



Sermon Discussion Guide
Love Thy (Socially Distanced) Neighbor: Make the Invitation
Sunday, September 6, 2020
Based on Pastor Alex's Sermon

Introduction

We're concluding our series called *Love Thy (Socially-Distanced) Neighbor*. In this series we're thinking through what it would look like to really love our neighbors during this pandemic season, and take steps that will help introduce them to Jesus. In this third lesson, we learn that it's time to invite our neighbors to check out church.

To watch this week's sermon before your group discussion, go to www.journeyoffaith.com/messages

Share Your Story

1. What's the most awkward thing you've been invited to?
2. What's been the best way you've ever connected with someone new?

Hear God's Story

1. Read Matthew 9:9-13. In that day, Israel was occupied by Roman rule. One way the Roman Empire kept their power was by recruiting those from the Jewish community, like Matthew, to collect taxes from the people. Needless to say, those "traitors" weren't liked very much. How does this context help frame this text? And, what benefit is there in remembering where WE came from when talking to others about Jesus?
2. Note in verse 10 that Matthew invited Jesus over to meet his friends. Matthew knew, even as a new follower of Jesus, that there's something special about experiencing Jesus within the context of community. When you think about your community at Journey of Faith, what's the biggest blessing you've gained from experiencing Jesus among our particular faith community?
3. Note how the text doesn't say Matthew threw a special dinner just for Jesus; rather, he invited Jesus into his normal routine. What's the biggest excuse you make for not inviting others into your own life to experience Jesus through you?

Create a New Story

1. Take a 30-minute break this week to think through your own story this week. How can this help shape how you share your faith, and what impact does it have on your heart?
2. Think about what Journey has meant to you. How can you relate that to others who could benefit from our faith community as well?

Further Studies: Living Out the Message & Looking Forward

In this study series we've been talking about how to reach out and connect in practical ways with our neighbors and others in our life who don't know the love of God yet. This next Sunday, the 13th, we're going to be starting a new series on the topic of stress and anxiety for our Fall Kickoff. This was strategic, as we're now equipped to invite them to something super relevant in this season we're going through together. Here's one way we can invite those we've been making relationships with to our new series:

"Hey, this Sunday, our online church is going to be talking about how to deal with stress and anxiety. I think it'd be really cool if we both watched it sometime that day and then sometime after that I'd like to hear your take on that topic. Would you be up for that? Here's the link..."

DISCUSS

1. What's been the single greatest takeaway for you from this past series?
2. Our next series is on stress and anxiety. How is this topic relevant to your neighbors and others in your social circle?
3. Because this is such an important topic to get biblical advice on, when and how are you planning to invite others to our upcoming series on stress and anxiety this next week?
4. What is God teaching you in your personal spiritual life right now?
5. What are you most thankful for in this season of life?

For Parents: Repackaging for Youth

1. For those who have young children in the home, what are some ways you could teach this lesson to them that takes into account their age and learning level?

For questions about this curriculum, contact Pastor Matthew Jensen at matthew.jensen@journeyoffaith.com