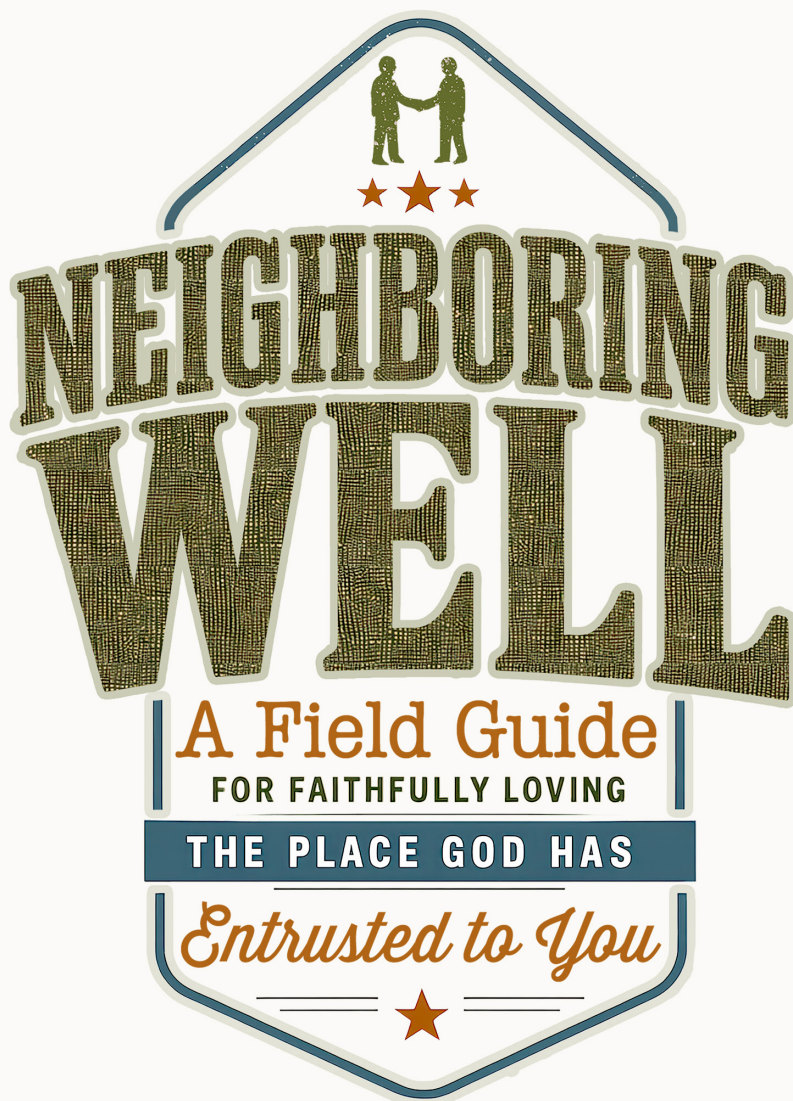




KEN JANKE

Neighboring Well
A Field Guide for Faithfully Loving
the Place God Has Entrusted to You

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For information regarding bulk purchases, speaking engagements,
or special editions, please contact:

Ken Janke
kennethjanke@gmail.com
KenJanke.com

Dedication

For my wife, Lori,
who has been with me through every season,
and for our four beautiful children,
who went with me into neighborhoods, cities, friendships,
shared tables, unexpected conversations,
and the beautiful, sometimes messy work
of learning what it means to love a place.

You did not simply hear me talk about neighboring.
You lived it with me.

So much of what fills these pages
was first learned in the life we shared together.

**And to those who still believe love is
the most powerful way to change the world.**

To those who choose presence over performance,
hospitality over hurry,
curiosity over assumption,
and faithfulness over recognition.

May you discover that as you seek to love
the place God has entrusted to you,
He is quietly using that place to transform you.

And may every ordinary act of neighboring
become a small glimpse of His coming Kingdom.

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WELCOME

I'm grateful you've chosen to spend some time with this field guide. Perhaps you long to know your neighbors better. Perhaps you care deeply about your city and want to live more faithfully within it. Or perhaps you simply have a quiet sense that there must be more to following Jesus than moving from one busy week to the next.

Whatever brought you here, I hope these pages help you slow down long enough to notice what has been waiting for you all along.

I believe that God often does His deepest work in places we are tempted to overlook. We naturally look for Him in the extraordinary moments of life, yet He so often meets us in ordinary conversations, around ordinary tables, on ordinary sidewalks, and among ordinary neighbors. It is easy to hurry past those moments without realizing they are quietly shaping us.

This field guide was born from my conviction that, while I thought I was loving my neighborhood, God was patiently using my neighborhood to transform me.

A field guide is not something to rush through. It is something to return to. It accompanies us as we learn to recognize what we could not see before. Over time, its pages become familiar because they have traveled with us. They remind us to look one more time, to ask another question, and to notice what we might have missed the first time.

My hope is that this guide becomes that kind of companion. Read it thoughtfully. Set it aside from time to time and simply pay attention to the place where God has planted you.

As you move through this field guide, you will be invited into eight movements of formation. You will begin by learning to see the story of your neighborhood within God's larger story. From there, you will learn to notice the treasures already present around you and recognize the people through whom God may already be at work.

You will be invited to honor the stories of others with holy curiosity, to join the work God has already begun, and to faithfully steward the particular place, gifts, relationships, and vocation He has entrusted to you. Along the way, you will learn to live with Kingdom hope and, finally, to gather these practices into a Rule of Life that can sustain a lifetime of faithful neighboring.

As you move through its pages, allow yourself to linger over the questions, try the practices, write in the margins, and return to them again. I suspect that what you notice six months from now will not be the same as what you notice today, because both you and your neighborhood will continue to change.

If this field guide accomplishes anything, I hope it helps you see your neighborhood with fresh eyes, and I hope it helps you discover that every ordinary act of neighborly can become an opportunity to meet Christ, love others well, and be quietly formed into His likeness.

Thank you for letting this guide become part of your journey.



INTRODUCTION

Becoming a Neighbor

There was a time when I assumed neighboring happened naturally. I believed that if people lived beside one another long enough, friendships would simply emerge. People would share a wave while collecting the mail, engage in a conversation while mowing the lawn, or flash a smile across the driveway, and that seemed like enough. Yet, like many people, I found myself surrounded by neighbors whose names I did not know and whose stories I had not heard.

When my family moved to the Fair Haven neighborhood of New Haven, Connecticut, I sensed that God was inviting me into a different way of living. I had moved there believing that the reason for the move was to plant a church. What I did not yet understand was that God intended to use that neighborhood to reshape me.

The beginning of that lesson happened on a particular Saturday morning. My son and I decided to invite our neighbors to breakfast. Nothing elaborate, just pancakes, eggs, and coffee in the front yard of our home. We designed simple invitations and walked our streets together, placing one in each mailbox. We invited anyone who wished to join us to share breakfast the following Saturday morning. Then we waited.

To be honest, I had no idea whether or not anyone would come. Just in case they did, I borrowed a large grill from my next-door neighbor. The evening before, we gathered everything we thought we might need and quietly hoped both that it would be enough or that it wouldn't go to waste.

The next morning, we set out coffee and mixed the pancake batter. Standing beside that borrowed grill, I looked up and saw a family walking toward our house. Before long, neighbors were filling the yard. Some stood talking on the sidewalk while others gathered in small circles in the street. Children found one another almost immediately and were soon playing together as though they had known each other for years.

I kept cooking pancakes and eggs on the grill as fast as I could. Eventually, we ran out of eggs. Before I could decide what to do, one of our neighbors smiled and said, "I'll be right back." A few minutes later they returned carrying more eggs. Someone else appeared with milk. Another neighbor came back from home with additional food to share.

Without anyone planning it, the breakfast quietly stopped being ours and became the neighborhood's. For several hours, we simply stayed together. People lingered in conversations that had probably been waiting to happen for years. Names were learned. Stories were exchanged. Neighbors who had lived only a few houses apart discovered one another for the very first time.

As I watched those conversations unfold, I realized that community rarely begins with extraordinary events. More often, it begins when someone is willing to create space for ordinary people to become neighbors.

That breakfast did not solve every challenge our neighborhood faced. The realities of poverty, broken relationships, and injustice were still present when everyone returned home. Yet something genuine had happened among us that morning. For a few beautiful hours, the invisible walls that so often separate neighbors had given way to hospitality, generosity, and shared life. Our street felt warmer. Safer. More connected. There was a sense that we had caught a glimpse of the kind of community God intends for His people.

Years later, I have come to believe that morning was about much more than breakfast. I realize that I wasn't simply inviting my neighbors into my front yard. What God was really teaching me was how to become a neighbor. That morning became one of many quiet moments that transformed my understanding of what it looks like to neighbor well.

As you seek to love your neighborhood, God is quietly using your neighborhood to transform you. That is the invitation of this field guide. Together, we will learn to see our neighborhoods through the eyes of God. We will discover where He is already at work, and we will faithfully participate in the work He has already begun. And we will live today in light of the city that is coming.

My hope is not simply that you will become a better neighbor. My hope is that, as you faithfully love the place God has entrusted to you, you will discover that Christ is gently forming you into the kind of disciple who makes His Kingdom visible one conversation, one shared meal, and one faithful act of love at a time.

Welcome to the journey.



EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD Has a Story

Seeing Your Neighborhood Within God's Larger Story

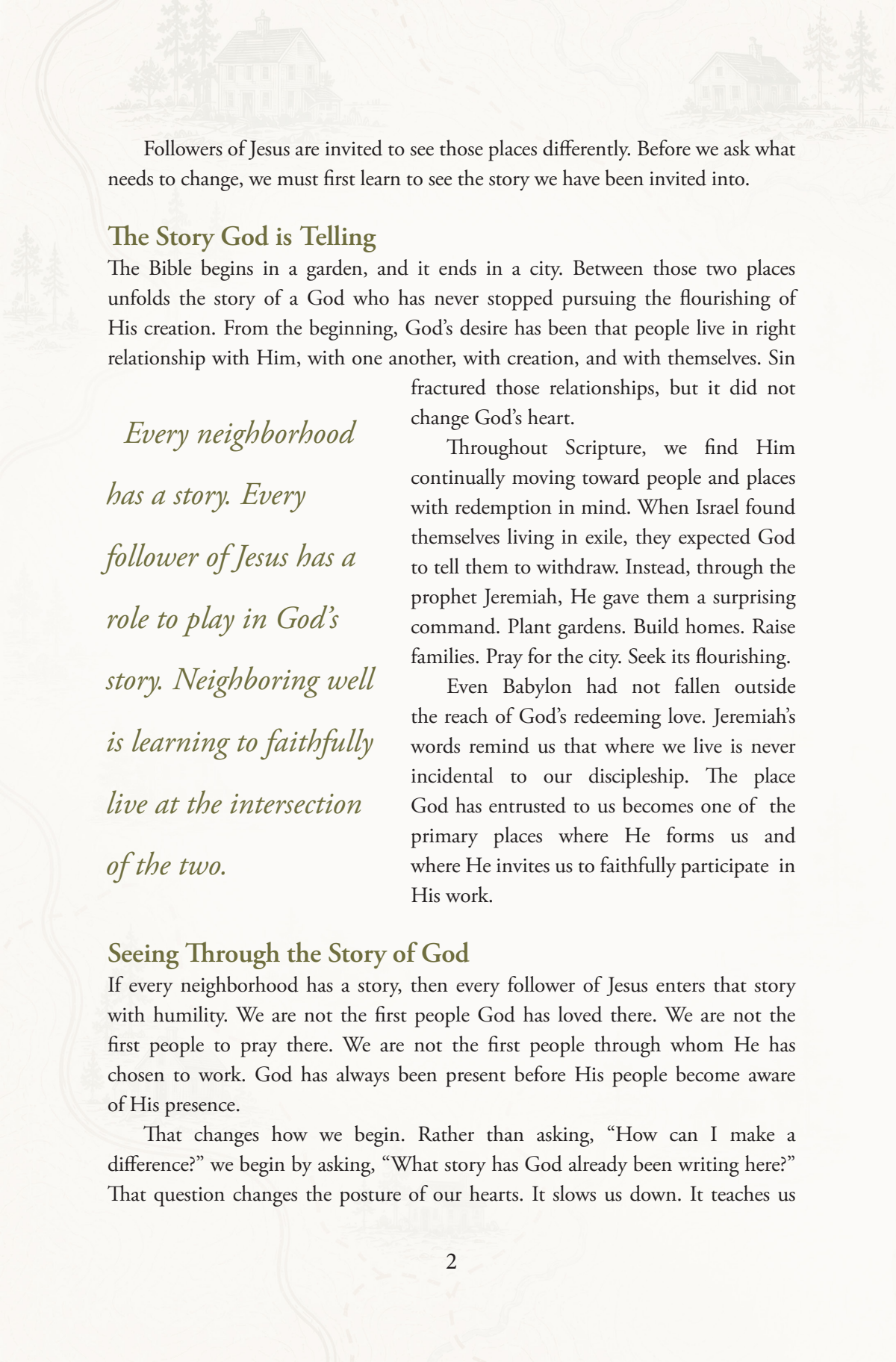
“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you...
for in its welfare you will find your welfare”
(Jeremiah 29:7 ESV).

Why This Matters

We rarely see a neighborhood for what it truly is. Most of us experience our streets through routines. We leave for work, return home, wave to a passing neighbor, pull into the garage, and begin again the next day. Over time, familiar places become almost invisible. Yet every neighborhood is far more than a collection of houses and streets.

Neighborhoods are living stories. They hold generations of memories, quiet acts of kindness, seasons of celebration and seasons of grief. They carry dreams that have flourished and dreams that have quietly faded. Every home, every park, every school, every small business, and every familiar corner has become part of a story that was already unfolding long before we arrived.

I live in the Meadows neighborhood in Castle Rock, Colorado, a neighborhood intentionally designed to foster community. Its parks, trails, front porches, and gathering spaces invite people to slow down, meet one another, and share life together. But I have discovered that thoughtful design alone cannot create genuine neighboring. It creates opportunity, but it still takes intentional presence.



Followers of Jesus are invited to see those places differently. Before we ask what needs to change, we must first learn to see the story we have been invited into.

The Story God is Telling

The Bible begins in a garden, and it ends in a city. Between those two places unfolds the story of a God who has never stopped pursuing the flourishing of His creation. From the beginning, God's desire has been that people live in right relationship with Him, with one another, with creation, and with themselves. Sin

fractured those relationships, but it did not change God's heart.

*Every neighborhood
has a story. Every
follower of Jesus has a
role to play in God's
story. Neighboring well
is learning to faithfully
live at the intersection
of the two.*

Throughout Scripture, we find Him continually moving toward people and places with redemption in mind. When Israel found themselves living in exile, they expected God to tell them to withdraw. Instead, through the prophet Jeremiah, He gave them a surprising command. Plant gardens. Build homes. Raise families. Pray for the city. Seek its flourishing.

Even Babylon had not fallen outside the reach of God's redeeming love. Jeremiah's words remind us that where we live is never incidental to our discipleship. The place God has entrusted to us becomes one of the primary places where He forms us and where He invites us to faithfully participate in His work.

Seeing Through the Story of God

If every neighborhood has a story, then every follower of Jesus enters that story with humility. We are not the first people God has loved there. We are not the first people to pray there. We are not the first people through whom He has chosen to work. God has always been present before His people become aware of His presence.

That changes how we begin. Rather than asking, "How can I make a difference?" we begin by asking, "What story has God already been writing here?" That question changes the posture of our hearts. It slows us down. It teaches us

to observe before we evaluate, to listen before we speak, and to learn before we lead. It reminds us that neighboring begins not with activity but with attention.

Seeking the Flourishing of the Place

Scripture describes a vision of life that is richer than success and deeper than happiness. The Bible calls it peace. Wholeness. Shalom.

Today we often use the word **flourishing**. Researchers have begun exploring flourishing through measures such as health, meaningful relationships, purpose, character, and life satisfaction. Those insights are valuable because they remind us that human beings were created for more than survival.

Yet Scripture stretches the vision even further. Biblical flourishing is life as God intended it to be. It is people, relationships, neighborhoods, institutions, and creation increasingly reflecting His goodness and His Kingdom.

Whenever reconciliation replaces hostility...

Whenever children are nurtured...

Whenever neighbors become friends...

Whenever generosity overcomes isolation...

Whenever hope quietly takes root...

We catch a glimpse of the Kingdom of God.

Flourishing is not something we manufacture. It is something in which we faithfully participate.



Field Notes

Flourishing is more than well-being. It is life lived in right relationship with God, neighbor, self, and creation.

Reflect

As you consider the place where you live, take a few moments to reflect.

- What story has shaped your neighborhood?

- 
- Where do you already see signs of beauty, hope, or resilience?

- What first drew you to this place?

- How might God be inviting you to see your neighborhood differently?

Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will remember that my neighborhood is part of God's story, and I will seek its flourishing.

Practice This Week

As you finish this chapter, resist the temptation to hurry ahead. Instead, spend time simply becoming more attentive to the place in which you live. Walk a familiar street without an agenda. Notice what you've overlooked. Pay attention to

the people, the rhythms, the gathering places, and the quiet signs of life that have always been there.

When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 1: Neighborhood Prayer Walk** in the **Field Kit**. Let it guide your first intentional practice of seeing your neighborhood through the eyes of God.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the place You have entrusted to me. Open my eyes to see my neighborhood as You see it. Teach me to recognize its beauty, its burdens, its stories, and its possibilities. Form in me the heart of a faithful neighbor who seeks not merely to live here, but to love here. May I remember that before I ever arrived, You were already present, already at work, and already inviting people into Your redeeming story. Help me faithfully join what You are doing. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

Every neighborhood has a story. This week, simply begin by learning to read the story of your neighborhood.





LEARNING TO NOTICE

Seeing the Gifts God Has Already Planted In Your Neighborhood

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field.
When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went
and sold all he had and bought that field"
(Matthew 13:44 NIV).

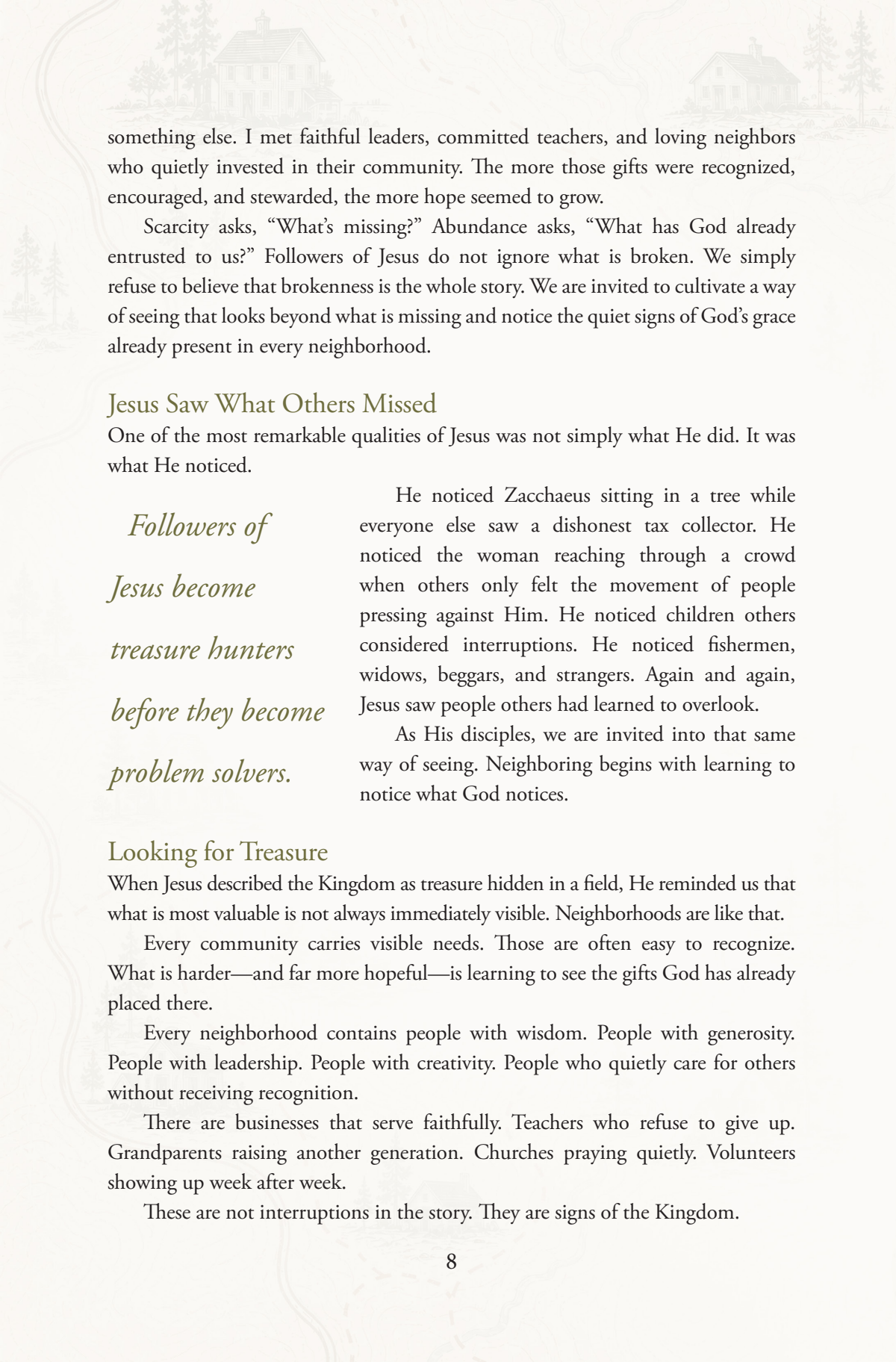
Why This Matters

We rarely notice what we have not first learned to value.

Two people can walk down the same street and see completely different neighborhoods. One notices abandoned buildings, overgrown lots, and everything that appears to be broken. The other notices children playing, neighbors talking on front porches, a teacher who knows every student's name, a faithful pastor quietly serving for decades, or a small business owner who greets every customer like an old friend.

Both are seeing the same place. But they are not seeing with the same eyes. The difference is not eyesight. It is attention.

Years ago, while living in the Fair Haven neighborhood of New Haven, Connecticut, I was struck by how easy it was to see only what was missing. The neighborhood carried the visible weight of poverty, under-resourced schools, and generations of struggle. But as I slowed down and listened, I began to notice



something else. I met faithful leaders, committed teachers, and loving neighbors who quietly invested in their community. The more those gifts were recognized, encouraged, and stewarded, the more hope seemed to grow.

Scarcity asks, “What’s missing?” Abundance asks, “What has God already entrusted to us?” Followers of Jesus do not ignore what is broken. We simply refuse to believe that brokenness is the whole story. We are invited to cultivate a way of seeing that looks beyond what is missing and notice the quiet signs of God’s grace already present in every neighborhood.

Jesus Saw What Others Missed

One of the most remarkable qualities of Jesus was not simply what He did. It was what He noticed.

*Followers of
Jesus become
treasure hunters
before they become
problem solvers.*

He noticed Zacchaeus sitting in a tree while everyone else saw a dishonest tax collector. He noticed the woman reaching through a crowd when others only felt the movement of people pressing against Him. He noticed children others considered interruptions. He noticed fishermen, widows, beggars, and strangers. Again and again, Jesus saw people others had learned to overlook.

As His disciples, we are invited into that same way of seeing. Neighboring begins with learning to notice what God notices.

Looking for Treasure

When Jesus described the Kingdom as treasure hidden in a field, He reminded us that what is most valuable is not always immediately visible. Neighborhoods are like that.

Every community carries visible needs. Those are often easy to recognize. What is harder—and far more hopeful—is learning to see the gifts God has already placed there.

Every neighborhood contains people with wisdom. People with generosity. People with leadership. People with creativity. People who quietly care for others without receiving recognition.

There are businesses that serve faithfully. Teachers who refuse to give up. Grandparents raising another generation. Churches praying quietly. Volunteers showing up week after week.

These are not interruptions in the story. They are signs of the Kingdom.



Learning With a New Lens

Years ago, I was introduced to the work of Asset-Based Community Development. Rather than beginning with a community's deficiencies, its practitioners encourage people to begin by discovering its assets—its people, relationships, institutions, skills, and capacities. That simple shift resonated deeply with me because it echoed something I had already begun to see in the gospels.

Jesus rarely began with what was broken. He began with people. He recognized dignity before deficiency. Possibility before problems. Invitation before instruction.

This does not mean we ignore suffering or pretend brokenness does not exist. Followers of Jesus do not close their eyes to pain. We simply refuse to let pain become the only story we tell. Hope grows wherever we learn to recognize the gifts God has already planted.

Field Notes

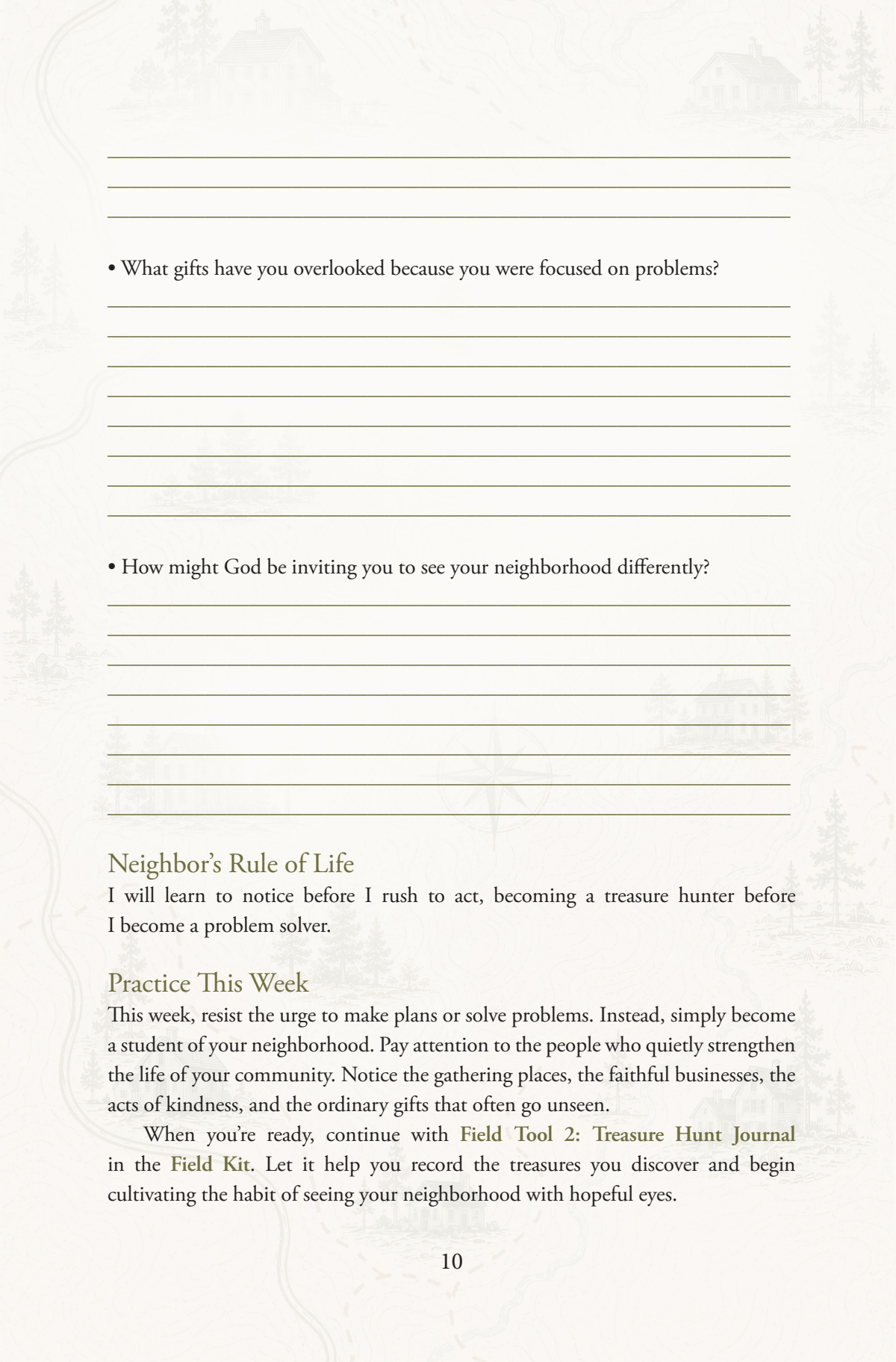
The practice of noticing changes us before it changes our neighborhood. The more we learn to recognize God's gifts in others, the more hopeful our own hearts become.

Reflect

As you think about your neighborhood, consider these questions:

- Who are the quiet servants in this place?

- Where do you already see beauty, generosity, or resilience?

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- What gifts have you overlooked because you were focused on problems?
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- How might God be inviting you to see your neighborhood differently?
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Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will learn to notice before I rush to act, becoming a treasure hunter before I become a problem solver.

Practice This Week

This week, resist the urge to make plans or solve problems. Instead, simply become a student of your neighborhood. Pay attention to the people who quietly strengthen the life of your community. Notice the gathering places, the faithful businesses, the acts of kindness, and the ordinary gifts that often go unseen.

When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 2: Treasure Hunt Journal** in the **Field Kit**. Let it help you record the treasures you discover and begin cultivating the habit of seeing your neighborhood with hopeful eyes.

Prayer

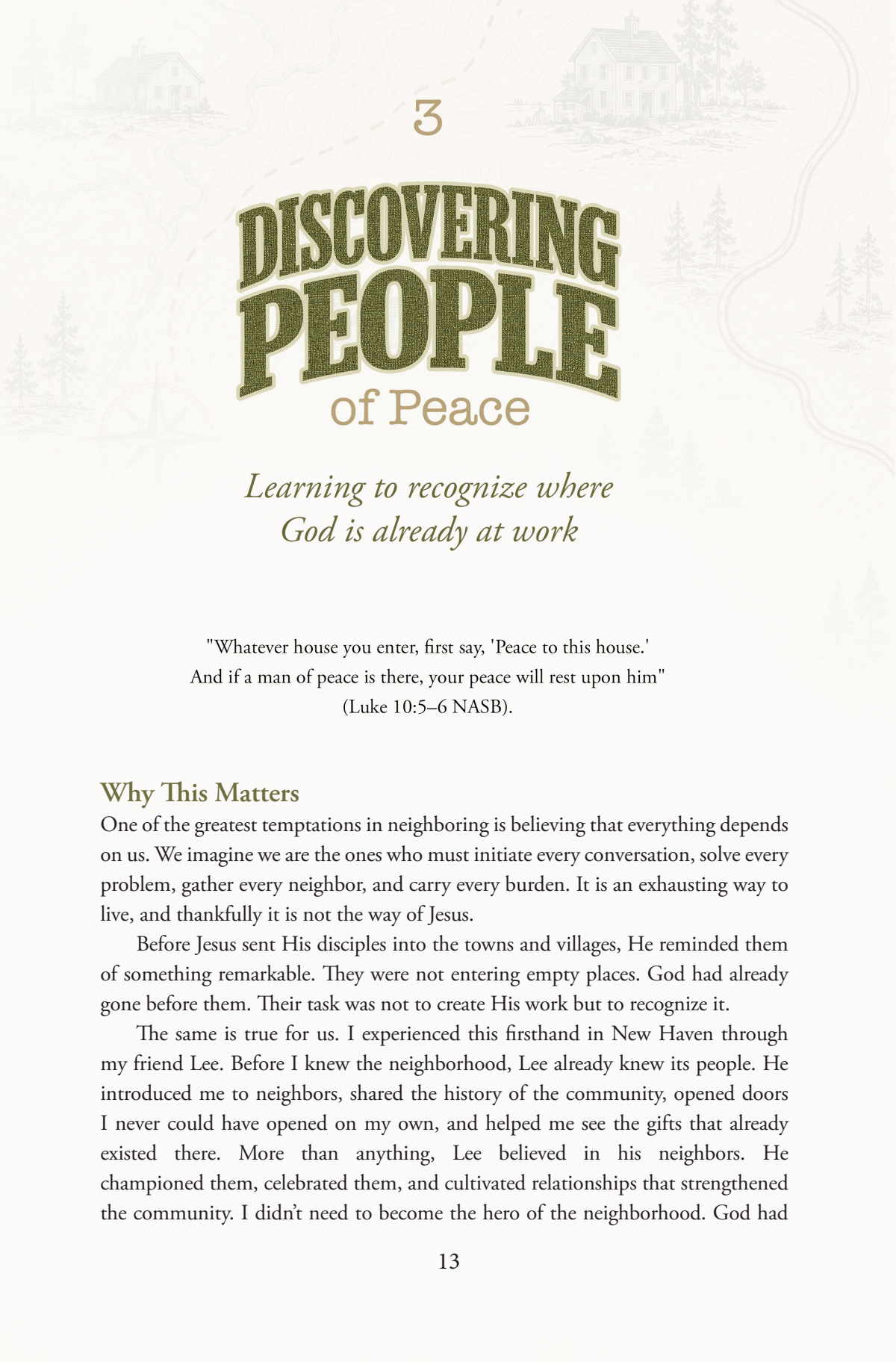
Father, thank You for opening my eyes to see more than I have seen before. Teach me to notice people the way Jesus noticed people. Keep me from becoming so focused on what is broken that I miss the quiet evidence of Your grace already present around me. Give me the humility to learn, the patience to observe, and the hope to believe that You have already planted gifts within this community. May I become the kind of neighbor who recognizes treasure where others see only problems. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

Look for one hidden treasure today. Then thank God for what He has already planted in your neighborhood.







3

DISCOVERING PEOPLE of Peace

*Learning to recognize where
God is already at work*

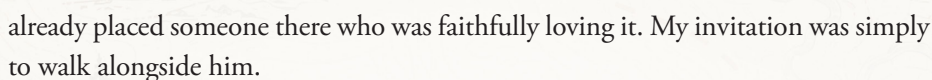
"Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.'
And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him"
(Luke 10:5–6 NASB).

Why This Matters

One of the greatest temptations in neighboring is believing that everything depends on us. We imagine we are the ones who must initiate every conversation, solve every problem, gather every neighbor, and carry every burden. It is an exhausting way to live, and thankfully it is not the way of Jesus.

Before Jesus sent His disciples into the towns and villages, He reminded them of something remarkable. They were not entering empty places. God had already gone before them. Their task was not to create His work but to recognize it.

The same is true for us. I experienced this firsthand in New Haven through my friend Lee. Before I knew the neighborhood, Lee already knew its people. He introduced me to neighbors, shared the history of the community, opened doors I never could have opened on my own, and helped me see the gifts that already existed there. More than anything, Lee believed in his neighbors. He championed them, celebrated them, and cultivated relationships that strengthened the community. I didn't need to become the hero of the neighborhood. God had



already placed someone there who was faithfully loving it. My invitation was simply to walk alongside him.

People of peace remind us that God is already at work before we arrive. They help us see what we could never discover on our own, and they invite us to join a story that is already unfolding.

Every neighborhood already contains people through whom God is quietly bringing life, hope, and peace. Our first responsibility is not to lead. It is to learn to recognize those people and faithfully walk alongside them.

The Mission Begins with Peace

When Jesus sent the seventy-two ahead of Him (see Luke 10) His instructions were surprisingly simple. Go. Offer peace. Stay where peace is received.

*People of Peace are
people God has been
preparing long before
we arrived.*

He never told His disciples to force their way into a community or convince everyone to listen. Instead, He taught them to pay attention to those who welcomed them, those whose hearts were already open, and those who were ready to participate in what God was doing.

For generations the Church has described these people as **People of Peace**. They are not necessarily the loudest voices or the most visible leaders. Often, they are ordinary people whose lives naturally gather others together. They are trusted. They care deeply about their community. They welcome relationships and quietly influence the people around them. Most importantly, they remind us that God is always at work before we arrive.

Presence Before Productivity

Recognizing a Person of Peace requires something our culture rarely rewards: presence. We cannot recognize people we don't take time to know. Presence is more than proximity. It is the willingness to remain. To linger. To listen. To receive another person's story without rushing toward an agenda.

Jesus lived this way. He walked slowly enough to be interrupted. He stayed for meals. He accepted invitations. He noticed people others hurried past. His ministry unfolded not through constant activity but through faithful presence.

For many years, I assumed that effectiveness meant doing more. My neighborhood began teaching me something different. Transformation often grows



at the speed of relationships. It is difficult to love people we never slow down long enough to know.

Joining What God Is Already Doing

One of the most freeing discoveries in my own journey was realizing that neighboring does not begin with asking, “What should I start?” It begins with asking, “Lord, who are You already preparing?”

That single question changes everything. Instead of feeling responsible for creating momentum, we begin paying attention to where momentum already exists. Instead of carrying every idea ourselves, we begin discovering people who are already serving, already caring, already praying, already gathering others, and already dreaming about the flourishing of the neighborhood.

People of Peace are not projects. They are partners. We do not recruit them. We recognize them. We learn from them. We encourage them. And when the opportunity comes, we faithfully join them in loving the place God has entrusted to all of us.

Field Notes

Presence is not a strategy. It is one of the ways that love becomes visible. People of Peace are not waiting to be discovered because they need us. They are gifts God has already placed within the neighborhood.

Reflect

As you think about your neighborhood, consider these questions:

- Who naturally brings people together?

- Whose presence creates trust?

- Who quietly serves others without seeking recognition?

- Where have you already experienced unexpected welcome?

- Who might God be inviting you to know more deeply?

Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will offer my faithful presence before I offer my ability, trusting that God has already prepared people through whom His peace is at work.

Practice This Week

Rather than introducing yourself to as many people as possible, choose one relationship to deepen. Spend time with someone you already know, even if only a little. Listen more than you speak. Ask thoughtful questions. Resist the urge to accomplish something. Simply practice being fully present.

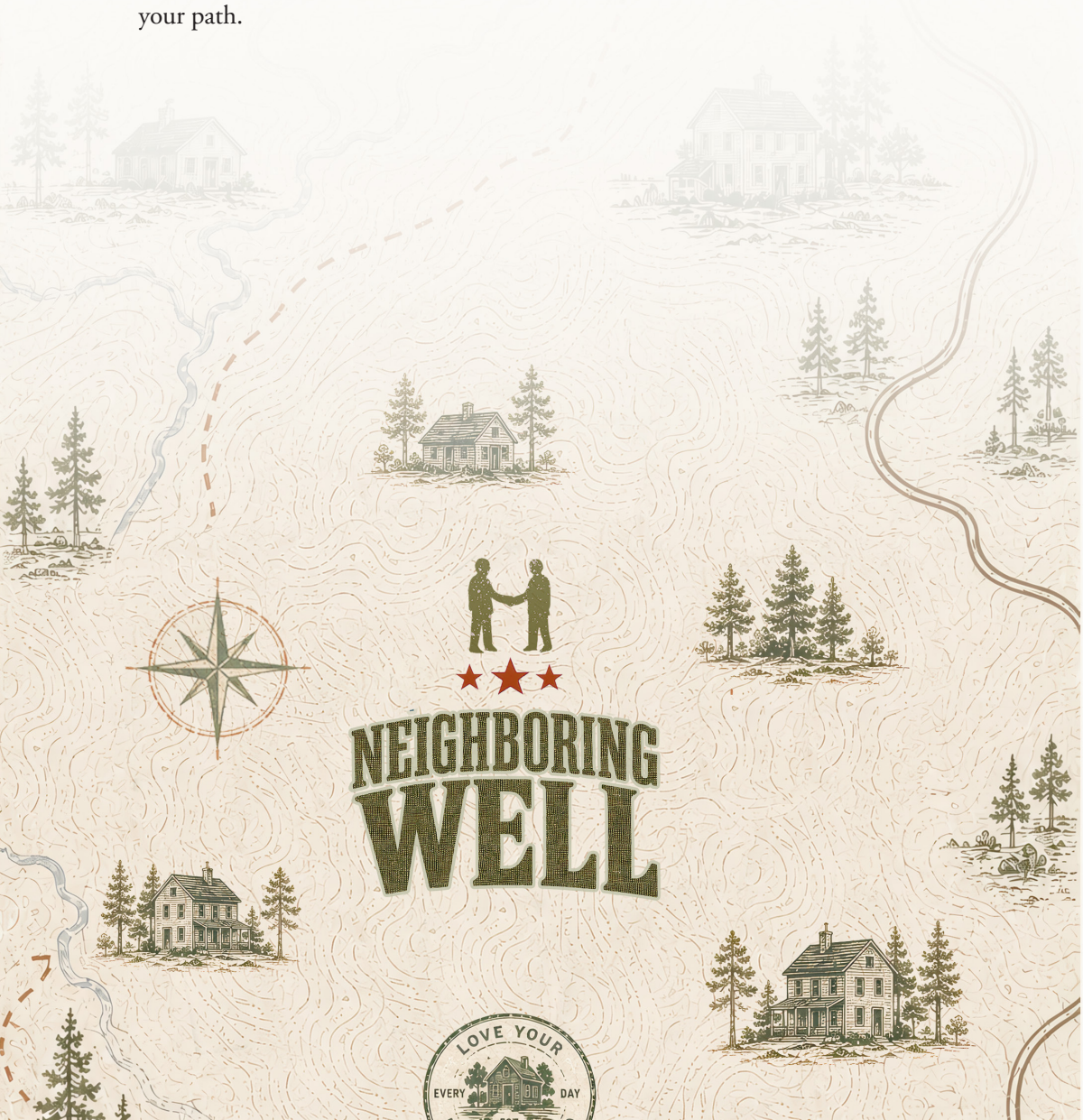
When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 3: People of Peace Discovery Map** in the Field Kit. Allow it to help you prayerfully recognize the relationships God may already be cultivating around you.

Prayer

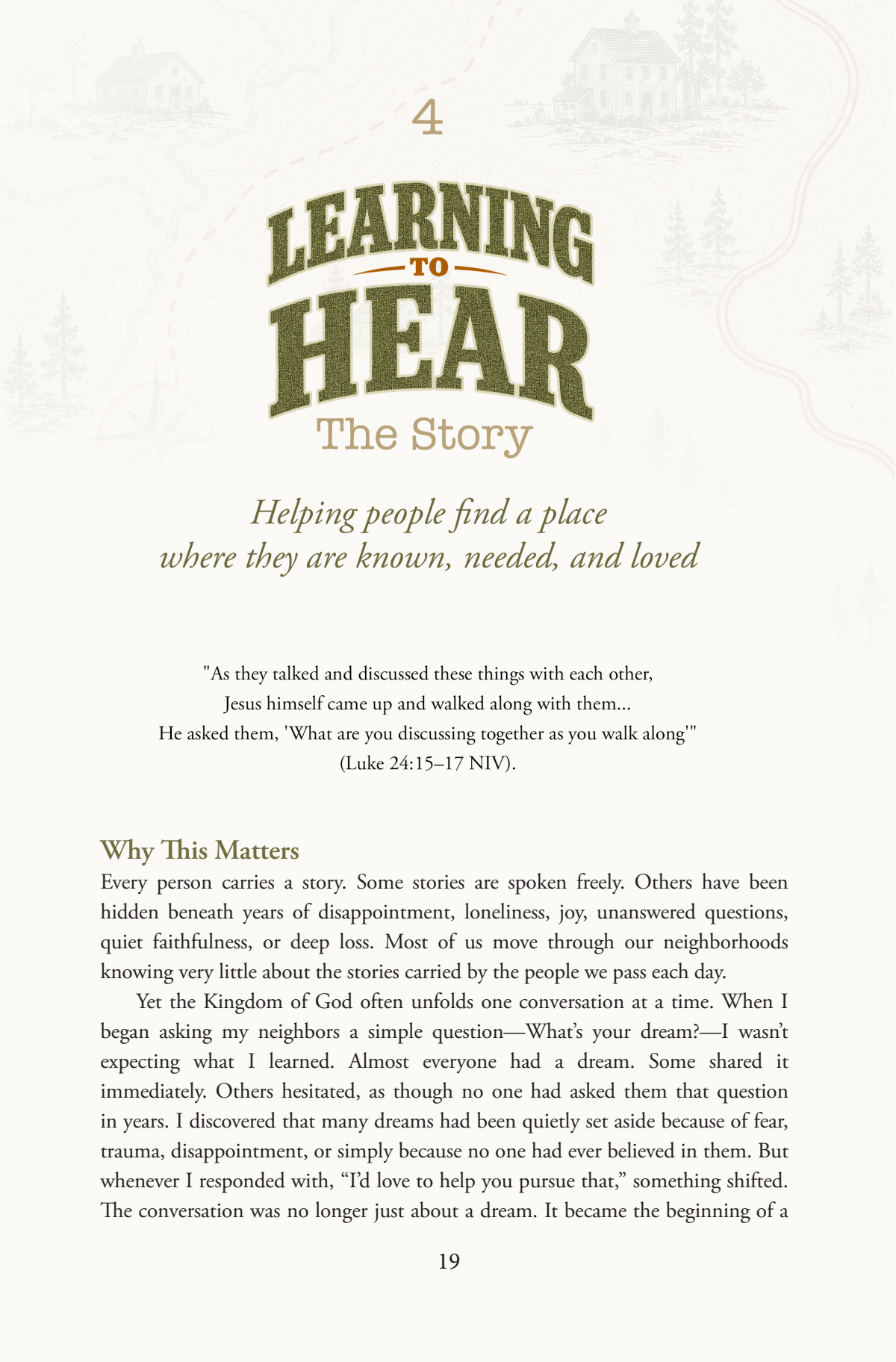
Father, thank You for always going before me. Keep me from believing that everything depends on my effort. Give me the humility to recognize the people You have already been preparing, and give me the patience to build relationships slowly. Teach me to be fully present, to listen with love, and to receive others as gifts rather than projects. May Your peace shape my presence, and may my presence quietly reflect Your peace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

Walk slowly enough to receive the people God has already placed along your path.





The background of the page is a light-colored map with topographical lines. A dashed line winds across the map. In the upper left and right corners, there are faint illustrations of houses. A compass rose is visible in the lower left area.

4

LEARNING —TO— HEAR The Story

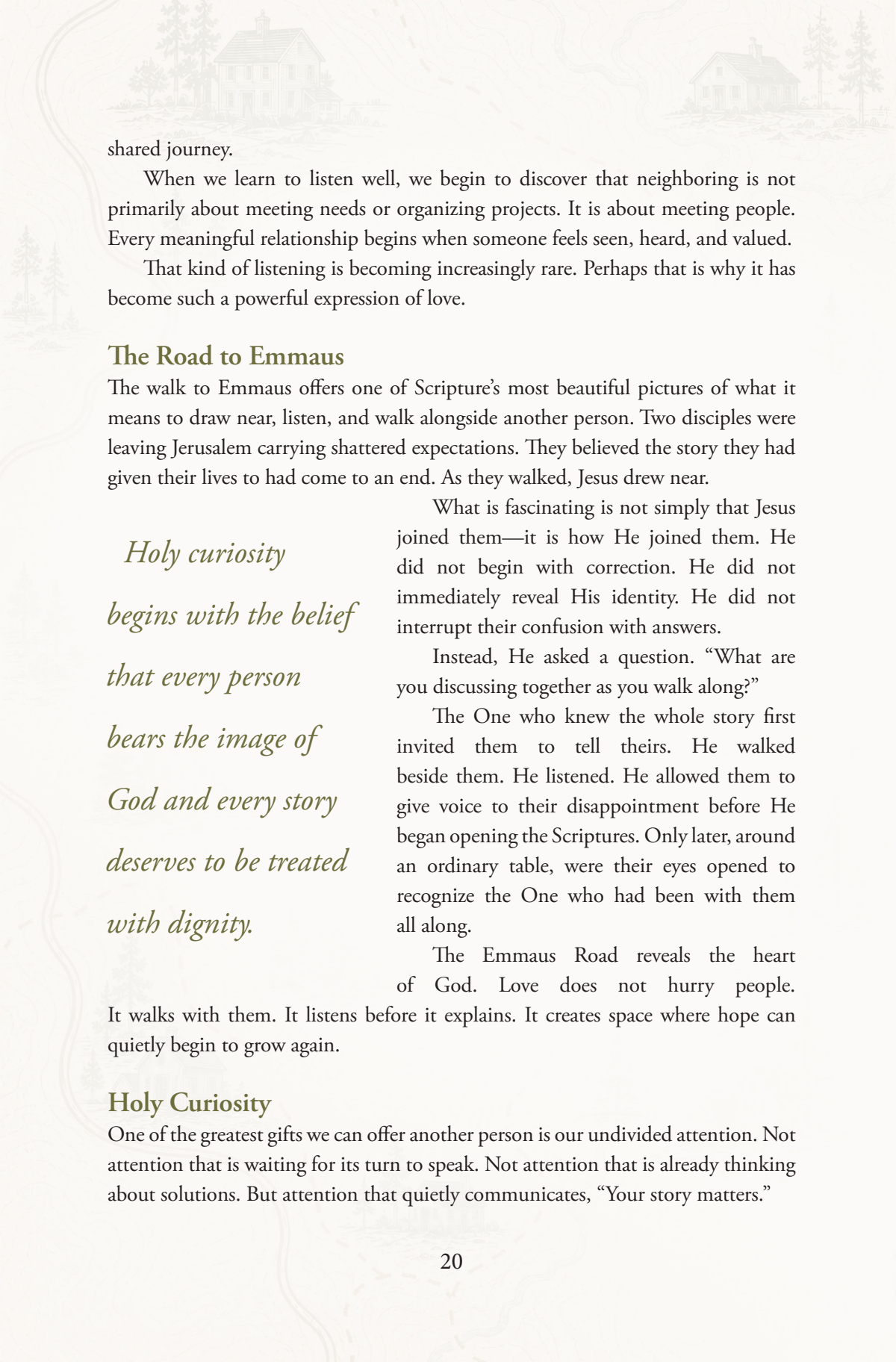
*Helping people find a place
where they are known, needed, and loved*

"As they talked and discussed these things with each other,
Jesus himself came up and walked along with them...
He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?'"
(Luke 24:15–17 NIV).

Why This Matters

Every person carries a story. Some stories are spoken freely. Others have been hidden beneath years of disappointment, loneliness, joy, unanswered questions, quiet faithfulness, or deep loss. Most of us move through our neighborhoods knowing very little about the stories carried by the people we pass each day.

Yet the Kingdom of God often unfolds one conversation at a time. When I began asking my neighbors a simple question—What's your dream?—I wasn't expecting what I learned. Almost everyone had a dream. Some shared it immediately. Others hesitated, as though no one had asked them that question in years. I discovered that many dreams had been quietly set aside because of fear, trauma, disappointment, or simply because no one had ever believed in them. But whenever I responded with, "I'd love to help you pursue that," something shifted. The conversation was no longer just about a dream. It became the beginning of a



shared journey.

When we learn to listen well, we begin to discover that neighboring is not primarily about meeting needs or organizing projects. It is about meeting people. Every meaningful relationship begins when someone feels seen, heard, and valued.

That kind of listening is becoming increasingly rare. Perhaps that is why it has become such a powerful expression of love.

The Road to Emmaus

The walk to Emmaus offers one of Scripture's most beautiful pictures of what it means to draw near, listen, and walk alongside another person. Two disciples were leaving Jerusalem carrying shattered expectations. They believed the story they had given their lives to had come to an end. As they walked, Jesus drew near.

*Holy curiosity
begins with the belief
that every person
bears the image of
God and every story
deserves to be treated
with dignity.*

What is fascinating is not simply that Jesus joined them—it is how He joined them. He did not begin with correction. He did not immediately reveal His identity. He did not interrupt their confusion with answers.

Instead, He asked a question. “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

The One who knew the whole story first invited them to tell theirs. He walked beside them. He listened. He allowed them to give voice to their disappointment before He began opening the Scriptures. Only later, around an ordinary table, were their eyes opened to recognize the One who had been with them all along.

The Emmaus Road reveals the heart of God. Love does not hurry people. It walks with them. It listens before it explains. It creates space where hope can quietly begin to grow again.

Holy Curiosity

One of the greatest gifts we can offer another person is our undivided attention. Not attention that is waiting for its turn to speak. Not attention that is already thinking about solutions. But attention that quietly communicates, “Your story matters.”



This is what is meant by **holy curiosity**. Holy curiosity is more than asking thoughtful questions. It is a posture of the heart. It begins with the conviction that every person bears the image of God and that every story deserves to be received with dignity.

When we become curious about another person's life, we are not collecting information. We are honoring the work of God within them. Some of the most meaningful conversations have begun with remarkably simple questions.

"How long have you lived here?"

"What do you enjoy most about this neighborhood?"

"What has shaped your life?"

Questions like these are invitations. They tell another person, "I would like to know you, not simply know about you." Listening this way changes both people. The storyteller experiences the gift of being heard. The listener discovers that every conversation expands their understanding of the people and places God has entrusted to them.

In many ways, neighbor-ing becomes a conversation between two people for the flourishing of both. One person may speak more than the other, but both leave changed.

Belonging Begins Here

We often imagine belonging begins when someone receives an invitation, but belonging begins much earlier. It begins the moment someone realizes they no longer have to perform, impress, or defend themselves. It begins when another human listens without rushing, welcomes without judging, and remains present without needing to fix everything.

People rarely remember every word of a conversation. They almost always remember how they felt while they were telling their story. Followers of Jesus have the privilege of creating those moments. Every conversation becomes an opportunity to reflect the welcome of Christ. Every act of listening quietly says, "There is room for you here."

Field Notes

Listening is one of the simplest ways that love becomes visible. Before people experience belonging around our tables, they often experience it in our conversations.

Reflect

As you think about the people God has placed around you, spend a few moments reflecting on these questions.

- Whose story have I never taken the time to hear?

- When someone is speaking, what most often keeps me from truly listening?

- What assumptions about a neighbor might change if I became more curious about their story?

- Who might God be inviting me to listen to with greater patience and holy curiosity?

Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will honor the stories of others with holy curiosity and make room so that others discover they are known, needed, and loved.

Practice This Week

This week, choose one conversation and approach it differently. Rather than thinking about what you hope to say, prepare yourself to listen well. Ask thoughtful questions, remain curious, and resist the temptation to steer the conversation toward yourself. Allow another person's story to unfold at its own pace.

When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 4: Story Listening Guide** in the **Field Kit**. It will help you cultivate the habit of listening with greater attentiveness and grace.

Prayer

Father, thank You for listening to me with patience, compassion, and love. Teach me to become a faithful listener. Quiet my need to impress, advise, or solve. Give me a heart that is genuinely curious about the people You place in my path. May my conversations reflect Your welcome. May those who speak with me experience something of Your kindness, Your patience, and Your presence. And as I learn to hear the stories of others, continue writing Your story within me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

Every meaningful conversation is an opportunity to help someone remember they are deeply seen and deeply loved.





JOINING THE STORY

*Faithfully
participating in the work
God has already begun*

"For we are God's fellow workers"
(1 Corinthians 3:9 ESV).

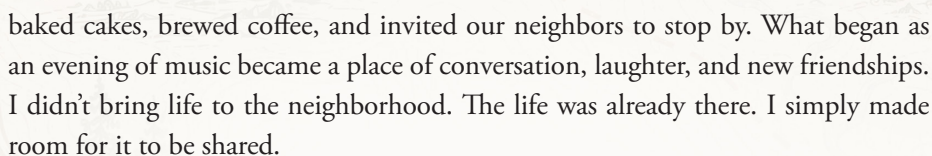
Why This Matters

There comes a moment in every journey of neighboring when seeing is no longer enough. We begin noticing the gifts within a neighborhood. We learn the names and stories of our neighbors. We discover People of Peace and experience the beauty of belonging.

Eventually another question quietly emerges. "Lord, how would You have me participate?"

It is a beautiful question. But it is also one we can answer too quickly. Our instinct is often to start something new. The Kingdom of God usually invites something different. Before beginning a new work, we first learn to recognize the work God has already begun.

I remember my next-door neighbor, Ralph, who would often sit on his porch in the evenings playing his hand drum. In our neighborhood, music was woven into the life of the community. Rather than organizing something of my own, I asked Ralph if he and a few friends would bring their drums to my front porch. We



baked cakes, brewed coffee, and invited our neighbors to stop by. What began as an evening of music became a place of conversation, laughter, and new friendships. I didn't bring life to the neighborhood. The life was already there. I simply made room for it to be shared.

That experience changed the way I think about neighboring. Often our greatest contribution is not creating something new but cultivating a space where the gifts God has already placed in our neighbors can become a blessing to the whole neighborhood.

Faithful neighboring is not about becoming the hero of the story. It is about joyfully taking our place within God's story.

Small Fits Where Big Doesn't

We often underestimate the significance of small acts of faithfulness. Our culture celebrates scale.

*God often brings
extraordinary
transformation
through ordinary
acts of faithful love.*

The Kingdom celebrates seeds. Jesus compared the Kingdom to yeast hidden in dough. A mustard seed planted in the ground. Treasure hidden in a field. Again and again, He pointed toward ordinary things that quietly transformed everything around them.

The same is true in our neighborhoods. A shared meal. Remembering a birthday. Helping a neighbor rake leaves. Praying for a local school. Encouraging a small business. Showing up consistently.

These acts rarely make headlines. Yet they often become the places where God's Kingdom quietly becomes visible. God often brings extraordinary transformation through ordinary acts of faithful love.

We Were Never Meant to Do This Alone

One of the surprising discoveries of neighboring is realizing that flourishing is always shared. Community is not merely a strategy for accomplishing more. Relationship lies near the heart of what it means to be human. We worship a God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and we were never created to flourish in isolation. We flourish not in isolation but in relationship.

That means neighboring is never simply about our own contribution. It is about



our shared stewardship of the place God has entrusted to us.

As we begin paying attention, we discover something remarkable. Teachers are already serving. Pastors are already praying. Business owners are already investing. Neighbors are already caring. Volunteers are already showing up. People of Peace are already gathering others.

We are not asked to replace them. We are invited to join them. Shared stewardship begins when we stop asking, “How can I make a difference?” and begin asking, “How can we faithfully love this place together?”

Field Notes

Every act of neighboring is an opportunity to join the work God is already doing. We do not bring His presence into our neighborhood. We discover it. We do not manufacture transformation. We faithfully participate in it.

Reflect

Spend a few moments reflecting on these questions.

- Where do I already see faithful people serving my neighborhood?

- What ordinary act of love might God be inviting me to practice?

- Who could I join instead of trying to replace?

- How might neighboring become an act of worship in my everyday life?

Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will faithfully participate in the work God is already doing, remembering that ordinary acts of faithful love become worship.

Practice This Week

Choose one small act of faithful love this week. Keep it simple.

Rather than beginning something entirely new, look for an opportunity to join someone else who is already serving your neighborhood. Offer your presence before your ideas, your encouragement before your leadership, and your faithfulness before your ambition.

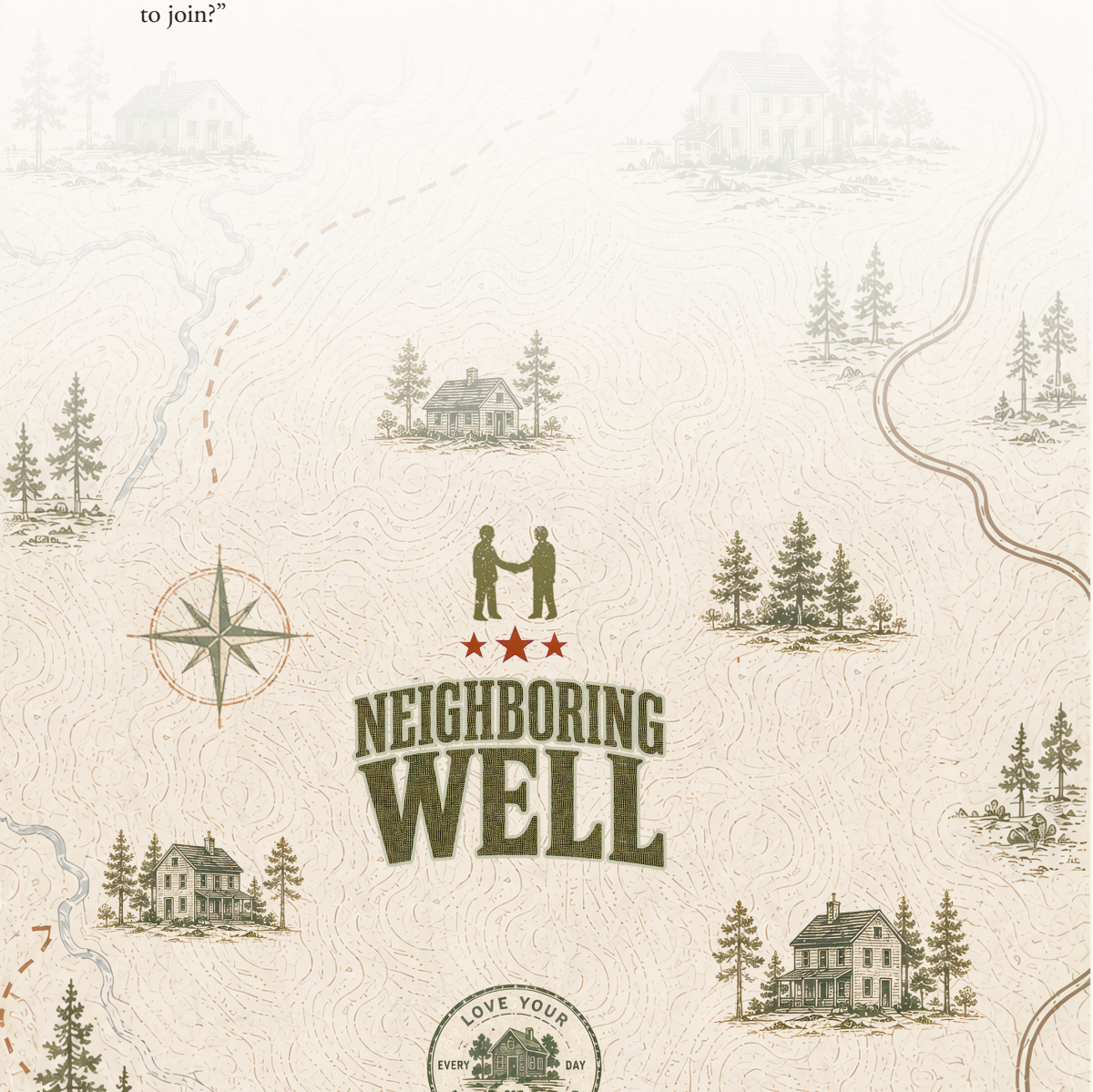
When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 5: Make Room at the Table** in the **Field Kit**. It will help you practice the ordinary hospitality through which faithful participation so often begins.

Prayer

Father, thank You for inviting me into Your work. Keep me from believing that everything depends on me. Teach me to recognize where Your Spirit is already moving, and give me the humility to faithfully join what You have begun. May my ordinary acts of love become quiet expressions of worship. Help me delight in small beginnings, rejoice in shared stewardship, and trust that You are able to accomplish far more than I can imagine through simple acts of faithfulness. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

This week, ask not, "What should I start?" but "Where is God inviting me to join?"





FINDING —YOUR— PLACE

*Discovering your
faithful vocation in the place
God has entrusted to you*

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others,
as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms"

(1 Peter 4:10 NIV).

Why This Matters

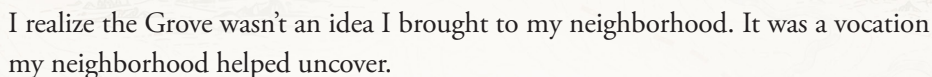
There comes a moment when neighboring becomes deeply personal.

Up to this point, we have learned to see our neighborhood through God's story, notice the gifts He has already planted there, recognize the people He is preparing, listen with holy curiosity, and faithfully join the work He has already begun.

Eventually another question begins to emerge. "Lord, what is my place in this story?" It is not a question about significance. It is a question about stewardship.

God has not asked you to do everything. He simply invites you to faithfully offer the life you have been given. That is what vocation has always meant.

As I spent time with my neighbors, listening to their stories and encouraging their dreams, I began to notice something changing in me. Their dreams awakened my own. I found myself longing to create a place where entrepreneurs, artists, community leaders, and everyday neighbors could gather to work on the ideas God had placed in their hearts. That longing eventually became the Grove—a business where people could cultivate their dreams together. Looking back,



I realize the Grove wasn't an idea I brought to my neighborhood. It was a vocation my neighborhood helped uncover.

Sometimes God reveals our calling not by asking us to leave our neighborhood but by inviting us to love it well. As we faithfully steward the lives and opportunities He places before us, we often discover He is also shaping our own.

More Than a Career

When many people hear the word calling, they immediately think about occupation. Scripture paints a much richer picture. Our first calling is not to a profession. It is to Christ. From that relationship flows every other calling we receive—as parents, teachers, business owners, artists, retirees, students, neighbors, pastors, tradespeople, volunteers, and friends.

*Calling and
faithfulness belong
together. Our work
becomes one of
the ways our love
finds a voice.*

Vocation is simply the unique way God's love takes shape through our ordinary lives. Our work becomes one of the ways our love finds a voice. That means neighboring is never something added onto life. It becomes one of the places where our calling is lived.

Faithfulness Looks Different for Everyone

One of the quiet dangers of reading a book like this is imagining there is one right way to neighbor. There isn't.

The Kingdom of God is wonderfully diverse. One neighbor faithfully prays while walking every morning. Another gathers children in the park. Someone else quietly checks on elderly neighbors. A local teacher invests in families every day. A mechanic serves with integrity. A business owner creates meaningful work. A retiree has time to linger in conversations others are too busy to have. None of these expressions is more spiritual than another.

Faithfulness is not measured by comparison. It is measured by obedience. The question is never, "Am I doing what someone else is doing?" The question is, "Am I faithfully offering the life God has entrusted to me?"



The Quiet Power of Remaining

We often imagine that transformation comes through dramatic moments. Scripture more often points us toward steady faithfulness. Seeds grow slowly. Vines bear fruit over seasons. Disciples are formed one day at a time.

Neighborhoods are much the same. There is a quiet holiness in remaining. Showing up again. Learning names. Keeping promises. Returning after disappointment. Continuing to pray when change feels slow.

Faithfulness rarely feels spectacular while we are living it. Yet throughout Scripture, God delights in ordinary people who quietly remain faithful over long seasons. We are responsible for our faithfulness. God is responsible for the fruit.

That realization brings tremendous freedom. Our task is not to measure outcomes. Our task is to remain available.

Field Notes

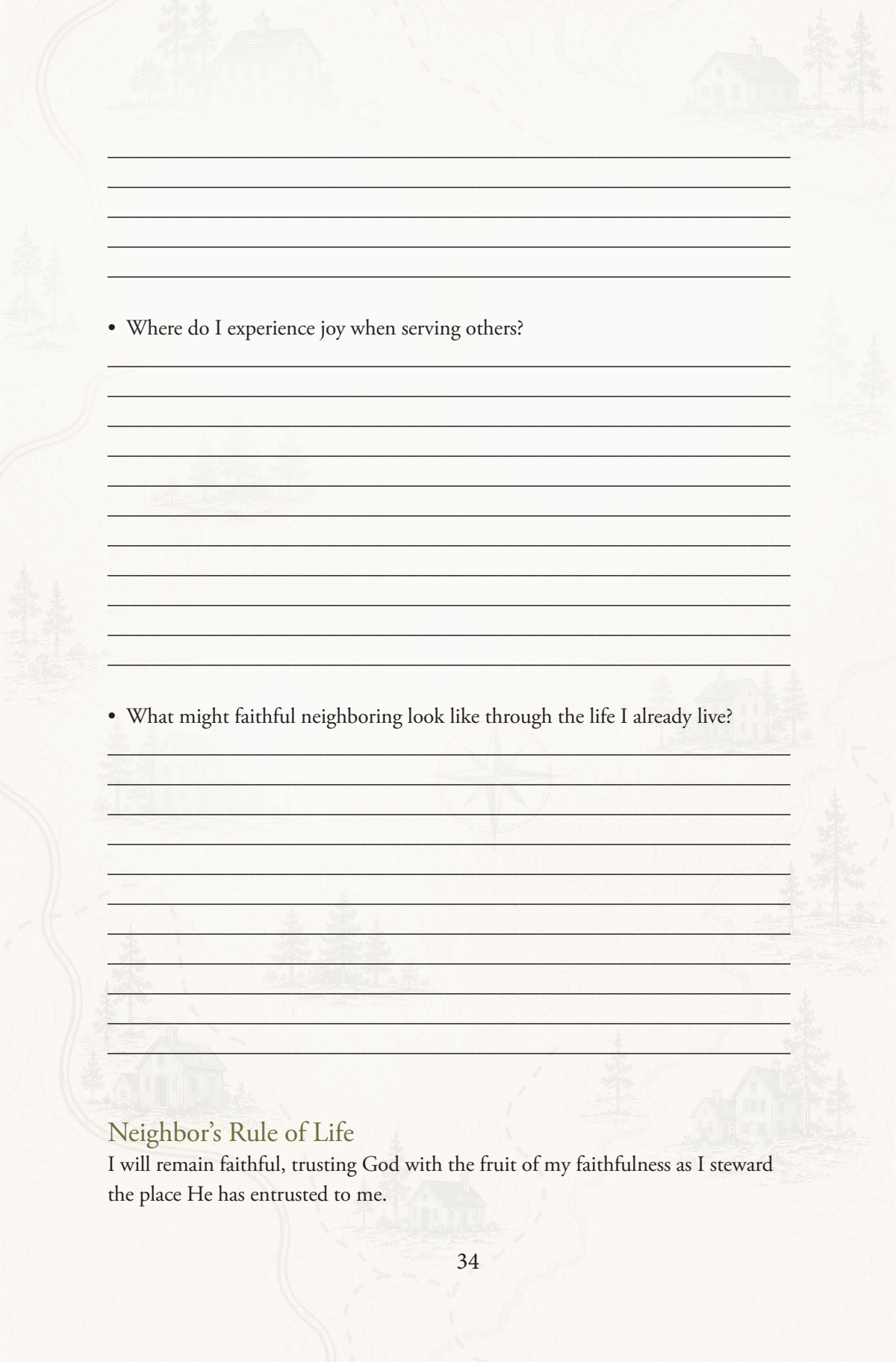
Faithfulness is not the result of seeing immediate change. Faithfulness is choosing to remain obedient even when the fruit cannot yet be seen.

Reflect

Take a few moments to prayerfully consider these questions.

- What gifts has God uniquely entrusted to me?

- What opportunities already exist within my everyday life?

- 
- Where do I experience joy when serving others?

- What might faithful neighboring look like through the life I already live?

Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will remain faithful, trusting God with the fruit of my faithfulness as I steward the place He has entrusted to me.

Practice This Week

Rather than searching for a new assignment, spend time reflecting on the life you already have. Consider the relationships, gifts, experiences, and opportunities God has already placed in your hands. Ask Him to show you one simple way your everyday vocation can become an expression of His love within your neighborhood.

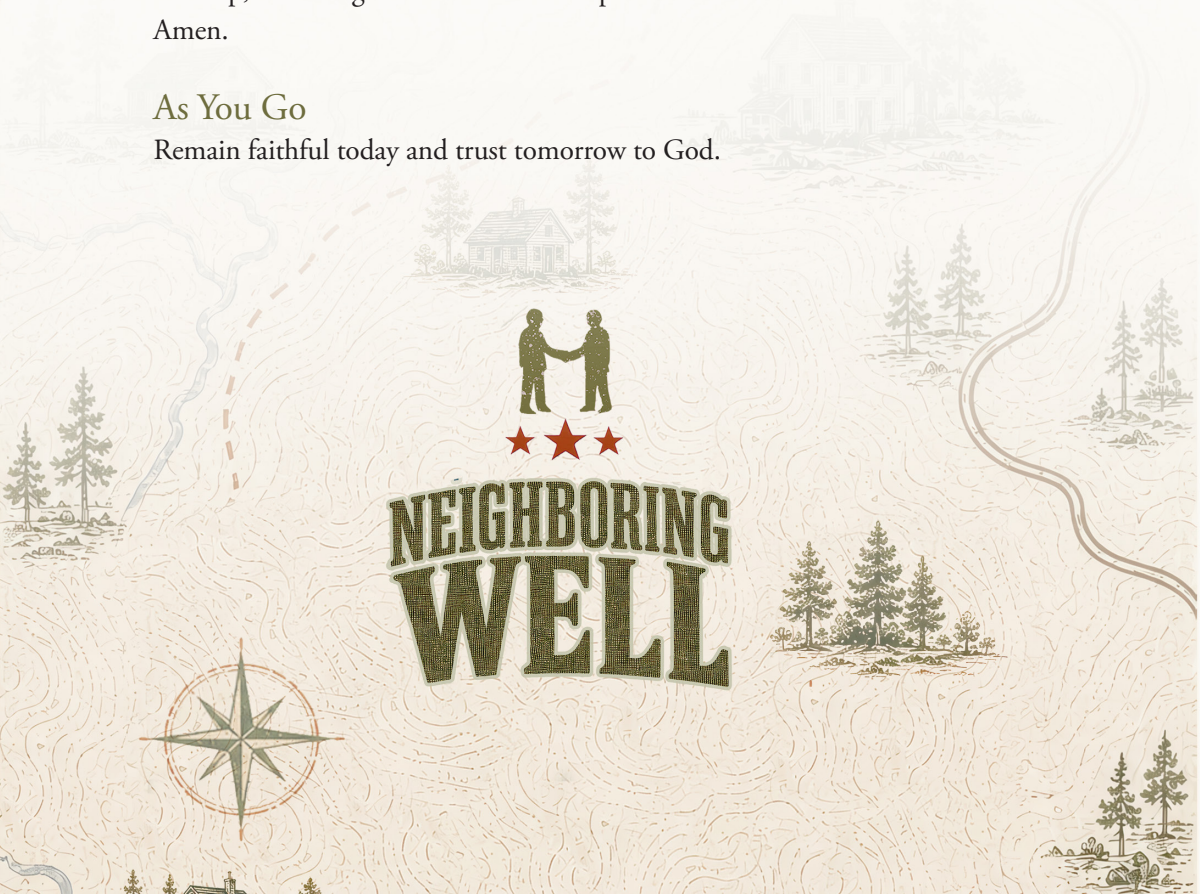
When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 6: Discover Your Faithful Vocation** in the **Field Kit**. Allow it to help you prayerfully discern how God may be inviting you to faithfully steward the place He has entrusted to you.

Prayer

Father, thank You for creating me uniquely and entrusting me with gifts that reflect Your grace. Keep me from comparing my calling with the calling of others. Teach me to faithfully steward the life You have given me and to trust You with what grows from my obedience. Give me courage to remain when remaining feels ordinary. Form in me a steady heart that delights more in faithfulness than in recognition. May my work, my relationships, and my everyday life become quiet expressions of worship, revealing Your love in the place You have called me to serve. Amen.

As You Go

Remain faithful today and trust tomorrow to God.





LIVING TOWARD

The City That Is Coming

*Allowing Tomorrow's Kingdom
to Shape Today's Faithfulness*

"Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth'... I saw the Holy City,
the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God"

(Revelation 21:1–2 NIV).

Why This Matters

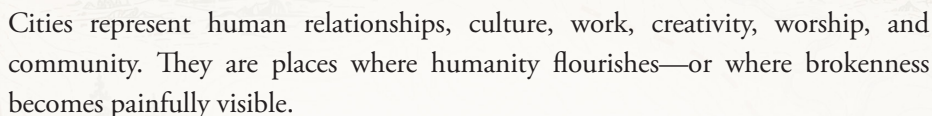
Every story is moving toward something. Some stories drift toward fear. Others toward comfort. Still others toward success or security.

Followers of Jesus live toward a different future. Scripture ends not with people escaping the earth, but with God making all things new. The final vision of the Bible is not a garden abandoned but a city redeemed. Heaven comes to earth. God dwells with His people. Justice and mercy embrace. Tears are wiped away. Death is no more. The nations are healed. Creation is restored.

That future changes how we live today. Hope is never an escape from the present. Hope teaches us how to remain faithful within it.

The City We Are Becoming

The Bible begins in a garden. It ends in a city. That movement is not accidental.



Cities represent human relationships, culture, work, creativity, worship, and community. They are places where humanity flourishes—or where brokenness becomes painfully visible.

God does not abandon cities. He redeems them. The New Jerusalem is not merely our destination. It is God's promise that everything sin has fractured will one day be restored.

*Hope is not
wishful thinking
about tomorrow.*

*It is faithful living
because of tomorrow.*

Every act of neighboring, every shared meal, every conversation, every prayer, every quiet expression of faithful love becomes a small foretaste of that coming Kingdom. We are not building the New Jerusalem. Only Christ can do that. But we are invited to live now in ways that anticipate the day when He will.

Looking back now, I realize that morning in Fair Haven was never simply about pancakes or neighbors gathered in a front yard. For a few ordinary hours, strangers became friends. Generosity quietly overcame scarcity as neighbors disappeared into their own kitchens and returned carrying eggs, milk, and food to share. Conversations lingered. Children played together. People who had lived on the same street for years discovered one another in new ways.

It did not last forever. By afternoon the tables were folded, everyone returned home, and the ordinary rhythms of life resumed.

Yet something had happened that morning. For a brief moment, we caught a glimpse of the world as God intends it to be. I no longer see that breakfast as merely a neighborhood gathering. I see it as a small foretaste of the coming Kingdom—a quiet reminder that one day Christ will make all things new. Every shared meal, every act of generosity, every restored relationship, and every expression of belonging points beyond itself to that greater feast when God will dwell with His people and all creation will be made new.

Hope Changes Ordinary Days

Christian hope is remarkably practical. It teaches us to plant gardens even when harvest feels far away, to forgive before reconciliation is complete, to remain faithful when progress appears slow, and to continue loving neighbors whose stories are

still unfolding.

Hope frees us from measuring every act by immediate results. We no longer ask, “Did this work?” Instead, we ask, “Was I faithful?” Faithfulness is never wasted.

The smallest acts of obedience become signs pointing toward the Kingdom that is coming. Every prayer whispered while walking your neighborhood, every meal shared across a table, every story honored, every child encouraged, and every act of generosity become quiet declarations that the future belongs to Christ.

Living Between the Cities

In many ways, we live between two cities. The city we inhabit today is marked by both beauty and brokenness. The city that is coming will be marked only by beauty.

Until that day, we learn to live with both realism and hope. We grieve what is broken without surrendering to despair. We celebrate what is beautiful without pretending everything is complete. We remain present because we know redemption is still unfolding.

Neighboring becomes one of the ordinary ways we bear witness to that future. Each act of faithful love quietly announces, “This is what God’s Kingdom is like.”

Field Notes

Kingdom hope does not remove us from our neighborhoods.
It roots us more deeply within them.

Reflect

Spend a few moments considering these questions.

- How does God’s promised future change the way I see my neighborhood today?

- 
- Where do I already see signs of God's coming Kingdom?

- What act of faithfulness am I tempted to abandon because I cannot yet see its fruit?

- How might hope deepen my perseverance?

Neighbor's Rule of Life

I will live today in light of the city that is coming, trusting God with the fruit of my faithful love.

Practice This Week

Choose one ordinary practice you intend to continue—not because it produces immediate results, but because it reflects the Kingdom of God. Whether it is praying for your neighbors, walking your neighborhood, sharing meals, checking on someone who lives nearby, or serving quietly behind the scenes, let this week's practice become an act of hope.

When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 7: A Monthly Neighbor's Examen** in the **Field Kit**. It will help you reflect on where you have seen God's Kingdom quietly breaking into everyday life and where He continues to invite your faithful participation.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the promise that one day You will make all things new. When I grow discouraged, remind me that Your Kingdom is coming. When I become impatient, teach me the quiet strength of faithfulness. Keep my eyes fixed on Christ, whose resurrection assures me that hope is never misplaced. May the way I love my neighbors today become a small witness to the city that is coming. Help me live with courage, humility, and joy until that day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

Every act of faithful love whispers that a better City is coming.





8

A NEIGHBOR'S RULE of Life

Practicing the Rhythms That Shape a Lifetime of Faithful Neighboring

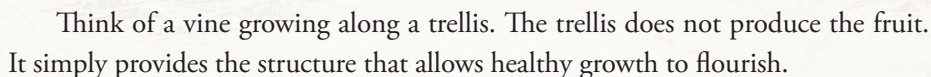
"Remain in me, as I also remain in you.
No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.
Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me"
(John 15:4 NIV).

Why This Matters

Every journey eventually reaches a moment when we must decide whether what we have learned will become something we simply remember or a way of life we intentionally embrace. Books are easy to finish. Formation is not.

Formation happens slowly. It unfolds through ordinary rhythms repeated over months and years until they begin to shape our character. We become the people our habits are quietly forming us to be.

That is why Christians throughout history have embraced what is known as a **Rule of Life**. The word rule can sound restrictive to modern ears, but its original meaning points in a much different direction. It comes from the Latin word *regula*, a straight piece of wood used as a guide or measure. A Rule of Life is not a collection of rigid expectations. It is a pattern that helps us remain rooted in what matters most.



Think of a vine growing along a trellis. The trellis does not produce the fruit. It simply provides the structure that allows healthy growth to flourish.

A Neighbor's Rule of Life serves the same purpose. It is not another spiritual burden to carry. It is a gracious rhythm that continually brings us back to Christ and the life He is forming within us.

A Life Shaped by Faithful Rhythms

When we first began this journey, we started with a simple invitation: Let's learn to see our neighborhood through the story of God.

*A Rule of Life
is not a list of
obligations. It is a
way of arranging
our lives, so we
become the kind
of people who
naturally love
God and our
neighbors.*

As we continued walking together, that invitation slowly became a way of life. We learned to notice before rushing to act. We learned to look for treasures before focusing on problems. We discovered that God had already placed People of Peace around us. We practiced listening with holy curiosity. We learned that neighboring is not about becoming the hero of the story but faithfully joining the work God has already begun. We discovered that our vocation is one of the ways our love finds a voice.

Finally, we lifted our eyes toward the city that is coming and discovered that neighboring is one of the ordinary ways disciples rehearse the coming Kingdom.

None of these practices stands alone. Together they become a rhythm. A slower rhythm. A more attentive rhythm. A more hopeful rhythm. A rhythm that quietly shapes us into the likeness of Christ. That is the purpose of a Rule of Life.

Neighbor's Rule of Life

Over the past seven chapters, you have already been introduced to a Neighbor's Rule of Life. It is not a checklist to complete. It is a path to walk. Read it slowly. Allow each sentence to remind you of the journey you have taken.

I will remember that my neighborhood is part of God's story, and I will



seek its flourishing.

I will learn to notice before I rush to act, becoming a treasure hunter before I become a problem solver.

I will offer my faithful presence before I offer my ability, trusting that God has already prepared people through whom His peace is already at work.

I will honor the stories of others with holy curiosity and make room so that others discover they are known, needed, and loved.

I will faithfully participate in the work God is already doing, remembering that ordinary acts of faithful love become worship.

I will remain faithful, trusting God with the fruit of my faithfulness as I steward the place God has entrusted to me.

I will live today in light of the city that is coming, remembering that neighboring is one of the ordinary ways disciples rehearse the coming Kingdom.

Receiving the Rule

You may feel tempted to rewrite these words or immediately begin creating a Rule of your own. Resist that temptation.

For now, simply receive this Rule as a companion for the journey. Live with it. Pray through it. Carry it with you on your neighborhood walks. Return to it after difficult conversations. Read it again when your enthusiasm fades or when your hope begins to grow weary.

Over time, these words will become more than sentences on a page. They will become habits. And by God's grace, those habits will slowly become character. Years from now, you may find yourself adapting this Rule to reflect the unique calling God has given you and the neighborhood He has entrusted to your care.

Each year, during your Neighbor's Annual Retreat, return to this Rule with fresh eyes. As Christ continues to form you, you may discover new ways these same rhythms take shape in your place and season. If that day comes, receive it as a gift. But don't rush there.

For now, simply live this Rule of Life. Let it shape your imagination, your habits, and your loves before you ever think about rewriting it. The purpose of a Rule of Life is not to express your originality. It is to help you remain with Christ.

Field Notes

A Rule of Life is not something we master. It is something we return to. Whenever we lose our way, grace quietly invites us to begin again.



DAILY

Neighbor's Rule of Life



MONTHLY

Neighbor's Examen



YEARLY

Neighbor's Annual Retreat
(Renew the Rule)

Three rhythms. One life of faithful neighboring.

Formed by grace. Sustained over time. Renewed each year.



Reflect

As you complete this journey, spend a few quiet moments with God.

- Which rhythm has already begun shaping my life?

- Which part of this Rule stretches me most?

- Where have I already begun noticing God at work differently?

- What invitation from Christ do I most want to carry into the next season of my life?



Neighbor's Rule of Life

Read the Rule once more. This time don't read it as a promise you are making through your own strength. Read it as a prayer. Allow each sentence to become an invitation for Christ to continue forming His life within you.

Formation has never been about trying harder. It has always been about remaining with Him.

Practice This Week

Choose one rhythm from this Rule of Life and intentionally practice it throughout the coming month. Don't try to embrace everything at once. Walk patiently and return often. Trust that small acts of faithfulness, repeated over time, become the places where God accomplishes His deepest work.

When you're ready, continue with **Field Tool 8: A Neighbor's Annual Retreat** in the Field Kit. Set aside time each year to remember God's faithfulness, reflect on your journey, discern His invitations for the season ahead, and renew your commitment to faithfully love the place He has entrusted to you.

Prayer

Father, thank You for walking with me throughout this journey. Thank You for every conversation, every prayer, every shared meal, every quiet act of neighborly through which You have been forming me. Keep these rhythms alive within me. When I become distracted, draw me back. When I become discouraged, renew my hope. When I become hurried, teach me to remain. Continue shaping me into the kind of disciple whose ordinary life quietly reflects the presence of Christ. May my neighborhood become one of the places where Your Kingdom is rehearsed until the day rehearsal gives way to reality and faith becomes sight. In Jesus' name, Amen.

As You Go

Tomorrow morning, when you step outside your front door, remember this: The field guide is finished. The pilgrimage has just begun.



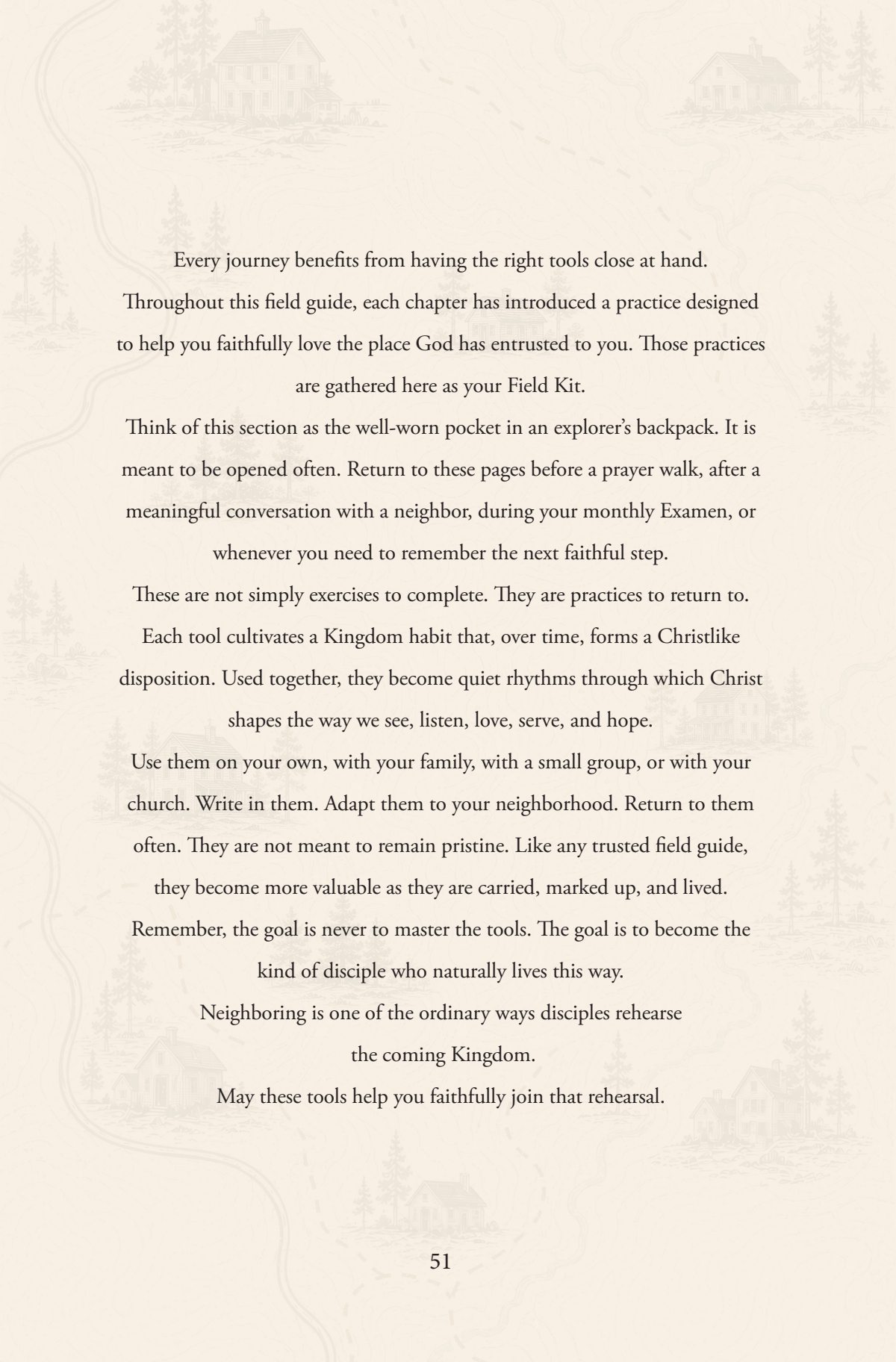
NEIGHBORING WELL





Field Kit





Every journey benefits from having the right tools close at hand. Throughout this field guide, each chapter has introduced a practice designed to help you faithfully love the place God has entrusted to you. Those practices are gathered here as your Field Kit.

Think of this section as the well-worn pocket in an explorer's backpack. It is meant to be opened often. Return to these pages before a prayer walk, after a meaningful conversation with a neighbor, during your monthly Examen, or whenever you need to remember the next faithful step.

These are not simply exercises to complete. They are practices to return to.

Each tool cultivates a Kingdom habit that, over time, forms a Christlike disposition. Used together, they become quiet rhythms through which Christ shapes the way we see, listen, love, serve, and hope.

Use them on your own, with your family, with a small group, or with your church. Write in them. Adapt them to your neighborhood. Return to them often. They are not meant to remain pristine. Like any trusted field guide, they become more valuable as they are carried, marked up, and lived.

Remember, the goal is never to master the tools. The goal is to become the kind of disciple who naturally lives this way.

Neighboring is one of the ordinary ways disciples rehearse the coming Kingdom.

May these tools help you faithfully join that rehearsal.



FIELD TOOL 1

Neighborhood Prayer Walk

Learning to see your neighborhood through the eyes of Christ.

*Carry this page with you. Write in it. Return to it often.
Let your neighborhood become your classroom and
the Holy Spirit your guide.*



Prepare Your Heart

A neighborhood prayer walk is not about covering every street. It is about slowing down long enough to notice what God may already be inviting you to see.

Walk slowly. Pray simply. Pay attention. Remember—you are not looking for problems to solve. You are learning to recognize God's presence and faithfully join the work He is already doing.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, open my eyes to see what You see. Quiet my assumptions. Slow my pace. Help me notice Your goodness, Your presence, and the people You love. Teach me to faithfully join the work You are already doing in this neighborhood. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Enter the Field

Walk without hurry. Pause often. Pay attention. You do not need to answer every question. Simply notice what captures your attention.



People

Who did you notice today?

Signs of Beauty

Where did you see goodness, joy, creativity, generosity, or care?

Kingdom Clues

Where might God already be at work?

Gathering Places

Where do people naturally connect?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ School | ☐ Church |
| ☐ Park | ☐ Playground |
| ☐ Coffee Shop | ☐ Business |
| ☐ Restaurant | ☐ Other _____ |

Opportunities for Prayer

Who or what is God inviting you to pray for?

Places Longing for Restoration

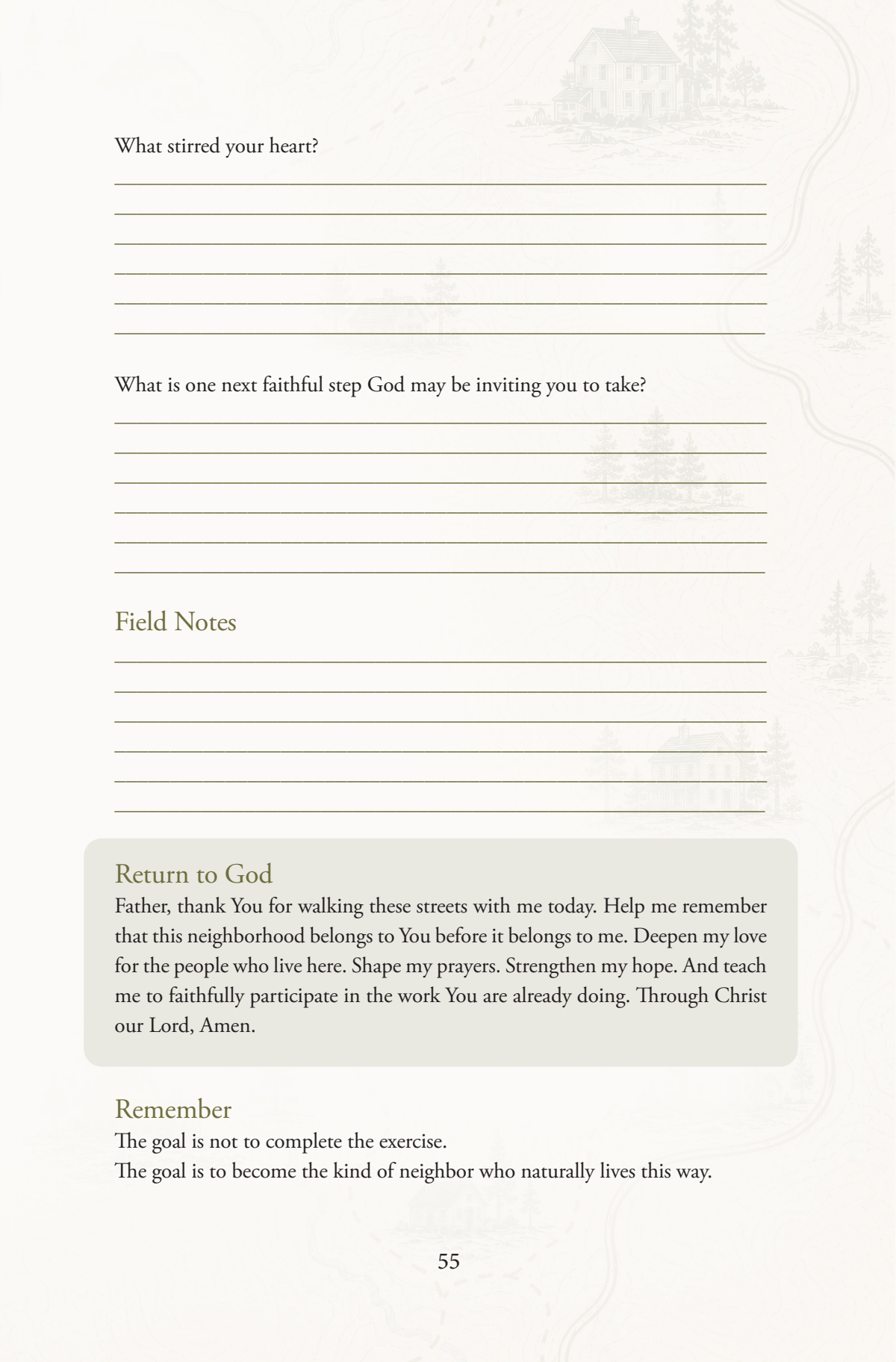
Where did you notice loneliness, neglect, injustice, or brokenness?

After the Walk



What surprised you?

What gave you hope?



What stirred your heart?

What is one next faithful step God may be inviting you to take?

Field Notes

Return to God

Father, thank You for walking these streets with me today. Help me remember that this neighborhood belongs to You before it belongs to me. Deepen my love for the people who live here. Shape my prayers. Strengthen my hope. And teach me to faithfully participate in the work You are already doing. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Remember

The goal is not to complete the exercise.
The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 2

Treasure Hunt Journal

Learning to discover the gifts, people, and places God is already using for the flourishing of your neighborhood.

*Every neighborhood contains signs of God's grace.
This tool will help you become a treasure hunter
before you become a problem solver.*



Prepare Your Heart

Jesus consistently saw what others overlooked. He noticed people others ignored. He recognized faith others missed. He discovered possibility where others saw only problems.

Today, ask the Holy Spirit to help you see your neighborhood with those same eyes.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, teach me to become a treasure hunter. Open my eyes to the gifts You have already placed in this neighborhood. Help me notice signs of beauty, hope, generosity, and Your quiet work. Keep me from focusing only on what is broken. Show me where Your Kingdom is already breaking through. Amen.



Enter the Field

Walk, drive, or sit quietly somewhere in your neighborhood. Pay attention. Where do you see evidence of God's common grace?



Faithful People

Who quietly serves others?

Gathering Places

Where do people naturally connect and build relationships?

Places of Beauty

Where do you see care, creativity, joy, or hospitality?

Hidden Gifts

What skills, resources, traditions, or stories make this neighborhood unique?

Kingdom Clues

Where might God already be bringing hope, healing, or reconciliation?

New Treasures You Didn't Expect

What surprised you today?

After the Hunt



Which treasure most encouraged you?

Which treasure deserves more attention?



Who would you like to meet?

How might God be inviting you to encourage, support, or join one of these treasures?

Field Notes

Return to God

Father, thank You for going before me. Thank You for the faithful people, quiet acts of service, and hidden treasures You have already placed within this neighborhood. Keep teaching me to see with gratitude before I speak with solutions. May I become someone who discovers, celebrates, and strengthens the good You are already growing here. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Remember

The goal is not to complete the exercise.

The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 3

People of Peace Discovery Map

Learning to recognize the people God may already be preparing for the flourishing of your neighborhood.

People of Peace are people God has already been preparing long before we arrived. Our privilege is to recognize them, learn from them, and, where appropriate, join together in seeking the flourishing of the neighborhood.



Prepare Your Heart

In Luke 10, Jesus sent His disciples into towns they had never visited before. He did not tell them to begin with strategies. He told them to look for **People of Peace**.

These are people who naturally welcome others, care about their community, and are open to relationships that bring life. Today, ask the Holy Spirit to help you recognize the people He may already be using.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for always going before me. Open my eyes to the people You are already preparing. Give me humility to learn from them, courage to encourage them, and wisdom to faithfully join the good work You are already doing through their lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Enter the Field



As you think about your neighborhood, prayerfully reflect on the following questions. Don't rush. Discern.

Who naturally welcomes people?

Who seems to know everyone?

Who brings people together?

Who quietly serves others without seeking recognition?

Who is trusted across different groups of people?

Who gives you hope when you think about your neighborhood?

A Simple Discovery Map

Write the names of people who come to mind.

Place a ★ beside anyone you sense God may be inviting you to know better.

Name	What have you noticed?	★ ☐
_____	_____	
_____	_____	

Name	What have you noticed?	★ ☐
_____	_____	
_____	_____	

Name	What have you noticed?	★ ☐
_____	_____	
_____	_____	

Name	What have you noticed?	★ ☐
_____	_____	
_____	_____	

After the Conversation

Choose one person from your list.



What qualities first drew your attention?



What might God already be doing through them?

What could you learn from them?

What is one simple step toward building a relationship?

Field Notes

One Sentence I'll Carry With Me

Return to God

Father, thank You for preparing people long before I ever arrived. Help me resist the temptation to become the hero of this story. Teach me to recognize, encourage, and faithfully partner with the people You are already using for the good of this neighborhood. May every relationship become an opportunity to reflect Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Remember

The goal is not to complete the exercise.

The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 4

Story Listening Guide

Learning to honor the image of God
by listening with holy curiosity.

Every person you meet is carrying a story. Love begins when someone finally feels seen and their story heard.



Prepare Your Heart

Every conversation is an opportunity to honor another person. As followers of Jesus, we do not listen simply to gather information. We listen because every person bears the image of God and every story deserves to be treated with dignity.

Holy curiosity begins with humility. Enter every conversation believing you have something to learn.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, teach me to listen the way You listened. Give me a heart that is genuinely curious and slow to speak. Help me see every person as someone deeply loved by You. May my listening become an expression of Your love. Amen.



Enter the Conversation

You do not need to ask every question. Allow the conversation to unfold naturally. Choose the questions that fit the moment.



Their Story

How long have you lived here?

What first brought you to this neighborhood?

What do you enjoy most about living here?

What has kept you here?

Their Experience

Who first helped you feel at home?

What do you appreciate most about this community?

What do you hope never changes?

If you could improve one thing, what would it be?

Their Hopes

What gives you hope these days?

What do you enjoy doing?

What are you passionate about?

How would you love to see this neighborhood flourish?

Listening Well

As you listen...

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Listen more than you speak | ☐ Remember names and important details |
| ☐ Don't interrupt | ☐ Thank them for sharing their story |
| ☐ Resist the urge to solve problems | |
| ☐ Ask gentle follow-up questions | |



After the Conversation

What did you learn about this person?

What surprised you?



Where did you notice God's fingerprints in their story?

How might you continue this relationship?

Field Notes

One Sentence I'll Carry With Me

Return to God

Father, thank You for trusting me with another person's story. Help me remember what I have heard. Teach me to love more deeply because I have listened more carefully. Continue Your good work in this person's life and show me how I might faithfully encourage them in the days ahead. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Remember

People are never projects. They are image-bearers worthy of love, dignity, and attentive listening.

The goal is not to complete the exercise. The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 5

Make Room at The Table

Learning to cultivate belonging through generous hospitality.

Belonging begins when someone discovers they no longer have to earn their place at the table.



Prepare Your Heart

Hospitality begins long before someone enters your home. It begins by making room in your heart.

Followers of Jesus do not simply invite people into their houses. They invite people into their lives. Remember, the goal is not to impress people. It is to help someone experience welcome.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for welcoming me into Your family. Teach me to welcome others with the same grace You have shown me. Open my eyes to those who may be longing to belong. Help me create spaces where people feel seen, valued, and loved. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Make Room

Prayerfully consider one person, one couple, or one family.

Who comes to mind?

How might you make room for them?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Coffee | ☐ Park |
| ☐ Lunch | ☐ Dessert |
| ☐ Dinner | ☐ Backyard |
| ☐ Front Porch | ☐ Other |
| ☐ Walk | _____ |

Prepare the Space

Before you gather...

What small act of welcome could communicate, “I’m glad you’re here.”

Around the Table



You do not need to fill every silence. Simply be present.

Here are a few gentle questions that help cultivate belonging.

What has brought you the most joy recently?

What's something you're looking forward to?

What do you appreciate most about living here?

Who has made a difference in your life?

If you could bless this neighborhood in one way, what would it be?

Listen more than you speak. Laugh freely. Enjoy the gift of being together.

After the Gathering



What did you notice?

When did you sense genuine connection?



What did you learn about your guest?

How might you continue building this relationship?

Field Notes

One Sentence I'll Carry With Me

Return to God

Father, thank You for welcoming me when I had nothing to offer You except my need. Help me become the kind of person through whom others experience Your welcome. May my table, my conversations, and my everyday life become places where people encounter the kindness of Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Remember

Hospitality is not about entertaining. It is about making room.

The goal is not to complete the exercise. The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 6

Discover Your Faithful Vocation

Learning to recognize how God has uniquely shaped you to become a blessing where He has placed you.

Faithful vocation begins when we stop asking, “What should I do?” and begin asking, “Who is God inviting me to become in this place?”



Prepare Your Heart

God has not called you to become someone else. He has called you to faithfully become the person He created you to be. Your gifts, experiences, relationships, opportunities, and the place where you live all become part of the life you have been given to steward.

This is not about discovering the perfect plan for your life. It is about paying attention to what God has already placed in your hands and discerning your next faithful yes.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for creating me with purpose. Open my eyes to the gifts You have entrusted to me, the people You have placed around me, and the opportunities You are inviting me to embrace. Teach me to faithfully become the person You created me to be, for the good of my neighborhood and the glory of Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Discover Your Faithful Vocation



Take your time. Pray through each section. There are no perfect answers. Simply pay attention to what begins to emerge.

What has God entrusted to me?

Consider the life you already have. What gifts, experiences, relationships, skills, passions, resources, or opportunities has God placed in your hands?

How does my life bring life to others?

When do you feel most alive while serving others?

What do people consistently thank you for?

Where have you already seen God use your life, experience, gifts, or presence to bless someone else?

What is capturing my attention in this place?

Think about what you have discovered as you have prayed, walked, noticed, listened, and built relationships in your neighborhood.

What people keep coming to mind?

What opportunities stir something within you?

Don't begin by asking what you can fix. Notice what you find yourself caring about.

What Invitation Is Beginning to Emerge?

Now look back over what you have written.

Notice the connections between what God has entrusted to you, the ways your life already brings life to others, and what has been capturing your attention in your neighborhood.

You are not trying to manufacture a calling. Instead you are listening for an invitation.

Complete this sentence:

Perhaps God is inviting me to...

Don't worry about getting it perfect. You are not deciding the rest of your life. You are simply discerning your next faithful yes.

My Next Faithful Yes





What is one small step I will take in the next seven days?

When will I take it?

Who will I invite to encourage me or walk alongside me?

Field Notes

One Sentence I'll Carry With Me

Return to God

Father, thank You for creating me with purpose and placing me here in this season of my life. Keep me from comparing my calling with someone else's. Help me faithfully steward the gifts, experiences, relationships, and opportunities You have entrusted to me. May my work, my relationships, my service, and my everyday life become acts of worship that bless my neighbors and glorify You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Remember

Your calling is not to do everything. It is to faithfully become the person God created you to be for the flourishing of others.

The goal is not to complete the exercise. The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 7

A Monthly Neighbor's Examen

Learning to notice how Christ is forming you through the ordinary practice of neighbor-ing.

*Neighbor-ing is not only changing your neighborhood.
God is also using it to change you.*



Prepare Your Heart

Growth often happens quietly. It is easy to notice what still needs to change while overlooking the ways God has already been shaping your heart. Set aside twenty or thirty minutes. Find a quiet place and invite the Holy Spirit to help you look back over the past month with gratitude, honesty, and hope.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for walking with me through the ordinary moments of this past month. Help me remember what You want me to remember. Show me where I have seen Your grace, where I have resisted Your invitation, and where You are continuing to form me into the likeness of Christ. Teach me to receive this time with gratitude, humility, and hope. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Look Back with Gratitude



Where did you notice God's presence in your neighborhood this month?



Which neighbor, conversation, or experience brought you the most joy?

What are you most thankful for?

Notice Your Formation

As you reflect on the past month...

How have you grown?

☐ Holy Attention

☐ Hopeful Vision

☐ Spiritual Discernment

☐ Holy Curiosity

☐ Generous Hospitality

☐ Faithful Stewardship

☐ Patient Faithfulness

What evidence do you see?

Where have you struggled?

Where do you sense Christ inviting you to continue growing?

Look Forward with Hope



Who comes to mind as you pray for the month ahead?

What is one relationship you want to intentionally nurture?



What is one faithful step you sense God inviting you to take?

Field Notes

One Sentence I'll Carry With Me

Return to God

Father, thank You for walking these streets with me today. Help me remember that this neighborhood belongs to You before it belongs to me. Deepen my love for the people who live here. Shape my prayers. Strengthen my hope. And teach me to faithfully participate in the work You are already doing. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Remember

The goal is not to complete the exercise.

The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



FIELD TOOL 8

A Neighbor's Annual Retreat

Remembering how God has been forming you through the ordinary practice of neighbor

The goal of neighbor is not simply to bless your neighborhood. It is also to become the kind of neighbor Christ is forming you to be.



Prepare Your Heart

Set aside an hour. Turn off your phone. Bring your Bible, your journal, and perhaps a cup of coffee or tea. Find a quiet place where you can reflect without hurry. Before looking back over the past year, begin by giving thanks.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for walking with me through another year. Help me remember Your faithfulness. Open my eyes to see where You have been quietly shaping my heart, deepening my love, and teaching me to faithfully join Your work. May this time renew my hope for the year ahead. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Look Back

What moments of neighbor brought you the greatest joy?



Which relationships have grown deeper?

Where have you seen signs of God's Kingdom breaking into ordinary life?

Which moments stretched your faith?

What prayers have you seen God answer?

Look Within

As you reflect on the past year...

Which Christlike dispositions have you seen growing?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Holy Attention | ☐ Generous Hospitality |
| ☐ Hopeful Vision | ☐ Faithful Stewardship |
| ☐ Spiritual Discernment | ☐ Hopeful Perseverance |
| ☐ Holy Curiosity | |

Where is Christ still inviting you to grow?

How has your understanding of neighboring changed this year?

Look Ahead



Prayerfully complete this sentence.

This year, I sense God inviting me to...

Field Notes

One Sentence I'll Carry With Me

Return to God

Father, thank You for walking these streets with me today. Help me remember that this neighborhood belongs to You before it belongs to me. Deepen my love for the people who live here. Shape my prayers. Strengthen my hope. And teach me to faithfully participate in the work You are already doing. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Remember

The goal is not to complete the exercise.

The goal is to become the kind of neighbor who naturally lives this way.



THE Journey OF Formation

*We are being transformed into His likeness
as we learn to live in step with His Kingdom.*

— 2 Corinthians 3:18

Habits shape **our lives**.

Dispositions shape **our character**.

Together they form a life that **reflects Jesus**.

Kingdom Habits



Christlike Dispositions

1 PRAYER WALKING

*We walk and pray,
listening for God.*



HOLY ATTENTION

*We learn to notice
what God notices.*

2 TREASURE HUNTING

*We look for God's
treasure in
ordinary places.*



HOPEFUL VISION

*We see people, places,
and possibilities
through God's eyes.*

3 PEOPLE OF PEACE

*We build bridges
of peace and trust.*



SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

*We sense where God
is already at work.*

4 STORY LISTENING

*We listen deeply to
the stories of others.*



HOLY CURIOSITY

*We grow in wonder
and understanding.*

5 MAKING ROOM

*We create space for
others to belong.*



GENEROUS HOSPITALITY

*We open our lives
with courage and grace.*

6 FAITHFUL VOCATION

*We serve faithfully
where God has
placed us.*



FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP

*We steward our time,
gifts, and resources
for His purposes.*

7 NEIGHBOR'S EXAMEN

*We review the day
with God's presence.*



HOPEFUL PERSEVERANCE

*We keep going, trusting
God's faithfulness.*

8 ANNUAL RETREAT

*We step away to be
with God and realign.*



KINGDOM HOPE

*We live with eyes on
the City that is coming.*

Formed by habits. Shaped by grace. Sent to love our neighbors for the glory of God.

