

Video 1: “What’s Jesus Up To?” Mark 1:15 | Book 1 chapter(s) 1

Processing Our Insights:

In a remarkably short amount of time, North America has become one of the largest mission fields on the planet. The odds are very good that right now, wherever you live in North America, the people in your neighborhood and workplace are unconnected to a local congregation and may not be connected to Jesus at all. The church today is no longer servicing a community filled with Christians. We are now a church who finds itself in a mission field.

- What disturbs you about this kind of rapid change in your community?

The good news is that Jesus isn’t struggling or confused. *Jesus is on a mission!* Ever since Jesus broke out of the tomb on Easter Sunday morning, He’s been on the loose, pursuing His Father’s redemptive mission: ripening people and preparing them to be reunited with the Father He loves. In fact, that’s what Jesus is up to *right now* in every one of our neighborhoods. And... He invites us to join Him.

- What intrigues you about thinking of mission/outreach in this way?
- Does the idea of joining Jesus on His mission make you nervous?

When the Finke’s start working with people who are ready to be everyday missionaries, one of the first questions they ask is, “So, how’s Jesus messing with you?” Remember, “messing with you” doesn’t mean, “How is Jesus picking on you?” It means, “How is He ‘messing’ with your status quo? How is He ‘messing’ with your presumptions and preferences as a Christian? How is He trying to get your attention?”

- So, how is Jesus messing with you lately?

Joining Jesus doesn’t add another layer of busyness on top of an already busy schedule. Instead, joining Jesus is something we do in the midst of our busy schedule. Living missionally simply requires a new mission *mindset* and to put some new mission *practices* into play along life’s way.

- How does this shape/change how you live your everyday life?

Before We Go

“A-Ha!” Insights to Action: What was the most significant insight you had as a result of today’s video and discussion? Take **3 minutes** to write down your insight and what you think Jesus might be giving you to believe and/or do as a result. This is your self-identified assignment for joining Jesus in the coming days.

In the coming days, *watch for opportunities Jesus will give you* to put your self-identified assignments into play. The next time your group meets be ready to tell the stories of what happened (whether little or large).

Video 2: “Jesus Is On a Mission” Colossians 1:19-20 & Revelation 21:5 | Book 1 chapter(s) 2

Processing Our Insights:

“A Missional Community is a smaller group of neighborhood missionaries who gather regularly to support each other as they learn to live their lives as a mission trip.”

- How would missional communities help us “Connect People with Jesus”?
- What missional communities are you already a part of?

Only Jesus can do Jesus-work. Only Jesus could die on the cross and rise again to take away our sins. Only Jesus can know what’s stirring around in the deep places of a person’s heart. Only Jesus can ripen a person so that our seed of kind-attention, gentle-truth or longed-for-grace lands at just the right moment.

- Jesus speaks of looking for “ripe” people in John 4:35. What does it mean for a person to be ripe?
- What if a person is not yet ripe?
- How does the analogy of the apple tree help you?

Jesus wants us to understand that He is already working in their lives and that many of them are ripe for a little grace, friendship, wisdom or a listening ear. However, in order to know how Jesus may be ripening them, we need to know their name and a little of their story. In the coming week, let’s take a small but intentional step toward joining Jesus in our “neighborhood”. (Remember, a “neighborhood” is a network of people to which we have regular access” at home, work, school, etc.)

Here is your challenge: Go around to as many of your neighbors as you can in the coming days and find out the following:

- *What is their name?*
- *What is a little of their story?* (e.g., what do they do for fun? How long have been here? What are their hobbies?)

Write down what you find out and bring it with you next time.

Before We Go

“A-Ha!” Insights to Action: What was the most significant insight you had as a result of today’s video and discussion? Take **3 minutes** to write down your insight and what you think Jesus might be giving you to believe and/or do as a result.

Important Terms:

“Missional Living”

Joining Jesus on his redemptive mission and living each day as if it were a mission trip into our own community. We are Neighborhood Missionaries.

“Missional Community”

A smaller group of local neighborhood missionaries who gather regularly in order to support each other as we learn to join Jesus on his mission.

“Neighborhood”

Any network of people to which we have regular access. Who is regularly within our reach? Who are the people who live near us, work near us, play near us, etc.?

“Neighboring”

Any interaction that helps foster friendship between neighbors. Neighboring puts us into position to find out what Jesus is already up to in the lives of people near us.

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Video 3: “Mission Mindset Changes” Matthew 11:19 | Book 1 chapter(s) 3-6

Processing Our Insights:

The first mission mindset change we are already familiar with: Jesus is on a mission and He invites us to join Him. We don't go for Jesus. We go with Jesus. He is already at work in the lives of everyone in every “neighborhood.” Our part is to **seek, recognize & respond** to what He is already up to in people's lives.

- Can it really be this simple?

The second mission mindset change is that **the river has moved**. Our culture has moved from a churched-culture to a mission field. Even our very best services and programming are not enough to attract a significant percentage of the community into our church buildings like they used to.

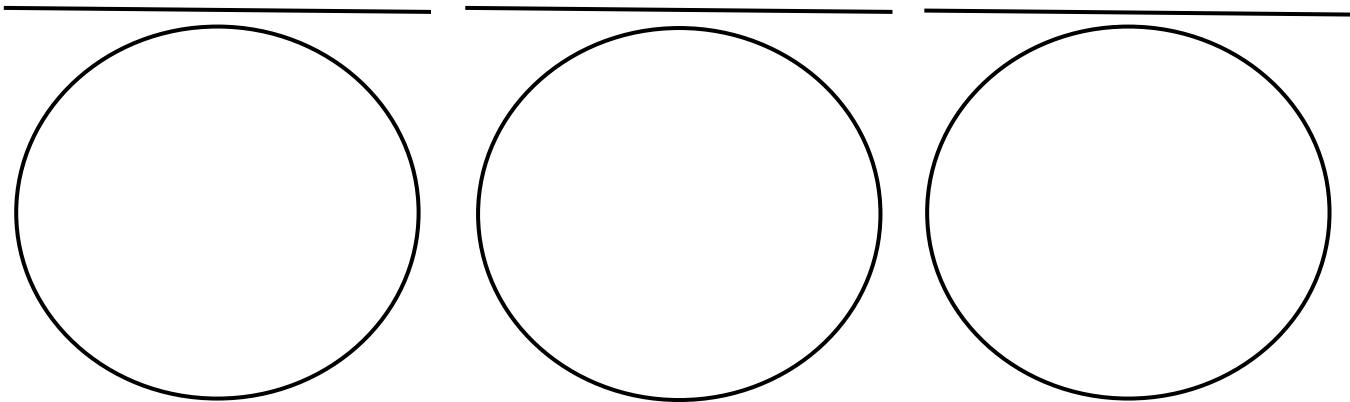
- What challenges do you (and your congregation) face now that the river has moved?

The third mission mindset change is to trust that our secret weapon for joining Jesus on His mission is **being with and enjoying people**. In other words, we imitate what Jesus did in the Gospels.

- What do you think could keep you from imitating Jesus' strategy? How can He help you overcome this?

Joining Jesus Exercise

Today we focus on three simple but important changes in how we think about mission. To give us a context for this experience, take a few minutes to identify the various “neighborhoods” in which you spend significant time. Label the circles below to represent each of your “neighborhoods,” for example, home, work, gym, coffee shop, school, etc. Draw additional circles as needed. Then in the circle write the names of people you know from each “neighborhood.”



The Finke's presented a simple formula for joining Jesus on His mission: **Enjoy People + Seek, Recognize and Respond** to what Jesus is already doing in the lives of the people we are enjoying

- As you think about these mission mindset changes, how do they impact the way you may relate to the various people you have identified in your “neighborhoods” (above)?

- As you think about the various people in your “neighborhoods,” what would it take to create the time and space to occasionally hang out with them and enjoy them like we see Jesus doing in the Gospels? (You do not need to think in terms of doing something every day or even every week, but every once in a while.)

My Plan to Enjoy People

- Who?
- What/Where?
- When?
- Who else can be included?
- Who can help me with this plan?

Bring it Home

This week, take time to pray: “Dear Jesus, You have placed various neighbors near me. Who is ripe for some unhurried time with me and You? Amen.”

- Which person or family came to mind during the prayer? Write down their name(s). (Perhaps Jesus has been preparing them for such a time as this.)
- What could be your plan for hanging out with this person within the next month?
- In the coming weeks, take a small but intentional step toward joining Jesus on His mission by implementing your plan. (Contact the person(s) and invite them to what you’ve planned. See if they are available within the next month for your get-together.)

Next time, let the group know how it’s going and where you are at.

[Note: If you are more introverted, how can you spend time with a “neighbor” in a way that may challenge but does not violate your relational wiring? If you are more extroverted, how can you build on your previous friendly encounters with neighbors to begin forming deeper friendships? Also, if you do not know a person or family very well, perhaps you could expand the plan to include other people as well. If the person who came to mind is of the opposite sex, be wise and be sure to invite additional people to join you.]

Video 4: “Seeking What’s Already Happening” Matthew 6:33 | Book 1 chapter(s) 7-9

Before the Video:

Take a moment to share with the group the insights and experiences you had over the last week as you sought to join Jesus on His mission in your everyday life.

Note: If you feel inadequate at this point in the training process. Take heart and be encouraged—because Jesus is risen and on the loose in your community, and He’s simply invited you to join Him!

Processing Our Insights:

Today we focus on how to **seek, recognize & respond** to what Jesus is already doing in the lives of the people we are enjoying. As you watched the video, what insights did you have?

Many people assume that seeking and recognizing what Jesus is doing must be the most difficult and mysterious part of joining Jesus on His mission. Why is it actually pretty simple?

At one point, Greg said, “It’s not that God is inactive. It’s that we are inattentive.” What makes sense about that?

The stories of the shrimp party and lawn mowing illustrate the Kingdom of God coming near. Jesus does all the hard, complicated work of preparing people and circumstances. All we have to do is watch for where a little grace can be applied. We can go about our daily routines simply asking ourselves, “What’s Jesus up to here?”

Therefore, what is a recent story from your life where you have seen “the Kingdom of God coming near”? (If you are having trouble with this question, think of something good or hard that happened last week. What might have Jesus been up to in the midst of that good or hard moment?)

Susan reminds us that when we see a need for a little grace in our neighbors’ lives, we do not need to feel like we must solve their problems or fix what is broken. That’s Jesus’ job, not ours. Why is this important to keep straight?

Before We Go – “A-Ha!”

What was the most significant insight you had as a result of today’s video & discussion? Take **3 minutes** to write down your insight and what you think Jesus might be giving you to believe and/or do as a result. This is your self-identified assignment for joining Jesus in the coming days.

In the coming days watch for opportunities Jesus will give you to put your self-identified assignments into play. The next time your group meets be ready to tell the stories of what happened.

Video 5: “How to Join Jesus Every Day” John 4:35-38 | Book 1 chapter(s) 10-12

Before the Video:

Take a moment to share with the group the insights and experiences you had over the last several days as you sought to join Jesus on His mission in your everyday life. If you were able to interact with neighbors from any of your various neighborhoods, tell your story to the group.

Processing Our Insights:

The 5 Questions, based on the 5 Mission Practices, help us tell the stories of what happened as we joined Jesus in our daily lives. The 5 Questions are:

1. How did you see God at work this week? | Seeking the Kingdom
2. What has Jesus been teaching you in His Word? | Hearing from Jesus
3. What kind of conversations are you having, especially with those who are not yet Christians? | Talking with People
4. What good can we do around here? | Doing Good
5. How can we help you in prayer? | Ministering through Prayer

Why is it important for us to regularly gather together like this and share our stories of joining Jesus on His mission?

Practice #1 is what Jesus invites us to do first of all: “**Seeking the Kingdom.**” Jesus has brought the kingdom of God into our world and into our community. Therefore, the practice of “seeking the kingdom” is the first practical step we can take in joining Jesus in what He is already doing. We can ask ourselves, what is Jesus already showing us? Who are the people already nearby? What is Jesus inviting us to notice or do?

What intrigues you about living each day as a Kingdom seeker & looking for what Jesus is already showing you?

As we become more intentional about “seeking the Kingdom,” don’t think big. Think small. Think, “What are the little things that are right at hand?” Jesus says that the kingdom of God is like a seed, a pinch of yeast or a cool cup of water.

As you think about your various “neighborhoods & neighbors”, where could you plant a seed of kindness in someone’s life, offer a pinch of hope or a cool cup of water of grace? [Note: *Wherever a little grace can be applied, we know Jesus is up to something and the kingdom of God is near!*]

What is encouraging to you about the GPS illustration and message?

Before We Go – “A-Ha!”

What was the most significant insight you had as a result of today’s video & discussion? Take **3 minutes** to write down your insight and what you think Jesus might be giving you to believe and/or do as a result. This is your self-identified assignment for joining Jesus in the coming days.

Video 6: "Hearing from Jesus" Matthew 17:5 | Book 1 chapter(s) 13

Before the Video:

Share with the group the insights and experiences you have had over the last several days as you sought to join Jesus on His mission in your everyday life. If you were able to interact with neighbors from any of your various neighborhoods, tell your story to the group. You can use the 5 Questions to help you get started.

- How did you see God at work this week?
- What has Jesus been teaching you in His Word?
- What kind of conversations are you having, especially with those who are not yet Christians?
- What good can we do around here?
- How can we help you in prayer?

Processing Our Insights:

The Bible says that because our identity is in Christ through our Baptism, we can now know who we are and what we have. We are forgiven children of the King and we have been given the gifts of the Kingdom. We have been given abundant love, abundant grace and abundant goodness – things our broken world needs so badly. And because of who we are and what we have in Christ, we now know what we can do. We can look for opportunities to share a little of what we have in abundance with people who need it. The practice of hearing from Jesus in the Gospels helps us do that.

- How does "hearing from Jesus" help? And why do you think this is important for you as an everyday missionary?

What Jesus said in the Gospels, He is still saying today. And what Jesus did in the Gospels, He is still doing today. So if we want to recognize and respond to what Jesus is telling us or showing us in our daily lives, it begins with being familiar with what He's already shown and told us in the Gospels. Over and over again, throughout the Gospels, Jesus disciplines His followers in these three practices: **seek the Kingdom, humble ourselves, and freely love our neighbors** who need it so badly. These practices are the foundation for the 5 Mission Practices.

- Why is humbling ourselves so important?

We love our neighbor out of the abundance of love which is already ours through Baptism. With the abundant love we already have as God's children, we look for those who need some love. Then we give some of what we already have in abundance to our neighbor. From God, through us, to our neighbor. Freely we have received, freely give.

- What difference does this make as you think about loving people nearby (coworkers, classmates, etc.?)

Before We Go:

Every day we need Jesus' encouragement and challenge in order for us to take up His practices anew. This is why "hearing from Jesus" in the Gospels is so important. Starting tomorrow, which Gospel will you open and start following Jesus around in? What will He be able to show you? (*Hint: it will have something to do with your true identity in Christ, and the invitation to seek the Kingdom, humble yourself and then love your neighbor.*)

- Take a moment to ask Jesus which of the four Gospels He would have you open tomorrow and start following Him around in it. Identify by circling → **Matthew | Mark | Luke | John**

In the coming days, listen for what Jesus is telling you in the Gospel, and reflect on what He is showing you in your everyday life. The next time your group meets, be ready to tell the stories of what you learned.

Video 7: “Talking with People & Doing Good” Ephesians 2:8-10| Book 1 chapter(s) 14-15

Before the Video:

Last time, you identified one of the Gospels to “hear from Jesus” and join Him around in. Which Gospel did you identify? What did you see, what did you hear, what do you think He was asking you to believe or to do?

Processing Our Insights:

The first half of today's session focuses on the Mission Practice of **Talking with People**. In our culture, ignoring most of the people that are regularly within our proximity is called normal. We look right past them. But what if we began to change that? Greg points out that *Jesus can do more with two people who are beginning to talk with each other than He can with two people successfully ignoring each other.*

- This makes sense. But what if someone is more introverted like Susan? What is the good news for introverts who take up the Mission Practice of Talking with People?
- Susan said that “the practice of talking with people is more about listening...than sustaining chit chat.” What does this mean for how we talk with people?
- So, what kind of conversations are you having with the people around you?

The second half of today's session unpacks the Mission Practice of Doing Good. Doing good isn't about adding more to our schedule—it's about being intentional in the places we already are. Greg Finke often says people need to see Jesus in us before they're ready to hear about Jesus from us.

- What struck you about the story of Ben and his autistic classmate?
- What would it look like for you to go through your normal week with a ‘Do good’ mindset? What might change?”
- How is the good we do for others, like planting a seed? In what ways can simple acts of kindness prepare the soil of someone’s heart for the love of Jesus to take root?

Before We Go:

In the coming week, let's take a small but intentional step toward joining Jesus on His mission. **Here is your challenge:** Who do you know that could use a seed of God's goodness planted in their life? They may not deserve it, but they need it. What's their name and what will you do within the next few days? *This is your self-identified assignment for joining Jesus in the coming days.*

Video 8: “Ministering Through Prayer” Matthew 6:9-13 | Book 1 chapter(s) 16

Before the Video:

Take a few minutes and share with the Group: How did you see God at work this past week? What has Jesus been teaching you in His Word? What kind of conversations are you having? What good can we do around here?

Processing Our Insights:

Today’s session focuses on the final Mission Practice of Ministering through Prayer... and honestly, doesn’t that sound like the most terrifying Mission Practice of all? How does Susan reassure us in the video? (And how does that help you?)

- What words of advice did the Finke’s give about how to pray with someone?

When trust has had time to build, people will start sharing what’s really going on in their lives. When a person shares something real and hard, we can respond to them with a simple offer of grace: *“Would you like me to pray with you about that?”*

- How does praying aloud in our group help you grow and prepare you to minister through prayer in your “neighborhoods”?

Praying with our neighbors is missionally powerful. But we can also pray for our neighbors during our personal or family devotion time. (Also, remember, “neighbors” aren’t just people who live near you; they are those with whom you have *regular* access.) Take a few minutes to fill in a Neighborhood Prayer Map for one of your neighborhoods on the next page of this handout.

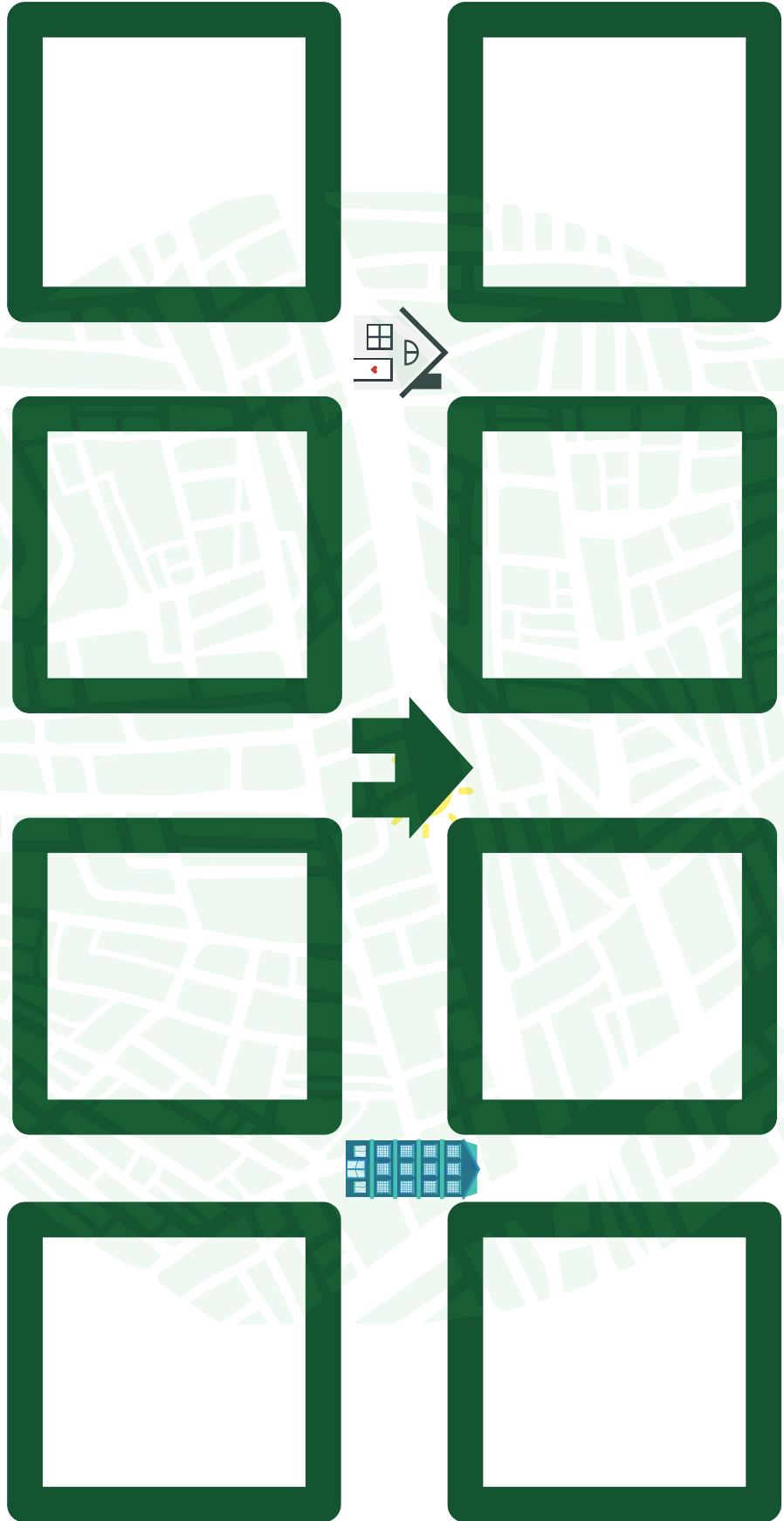
What was helpful about the encouragement the Finke’s offered regarding having time for a missional life?

Before We Go:

Take up the Challenge: Begin to use your Neighborhood Prayer Map to pray regularly for your neighbors – taking small intentional steps toward joining Jesus on His mission.

Ministering through Prayer: As we prepare to head out on our mission adventure with Jesus, have each person ask the next person, “How can I help you in prayer?” After everyone has had a turn to answer, each person then prays for their neighbor.

Neighborhood Prayer Map



dwe[↑]ling 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Video 9: “A Mission Trip to Our Own Neighborhood” Matthew 9:9-13 | Book 1 chapter(s) 17-18

Before the Video:

Discuss: How did you see God at work this past week? What kind of conversations are you having? Who are you praying for from your Neighborhood Prayer Map?

Processing Our Insights:

Being a *Neighborhood Missionary* begins with getting to know our neighbors and starting to enjoy them. There are 3 simple missionary questions we can begin to answer:

1. Who are these people?
2. What is Jesus already up to in their lives?
3. How can I join Him?

Neighboring by hanging out and having fun creates the time and space for conversations to begin and, when it is Jesus' timing, to go deeper. The Finke's gave a simple formula to describe how neighboring works best. See if your group can fill in the formula together:

$$\begin{aligned} U \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{Time} + P \underline{\hspace{2cm}} + A \underline{\hspace{2cm}} & \text{ (usually involving food/drink)} \\ = C \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times O \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ time} & = \text{FRIENDSHIP} \end{aligned}$$

The Finke's shared their story of starting to get to know the neighbors God had placed around them in their neighborhood. They noted how a simple neighborhood gathering began to catalyze a powerful shift in their neighborhood – from ignoring neighbors to enjoying neighbors.

- What new insights came to you during their story or how were you affirmed?
- What is one “intentional” & one “spontaneous” thing you will do within the next few weeks (see pages 149-151 in the book)?
- If you are struggling to make progress or just get started, what’s been in the way? What do you think is the resistance? (Take time right now to stop and pray about this resistance. *Prayer is not a last resort but a first response.*)

Is “neighboring” all we have to do to join Jesus on His mission in our neighborhoods? No. But it is how we start. So, *what’s your plan for starting?* Or if you have started, *what’s your plan for next steps?*

Before We Go:

What was the most significant insight you had as a result of today’s video & discussion? Take **3 minutes** to write down your insight and what you think Jesus might be giving you to believe and/or do as a result. This is your self-identified assignment for joining Jesus in the coming days.

Video 10: "The Missional Community" Hebrews 10:24-25 | Book 1 chapter 19

Before the Video: Discuss the 5 questions:

1. How did you see God at work this week?
2. What has Jesus been teaching you in His word?
3. What kind of conversations are you having, especially with those who are not yet Christians?
4. What good can we do around here?
5. How can we help you in prayer?

Processing Our Insights:

Our group has been regularly meeting together as we have been learning how to join Jesus on His mission in our everyday lives. We have become a Missional Community! Thinking about the words of Hebrews 10:24-25, how is our Missional Community an expression/example of what the writer to the Hebrews is encouraging?

By now, the 5 Questions are familiar to us. As a group, have some fun putting the 5 Questions into your own words:

- 1) **Seeking the Kingdom** –
- 2) **Hearing from Jesus** –
- 3) **Talking with People** –
- 4) **Doing Good** –
- 5) **Ministering through Prayer** –

Joining Jesus is not about changing what we do when we go to church—it is about changing what we do when we go out as the Church into our neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools.

- What do you most need God to change in you to become an everyday missionary?
- Why is asking each other the 5 Questions and telling our mission stories so important for helping us stay intentional and inspired for our long-term mission adventure with Jesus (consider Hebrews 10:24-25)?
- To someone who hasn't read the book, how would you explain what it means to join Jesus on His mission?
- In our time together, what are some of the most significant things you have learned about joining Jesus?

Before We Go: Take **3 minutes** to answer: "*What is Jesus inviting you to do as a result of reading this book?*" This is your self-identified assignment for Joining Jesus on His Mission.