

VIII. DO YOU KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS?

Describe the six people who live nearest to you:

Name / Religion	Religious Conversation?	Shared Gospel?	Type of Relationship
John Smith: mildly Roman Catholic	Yes	No	A
1)			
2)			
3)			
4)			
5)			
6)			

N = Not Known; A = Acquaintance; F = Friend; C = Contentious

What would your *neighbors* say is the biggest problem facing your neighborhood?

Gospel Growth – Neighboring
Week 5

Limitations & Boundaries

I. INTRODUCTION

- What happens when you try to put our previous lessons into practice and your neighbors don't seem interested?

II. WHAT IF MY NEIGHBORS DON'T WANT TO BE FRIENDS?

It may be because...

- They're too busy
- They're wary of you
- They're relationally full
- They're at a different stage of life
- They're afraid what you'll discover

What do you do if your neighbors don't want to be friends?

1. Fight against people-pleasing
2. Pray
3. Seek counsel
4. Stay
5. Obey as opportunities arise

III. WHAT IF OUR FRIENDSHIP ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE?

Most of the time, your friendship with most of your neighbors will likely be at the level of polite acquaintance. That's OK. Just make sure that, when possible, it's clear that if they want more of a friendship, you're game

IV. WHAT IF THEY DON'T LIKE ME?

1. "Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all." (Rom. 12:17)
2. "You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers." (1 Thess. 2:10)

V. WHAT IF THEY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ME?

- Why boundaries can be healthy
 - Love, not self-preservation
- What healthy boundaries look like
 - Finding the lines of responsibility
 - Am I infringing on their responsibilities?

VI. CONCLUSION: HOPING & RESTING IN GOD

God is the one working in us and through us. He is the one at work in our neighbors. Our goal is to do everything we can to pave the way for them to understand the love of God for them. By reflecting Christ's love for us, we learn how to love our neighbors as Christ loves us.

Let us take heart, let us be "steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord our labor is not in vain." - 1 Corinthians 15:58

VII. Review Questions

1. What's something you have taken away from this class?
2. What have been the frustrations you have faced in loving your neighbors?
3. How has understanding the differences between continuity and discontinuity helped you find value in loving your neighbors?
4. Can you describe a conflict you had with a neighbor, and how you approached it differently as a believer?
5. How have you made it know to your neighbors that you are a Christian? How has that impacted your interactions?