

# **Loving Your Neighbors : 6-Week D-Group Guide**



## WEEK 1 (9/14/25) – Seeing your Neighbor

- Read **Luke 10:25-37** (The Good Samaritan) out loud
- Key Takeaway: We have to see someone before we can love them

### Gathered Discussion

1. **Observe & Wonder** – What phrase or emotion catches your attention on first reading?
2. Put yourself in the lawyer’s sandals—what answer do you hope Jesus gives when you ask, “Who is my neighbor?”
3. Brainstorm three “good reasons” the priest & Levite might keep walking.
4. Imagine you are the Samaritan—what risks (emotional, social, financial) do you take by stopping?
5. Why does Jesus redefine *neighbor* through a story rather than a definition?
6. How does this parable resist outsourcing compassion to institutions?
7. Who are the people we label “non-neighbors”? Either write very candidly in a notebook or share with the group.
8. Where have you *seen* a need but not crossed the street to meet it—what held you back?

### Practice for the Week

Prayer-walk your block once; ask the Spirit to highlight one person or household to bless tangibly. Write it in a journal.

### PREPARATION FOR WEEK 2

- Read excerpts from [Dave Earley, Spiritual Formation is...](#), and [Rich Villodas, The Deeply Formed Life](#).

## WEEK 2 (9/21/25) -Being Present to & Interruptible by your Neighbor

- Read **Luke 10:38-42** and **Mark 5 : 21-34**
- *Key Takeaway:* We have to slow our pace to see and love the people right in front of us.

### Gathered Discussion

1. Read Luke 10:38-42 out loud twice— what adjectives describe Martha, Mary, and you this week?
2. What "things to do", "work ethic", or "how I was raised" statements often keep you from being present to Jesus?
3. Identify recent moments where ministry or productivity eclipsed presence with family, Jesus, friends, or others.
4. In Mark 5, Jesus is en route to an urgent need when interrupted. How does He respond, and why?
5. Rich Villodas asked, “What if there were a rhythm of life that could instead enable us to deeply connect with God, a lifestyle not dominated by hurry and exhaustion but by margin and joy?” How would you describe your rhythm of life? What about your life makes it that way?
6. What are some boundaries or practices to create more margin you could implement that feel realistic?
7. Set a timer for 10 minutes, find somewhere to sit, and practice sitting in silence and solitude with God. Many emotions or thoughts may flood in that we often do not create space to allow in. That's okay. Write down your thoughts and experience of this time in a journal or phone note.

### Practice for the Week

Block **two one-hour “margin windows”** on your calendar—phone silenced, no agenda. Be available to God and whoever crosses your path. Journal surprises.

### PREPARATION FOR WEEK 3

- Excerpt from [\*Dallas Willard, The Spirit of the Disciplines\*](#).

## WEEK 3 (9/28/25) – Formed by Serving your Neighbor

- Read John 13 : 1-17 · Mark 10 : 35-45 · Philippians 2 : 3-8
- Key Takeaways: Seeing the need and meeting it shapes us. Serving shapes the one serving.

### Gathered Discussion

1. Read John 13 : 1-17 aloud twice. Which verbs describing Jesus' action stand out and why?
2. Philippians 2 portrays Jesus' self-emptying? What ways did he put the interests of others before his own?
3. Think of your various contexts (family, work, church). Identify 5 "interests of others" in each category and write them down.
4. (Just for the exercise) Let someone in the group pick two from your list you can do one time and another from the list you can commit to weekly. Write down and share your candid reactions to those things being chosen for you as ways to serve.
5. Dallas Willard distinguishes between **volunteering** to serve and **adopting the posture of a servant**. What's the difference?
6. Identify internal resistances—status, time, fear—that keep us from menial service. What lies beneath them?
7. What communal rhythm of service could this group practice that would form us over the long haul? Discuss some way you can all serve together. If you do a lot already then consider dropping one area of service to serve together in community. This is for discussion not a commitment. That is something you can discuss as a community as time goes on.

### Practice for the Week

Select one **hidden act of service** for someone outside your immediate circle—no acknowledgement, no posting. Journal what the Spirit surfaces in you.

### PREPARATION FOR WEEK 4

- Listen to “Hospitality” (Van City Church Podcast, ~42 min). Note one question and one story to share next gathering. [CLICK HERE FOR “HOSPITALITY.”](#)

## WEEK 4 (10/19/25) – Opening Your Table to your Neighbor

- *Listen to Hospitality* (podcast) before group
- Key Takeaway: Serving in our home makes it personal and powerful.

### Gathered Discussion

1. What comes to mind when you hear the word “evangelism”? How have past experiences shaped your understanding—positive or negative?
2. Reflect on a time someone welcomed you into their space. What made you feel seen or included? How did it impact your relationship?
3. Cameron Silsby suggests that we’re often too “busy, anxious, distracted, or exhausted” to show hospitality. *“The truth is, for a lot of us, it’s not that we don’t care—it’s that we’re too busy, too anxious, too distracted, or too exhausted to even think about inviting someone into our home.”* Which of these feels most true for you? What’s one way to create margin?
4. In Jesus’ ministry, meals were often more than meals—they were moments of mission. Why do you think the table was such a powerful place for Jesus? Can you recall any stories where He used a meal to reveal the gospel?
5. What’s the difference between hospitality and entertaining? Which one are you more comfortable with, and why?
6. What might it look like to offer a simple, honest meal rather than a curated experience? How does that idea free or challenge you?
7. What is one small, intentional way you could open your table/life this month? It could be a meal, a walk, or an open invite to linger.

### Practice for the Week

**Identify one person** in your life—neighbor, coworker, classmate, or acquaintance—you’d like to move one step closer to.

Then send a message inviting them to something low-key: coffee, lunch, a walk, or even just a longer conversation after church or work. Don’t aim for a full dinner. Aim for intentional connection.

### PREPARATION FOR WEEK 4

- Read excerpt from [Tyler Staton, \*Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools\*](#). Note one question and one story to share next gathering

## WEEK 5 (10/26/25) – Prayer for your Neighbor

- Read excerpt Tyler Staton, *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools* before group
- Matthew 5:43-48 · Luke 6:27-36
- Key Takeaway: Practice **imaginative intercession**—See difficult neighbors as God sees them and praying accordingly.

### Gathered Discussion

1. Share a time prayer for others has softened you or in what way praying for others has often been difficult and not as fulfilling as others make it out to be.
2. After telling a story about D.L. Moody, Tyler says, “Plenty of people have been inspired by D.L. Moody’s list of one hundred people. Far fewer people continued to pray after the inspiration wore off. If you want that kind of legacy, you’ve got to live that kind of life.” What are your immediate candid thoughts and responses to this? Why might a legacy like that be something you maybe do or maybe don’t aspire to?
3. What story do you tell yourself about a difficult person? How could prayer reframe it?
4. Take a moment (3 minutes) to picture someone you find difficult or who opposes you. Imagine Jesus interacting with them. What is Jesus doing? Maybe that is something he wants you to pray over that person.
5. Matthew 5 and Luke 6 call us to pray for those who oppose us. When you picture your hard-to-love neighbor standing with Jesus, what new feelings or thoughts arise?
6. Identify distractions or cynicism that sabotage intercessory prayer. Brainstorm counter-practices.

### Practice for the Week

Read **Acts 6:8 – 7:60**. During the final verses 54-60 engage in imaginative prayer. After each verse imagine the scene and imagine yourself there in Stephen's shoes. Try to feel what he may have felt and seen what he may have seen. Pay special attention to the final verse where he prays for those killing him. How does he see them? What is he feeling? What might the conflicting feelings have been? After, imagine someone opposed to you. Imagine them with Jesus. Pray for what you see Jesus doing. If Jesus is embracing them then pray that person would know they are loved by Jesus, not alone if that's what they are feeling, etc.

## WEEK 6 (11/2/25) – Living Sent to your Neighbor

- Read **2 Corinthians 5:14-21 · 1 John 3:16-18 · Romans 12 : 1-2**
- *Key Takeaway:* Craft a sustainable rhythm of reconciling love so you can love people, not because they are lovable, but until they become lovable.

### Gathered Discussion

1. **Lectio Moment (2 Cor 5:14-15)** – read slowly, then ask: *If Christ's love truly compels me, what concrete change has or would appear in my weekly schedule as a result? Is the service I give out of love or compulsion?*
2. Romans 12:1-2 frames worship as a “living sacrifice.” What parts of your current routine feel most resistant to be sacrificed?
3. Another descriptive word for disciples is “apprentices.” How might an apprentice structure *weekly practice hours* to master loving neighbor?
4. G.K. Chesterton said, “Rome was not loved because she was beautiful. She was beautiful because she was loved.” Imagine difficult people you work with, live near, or with whom you go to church. How might they look in six months if you loved them, not because they are beautiful, but until they become beautiful? What would it tangibly look like to love them in this transformative way?
5. **Rule-of-Life Exercise:** Draft a simple rhythm (daily, weekly, monthly) and pick a block (daily, weekly, or monthly) you can make a “neighbor block” that you will at least try for the next 30 days.
6. **Group Action Plan:** Talk about a place in church or in the community you can serve together and during what seasons. What would you have to say “no” to for this to be possible? Do not feel guilty if you’re in a season of life where this is difficult and maybe not possible. Utilize serving at times or places where you already are (church, d-group nights, in your home with a spouse or roommate, etc.). The goal isn’t to add ANOTHER thing to the schedule but make serving part of the schedule you already have.

### Practice for the Week

- Follow up with each other about ideas in your D-Group group chat.