

How to Love Your Neighbor without Being Weird

Amy Lively

Bethany House (March 2015)

Softcover \$14.99 (208pp)

978-0-7642-1700-5

"I wanted to love my neighbor, but I didn't know how," writes Amy Lively. As a Christian called to follow Jesus's directive to "love your neighbor as yourself," she felt guilty that she, like so many of us, didn't even know the people who lived in her neighborhood.

Lively, a teacher, writer, speaker, and founder of Neighborhood Café Bible Study ministry and website, admits that the thought of going out into the world to make spiritual connections can be daunting. She diligently scoured the scriptures, looking for a way out of having to meet her sometimes scary (like the ones who'd named their dog Demon), sometimes seemingly uninteresting, neighbors. Finding no way out, she began to knock on their doors with an invitation to share a cup of coffee.

Lively found her life immeasurably enriched by her encounters, and although her book is Bible-based and directed at Christian women who would like to establish neighborhood Bible study groups, those of other faiths, and even the nonreligious, can use the practical and loving suggestions she offers to begin opening their doors and hearts to their neighbors. Following her tips, you're likely to find, as she did, that while people may walk into each other's homes as strangers, they walk out as friends.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Spring 2015)

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