

NEIGHBORING IN THE NEW YEAR

LISTEN

JANUARY 26

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 week three of the "Neighboring in the New Year" series, Eric emphasizes the importance of listening as part of the BLESS strategy to love our neighbors. Using the story of Jesus and Bartimaeus in Luke 18, he highlights how listening helps us understand others' true needs, recognize God's work in their lives, and show genuine love. He challenges us to imitate Jesus by giving people our undivided attention, practice listening at home, work, & in our neighborhoods. The message concludes with a call to listen intentionally because "when we listen, we learn."

DISCUSSION

Ice breaker: If you could have a superpower related to listening, what would it be and why?

General Discussion:

-When do you find it most challenging to really listen to someone?

-What key words cause you to immediately zone in or tune out when listening? How can your awareness change your behavior?

-Read Luke 18:35-42. What impresses you most about Jesus's interaction with the man who was blind? How would you have felt if you were that man? -What are the personal benefits of listening when others speak?

-How are you impacted when someone listens to you? When they don't?

-What practical steps will you take to be more deliberate about listening?

-How does listening to someone compare to listening to God? Or your boss or parent? Are you better at one or the other? Who gets your attention & when?

-What do you think of this statement: You're not taking Jesus to anybody. He's already at work in their life. And if you really listen to what the person has to say, you just might discover where Jesus is at work in their life. Then you can join Him and what He's already doing.

Prayer: Talk to God about your desire to listen to Him and to others. Like David, ask Him to listen to you. "Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer." Psalm 61:1