

Neighbor[ing]

Love where you live.

Part 4: Neighbors in the Kingdom

Garret Shelsta, Young Adults Pastor | January 27 & 28, 2018

“People are not to make images of God because God has already made images of himself when he made humans.”

- Tim Mackie

God is King, and Humans Rule on His Behalf

- **God is king**

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. – Genesis 1:1-5

- **People are made in God’s image**

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

– Genesis 1:26-27

- **Ruling is not reserved for the elite**

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” – Genesis 1:28

- **How people are to rule**

God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. – Genesis 1:29-30

Matthew 6:10

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

John 1:14 *(The Message)*

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory; like Father, like Son; generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

As Jesus’ representative in the world, he moves in to a neighborhood through me.

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Loving God and our neighbors is God's method for us to live out our identity as his representatives in the world.

Revelation 21:1-4

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

God cultivates all of our neighborhoods into an eternal city.

As Jesus' representatives, we are called to cultivate the kingdom of God in the present through loving God and our neighbors until his reign comes in its fullness.

Isaiah 43:1 But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.

John 10:2-3 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

God knows my neighbor's name, and I should too.

Neighboring Homework

- Pay Attention
- Ask God to change your heart
- Make the right choice
- Know your neighbors' names

Loving our neighbors isn't a strategy to get people into the kingdom of God.

Loving our neighbors is the kingdom of God.

Small Group Questions

- 1) Take some time and fill out the neighboring grid. How far did you make it?
- 2) For the names you did know, how did you learn those neighbors' names?
- 3) What obstacles prevent you from knowing some of your neighbors' names?
- 4) How could you get to know the names of the people you don't already know?
- 5) How can we pray for you right now and throughout the week? Pray also for opportunities to connect with your neighbors in the coming weeks.