

NEIGHBORLINESS

LOVE LIKE JESUS.

CROSS DIVIDING LINES.

TRANSFORM YOUR COMMUNITY.

DAVID DOCUSEN

FOREWORD BY MARK BATTERSON

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

Neighborliness

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CHAPTER ONE DISCUSSION

THE DAY I OPENED MY EYES

Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies.

HEBREWS 13:1-3

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. Why did you decide to read this book and participate in this conversation?
2. What stood out to you after reading the introduction and chapter 1?
3. Can you relate to the idea of silence?
4. How do you respond when you witness injustice?
5. Do you have a person or group of people you feel comfortable engaging with in challenging conversations?

NEXT STEP

Start with prayer. Pray that God would help you to see His beauty across dividing lines.

CHAPTER TWO DISCUSSION

THE OTHER HALF OF THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

“And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.” The second is equally important: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” No other commandment is greater than these.

MARK 12:30–31

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 2?
2. Define *neighbor* in your own words.
3. Define *neighborliness* in your own words.
4. Do your friendships reflect the diversity in your city? Why or why not?
5. What are some practical ways to love your neighbor?

NEXT STEP

Continue to learn. Choose one of the recommended resources to read or watch in the next week.

CHAPTER THREE DISCUSSION

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

MATTHEW 7:12

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 3?
2. We explored the stories of Andrea, Jasmine, Jamila, Eric, and Grandma Sadie. Which of these people do you relate to the most?
3. What comes to mind when you hear the word *gentrification*?
4. Describe *helping networks* in your own words.
5. How can your faith work for everyone around you?

NEXT STEP

Listen to the song “Gentrify” by an artist named Propaganda to get an overview of gentrification. Look up the lyrics and follow along.

CHAPTER FOUR DISCUSSION

A LOOK INWARD

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

PSALM 139:23–24

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 4?
2. Describe *inattentional blindness* in your own words.
3. Describe *implicit bias* in your own words.
4. What is the difference between *not racist* and *antiracist*?
5. Discuss Dr. Brian Blount's idea that we must identify cultural boundaries in need of kingdom trespass.

NEXT STEP

Pray the same way David did in Psalm 139:23–24. After asking God to search your heart, write down the areas you sense the Holy Spirit is challenging you to address from this reading.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

RECONSIDERING RECONCILIATION AND INCLUSION

After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb.

REVELATION 7:9

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 5?
2. Throughout history, how has the church been complicit in racism and inequality?
3. Throughout history, how has the church been courageous in addressing racism and inequality?
4. Discuss the difference between *racial reconciliation* and *racial conciliation*.
5. Do you believe that racial representation is the same as unity? Why or why not?

NEXT STEP

Watch Mark Charles's TED Talk, "The Truth Behind 'We the People'—the Three Most Misunderstood Words in US History."⁹

CHAPTER SIX DISCUSSION

FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT

Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power.

PSALM 145:4

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 6?
2. Desmond Tutu said that if you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. Explain why you agree or disagree.
3. The rich and the poor are neighbors in cities. Does proximity naturally lead to relationships?
4. What are ways you can creatively cultivate opportunities to learn about racial and economic inequality?
5. Would you be willing to sit with a friend at Woolworth's lunch counter?

NEXT STEP

Watch Dr. Lucretia Berry's TED Talk, "Children Will Light Up the World if We Don't Keep Them in the Dark."²⁴

CHAPTER SEVEN DISCUSSION

LEARNING TO LAMENT

I am sick at heart. How long, O LORD, until you restore me? Return, O LORD, and rescue me. Save me because of your unfailing love.

PSALM 6:3-4

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 7?
2. How many songs can you think of that express God-honoring lament?
3. Describe and discuss the meaning of healthy lament.
4. Jemar Tisby said that racism in America has *adapted* since the abolishment of slavery. Do you agree or disagree? Explain why or why not.
5. Have you ever corporately or personally grieved the loss of somebody you didn't know?

NEXT STEP

Watch Ava DuVernay's documentary *13TH*.

CHAPTER EIGHT DISCUSSION

WE BELONG TO ONE ANOTHER

God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:6-7

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 8?
2. How can language like *those people* and *them* create unhealthy distance between neighbors?
3. How do events like natural disasters and global pandemics highlight underlying issues of inequality in our society?
4. How can you embody the love of Christ to your neighbors?
5. How would your city be different if everyone truly belonged to one another?

NEXT STEP

Have a conversation with a friend outside of this study group about one thing you are learning.

CHAPTER NINE DISCUSSION

TOXIC CHARITY

There is joy for those who deal justly with others and always do what is right.

PSALM 106:3

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 9?
2. Describe *toxic charity* in your own words.
3. Discuss the different perspectives of Roman, Todd, David, Lisa, and Michael.
4. How can a posture of humility and curiosity lead to healthy expressions of volunteerism?
5. How can outreach programs become more meaningful if relationships are built between donors, volunteers, and the recipients of needed resources?

NEXT STEP

Make a list of three nonprofit organizations in your city that align with your interests and passions. Familiarize yourself with their work in the community. Pray about your potential involvement.

CHAPTER TEN DISCUSSION

EVERYONE PARTICIPATES

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

EPHESIANS 4:11–12

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 10?
2. Describe *social capital* in your own words.
3. Discuss how education can equal action.
4. Is God biased toward the rich or the poor? Discuss why or why not.
5. What is your first response when you come into close proximity with someone in need?

NEXT STEP

Prayerfully narrow the list of three nonprofit organizations down to one that you can engage in relationship and service. Continue to pray that the Holy Spirit would lead you to discern when and how to best support their mission.

CHAPTER ELEVEN DISCUSSION

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

MATTHEW 6:9–10

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 11?
2. Describe and discuss *asset-based community development*, *collective impact*, and *place-based initiatives*.
3. How can your church participate in a *collective impact strategy* with other churches and organizations in your community?
4. If you created an asset map of your community, what would be included?
5. Describe your version of the City Beautiful.

NEXT STEP

Slowly read and reflect on 2 Chronicles 7:14. Write a prayer and declare it over your city.

CHAPTER TWELVE DISCUSSION

REBUILD AND RESTORE

No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people.

ISAIAH 58:6

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 12?
2. How was the corporate fast displeasing to God in Isaiah 58?
3. Why did the rich young ruler experience sadness?
4. How has the influence of the spirit of mammon led to decisions in your life? How does the Sabbath directly oppose the spirit of mammon?
5. Isaiah 58:12 describes a unique calling to those who are anointed to bring about citywide reform. If this resonates in your spirit, discuss this with your group.

NEXT STEP

Practice Sabbath rest. For more information on the Sabbath, Abraham Joshua Heschel's book *The Sabbath* is the powerful story of a family that centered their week around the rhythm of work and rest.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN DISCUSSION

ALREADY AND NOT YET

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

REVELATION 21:4

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 13?
2. How do you see the *already* being expressed in your community?
3. How do you see the *not yet* being expressed in your community?
4. If neighborliness is expressed one person at a time, where can you begin?
5. Describe one of the most challenging and encouraging things you will take away from reading *Neighborliness: Love like Jesus. Cross Dividing Lines. Transform Your Community.*

NEXT STEP

Choose to engage. Refuse to ignore.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN DISCUSSION

HANDS OPEN, PALMS TO THE SKY

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

1. What stood out to you after reading chapter 14?
2. What do you have in your hands that may not be from the Lord?
3. What have you given up in the past that led to something better coming to pass?
4. Describe the difference between social justice and biblical justice.
5. How would you describe the spirit of neighborliness after reading this book?

NEXT STEP

Memorize the Lord's Prayer and pray it every day for one week straight.

■ NEIGHBORLINESS IN YOUR CHURCH

You can visit www.neighborliness.com to see how my friends at Radiant Printing and I have designed materials for further discussion. Resources include:

- A discussion guide for book clubs, churches, businesses, and organizations.
- A churchwide campaign that includes a sermon series with sermon notes (manuscript), sermon videos, and promotional graphics and videos.
- A community prayer guide.
- A citywide campaign for churches to explore *Neighborliness* at the same time as other congregations.
- A Holistic Community Development Framework for engaging your community.
- A six-month Neighborliness Corporate Action Plan to take a leadership team through a structured season of learning and growing.
- An outline of the Neighborliness Seminar. This is a one-day seminar that explores the basic concepts of and introduces your community to pursuing the spirit of neighborliness.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Recommended Reading

I recommend any of the books mentioned in *Neighborliness*. However, some are easier to engage in than others if you are at or near the beginning of your journey. The books listed below are recommended to inspire readers who want to go from reading *Neighborliness* to a practical next step.

- *The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby
- *The Deeply Formed Life: Five Transformative Values to Root Us in the Way of Jesus* by Rich Villodas
- *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice* by Jemar Tisby
- *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood* by Peter Moskowitz
- *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* by Austin Channing Brown

- *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson
- *One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love* by John M. Perkins
- *Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope* by Esau McCaulley
- *Rethinking Incarceration: Advocating for Justice That Restores* by Dominique DuBois Gilliard
- *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: Moving from Affluence to Generosity* by Ronald J. Sider
- *Soul Care in African American Practice* by Barbara L. Peacock
- *Trouble I've Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism* by Dr. Drew G. I. Hart
- *Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery* by Mark Charles and Soong-Chan Rah
- *The Very Good Gospel: How Everything Wrong Can Be Made Right* by Lisa Sharon Harper
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert

Recommended Listening

- *Code Switch* by NPR
- *Footnotes with Jemar Tisby* podcast
- *The Red Couch Podcast*

- *Inverse Podcast* by Dr. Drew Hart and Jarrod McKenna
- *Revisionist History* by Malcolm Gladwell, season 1, episodes 4–6

Recommended Seminar

- *Dignity Serves*, The Polis Institute

Dignity Serves is a paradigm-shifting, deeply impactful experience that teaches how to both serve and be served with dignity in every aspect of life. Since 2008, it has helped thousands of people serve others more effectively, using interactive exercises and real-world examples to help participants apply key principles to their personal lives and to the programs they take part in.

The principles of the course are derived from Scripture and built on the foundation that every person is created in the image of God. Every person possesses dignity. The course is made available through host organizations and is taught by Polis-trained facilitators. For more information, visit <https://growopportunity.org/>.

Recommended Online Resources

- *What Lies Between Us: Fostering First Steps Toward Racial Healing* by Dr. Lucretia Carter Berry

Dr. Berry has cultivated an online membership

platform that provides education, encouragement, and community. Through three simple stages, participants in the Brownicity community are guided through a process from fundamental understanding to practicing transformative change in their spheres of influence.

Additionally, Brownicity offers a small group study called *What Lies Between Us*, an in-depth study that takes participants through an enlightening and introspective journey toward recovering from the lies of race to progress toward racial healing. Online training for parents is available in their series *Raising Antiracist Kids*.

Dr. Berry speaks on these topics and is actively involved in training leaders across the United States. www.brownicity.com

- *The Color of Compromise* MasterLecture Series by Jemar Tisby

This study provides an in-depth diagnosis for a racially divided American church and suggests ways to foster a more equitable and inclusive environment among God's people.

Tisby earned a PhD in history from the University of Mississippi, focusing on race, religion, and social movements in the twentieth century. He is also cohost of the *Pass the Mic* podcast. He speaks at conferences nationwide and has written for the *New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and CNN. <https://masterlectures.zondervanacademic.com/the-color-of-compromise-jemar-tisby>

- *Rethinking Incarceration: Advocating for Justice That Restores* by Dominique DuBois Gilliard

This study argues that God's justice is relational and

inherently restorative. Examining the secular and church history through which we have ultimately arrived at having more people incarcerated than any country in the history of the world, Gilliard illustrates how Christians have been complicit in constructing a justice system that is anything but just. Ultimately, Gilliard points to practical steps forward to advocate for our neighbors. <https://walkingtowardslove.com/series/rethinking-incarceration/>

- *Arrabon*

Arrabon—which means “a foretaste of what is to come”—equips Christian leaders and their communities for the work of reconciliation. Their digital study series, worship resources, and Transformational Journey training modules are designed to help you cultivate a reconciling community that brings healing and wholeness to our broken and divided world. www.arrabon.com