

NEIGHBORING IN THE NEW YEAR

BEGIN WITH PRAYER

JANUARY 19

GROUP NORMS

Be courageous, be compassionate, be connected
Be a cog...not a hog or a log
Be a listener...not a fixer

NOTE: Don't feel the pressure to ask all of these questions. You may want to prioritize which ones you think will generate the most discussion within your group. There are a few cues for personal reflection that the group leader may also bring into the discussion if time and group dynamics allow.

SUMMARY

In "Begin with Prayer," part of the Neighboring in the New Year series, Eric emphasizes the power of prayer as the starting point for blessing others. Drawing from Luke 6:12-16, he highlights how Jesus depended on prayer for guidance and wisdom before choosing His disciples. Eric acknowledges common struggles with prayer—lack of time, doubts, or feeling unsure—but reminds us that prayer connects us to God's heart and Spirit. Through practical steps, like scheduling prayer and being open to God moments, we can align with God's purposes, allowing Him to change us and use us to transform the world.

DISCUSSION

Ice Breaker:

-What are your earliest memories of prayer? Did you recite a particular prayer? Did you pray in a specific place or with particular people?

General Discussion:

-What impact does praying for your neighbor(s) have on you?

-Right after Jesus was baptized but before He began His ministry, He went into the wilderness to fast and pray (Luke 4). In Luke 6:12-13, we find that He prayed before He selected His apostles. What can we learn about prayer from Jesus's example?

-What do you find challenging about prayer?

When have you found prayer to be helpful?

-Prayer is a conversation in which we talk to God and He talks to us. Have you ever felt a nudge from God to reach out to someone? What happened?

-What was one of your take aways from Sunday's teaching?

-REFLECT: Who are the people you can begin to pray for, asking God to give you opportunities to B.L.E.S.S. them?

-Use the Neighborhood graphic and spend time praying for those who are your neighbors. Put yourself in the center then jot down the names of 8 of your neighbors around you. Pray for them.