

CG Equip: Being a Great Neighbor

Session 2: Overcoming Barriers to Neighboring

Key Takeaways from Session 2

1. Time is Our Biggest Obstacle

- We live in a culture that values productivity and busyness over relationships
- Despite time-saving devices, we feel busier than ever
- We must be willing to prioritize and be present with those around us

2. The Martha Syndrome

- Martha was distracted by "much serving" and missed what mattered most
- Jesus called her name twice: "Martha, Martha"—she was too busy to hear Him the first time
- Good things can keep us from the main things
- Hospitality is biblical, but priorities must be right

3. Three Lies We Believe

- **"Things will settle down someday"** - This is just a busy season
- **"More will be enough"** - One more achievement/purchase will bring contentment
- **"Everybody lives like this"** - Frantic busyness is normal

4. Fear as a Barrier

- Fear affects how we relate to neighbors
- We make assumptions based on limited information
- Question: Are we a "safe place" for our neighbors, or the "grumpy neighbor"?

5. The Papua New Guinea Perspective

- Jesse's story showed radical community dependence
 - Life was physically hard but mentally simpler—"carrying a bowling ball up a hill"
 - Our lives are "juggling 30 golf balls"—easier physically, harder on the soul
 - We're created for community but don't live that way
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Discussion Questions

On Time & Priorities:

1. **On a scale of 1-10, how hectic is your life right now?** What's contributing most to that feeling?
2. **Do you relate more to Martha or Mary in the Luke 10 story?** Why? Has your answer changed as you've gotten older?
3. **Are you "interruptible"?** Can you think of a recent time when you were interrupted? How did you respond?
4. **Which of the three lies resonates most with you?**
 - Things will settle down someday
 - More will be enough
 - Everybody lives like this
5. **Look at your calendar from this past week. Does it align with your stated priorities?** What would need to change to make room for neighboring?

On Fear & Assumptions:

6. **Are you uncomfortable about spending time with anyone who lives near you?** What's the source of that discomfort?
7. **Do you think anyone might be scared of or hesitant to get to know you?** Why might that be?
8. **How do you think your neighbors see you?** As a safe place? As invisible? As the grumpy neighbor? As unavailable?
9. **What assumptions have you made about your neighbors based on limited information?**

On Community & Culture:

10. **Jesse described life in Papua New Guinea as "difficult on the body but easy on the soul," while American life is "easier on the body but harder on the soul." What do you think about this observation?**
11. **We're created for community but live segmented lives. Where do you see this tension in your own life?**
12. **Brady shared about being closed off at the gym until someone initiated with him. Where might you be closed off without realizing it?**

Practical Application

This Week's Challenge:

Choose 1-2 of the following to commit to this week:

1. **Calendar Audit**
 - Review your calendar and commitments
 - Identify one "good thing" that might be keeping you from the "main thing"
 - Consider what you might need to say "no" to in order to say "yes" to neighboring
 2. **Neighbor Mapping**
 - Pull out your block map from last week (or create one if you didn't)
 - Put it on your refrigerator as a visual reminder
 - Add any new information you've learned about neighbors
 3. **Embrace the Awkward**
 - Identify one neighbor you've made assumptions about
 - Commit to a simple interaction this week (wave, smile, brief conversation)
 - Remember: it's okay if it feels awkward at first
 4. **Visibility Practice**
 - Take a walk in your neighborhood at a consistent time
 - Work in your yard when others might be out
 - Be present and available to be "interrupted"
 5. **Create Margin**
 - Wake up 30 minutes earlier to spend time with the Lord
 - Turn off your phone for one hour each evening
 - Say "no" to one commitment to create space for spontaneous neighboring
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Prayer Focus:

- Ask God to help you identify what's stealing your time and attention
 - Pray for boldness to embrace awkward situations with neighbors
 - Ask for eyes to see people the way Jesus sees them
 - Pray for specific neighbors by name (if you know them)
 - Request protection as you step out in neighboring—the enemy is real, but God is greater
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Scripture for the Week

Luke 10:41-42 - "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

Mark 10 - Jesus made time for interruptions—children and a blind beggar. He wasn't hurried or frantic but purposeful.
