. We can drive together, eat dinner together at Alpha, and sit at the same table."

The Alpha Course is an opportunity for anyone to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed, non-threatening manner over 11 thought-provoking sessions. It is especially geared for people investigating Christianity, new Christians seeking more, or Christians wanting a refresher.

Alpha Topics include:

- Is There More to Life Than This?
 - Who is Jesus?
 - Why Did Jesus Die?
 - How Can We Have Faith?
 - Why and How Do I Pray?
 - Why and How Should I Read the Bible?
 - How Does God Guide Us?
 - How Can I Resist Evil?
 - Why and How Should I Tell Others?
 - Does God Heal Today?
 - What About the Church?
 - Who is the Holy Spirit?
- Vimeo Video: "Kelly and Jessie's Story" [3:24]

3. Do so with _____ and _____

- *prautes* = mildness, humility, meekness, gentleness
- Conclude: We are not to overwhelm others, but to share our faith with them in humbleness and gentleness.
- *phobos* = fear, respect
- Conclude: It is OK and natural that we get butterflies in our stomachs when we share our faith. We should share our faith in a way that is respectful of the person.
- Eric Swanson's distinction between *ulterior motive* and *ultimate motive* is really helpful here:

- **Ulterior** means something is intentionally kept 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.
- **Ultimate** means the farthest point of a journey. An ultimate goal is an eventual point or a longed-for destination.
- Jay Pathak: "Sharing the story of Jesus and His impact on our lives is the right (and ultimate) motive, but it cannot be an ulterior motive in developing relationships. We don't love our neighbors to convert them; we love our neighbors because we are converted. We are called to love people – period. Whether those people ever take any steps toward God is beside the point. We are called to love our neighbors unconditionally, without expecting anything in return. The Great Commandment says to "love your neighbor" with no other expectations given. Thus good neighboring is an end in itself. Most believers want the people they know to have an authentic relationship with Jesus. But if our friends choose not to enter that relationship, we should still desire to be friends with them."

Today's Application Challenge

- Pray and ask: Is there anyone in my work neighborhood, school neighborhood, family neighborhood, or literal neighborhood that God is nudging me to share my faith with by sharing my story or inviting to Alpha (1 for 1)?



- Immersion Baptism video from October 2015 [5:03]
- Next immersion baptism is on Sunday, March 20, after 2nd service. To sign up contact Joy at jperozo@whatisgrace.org or 281-646-1903 x.111 or sign up online at <http://www.whatisgrace.org/events/>