



BOOK CLUB REVIEW

Don't Invite Them to Church

Loving our neighbours

BY RENÉE JAMES

DR. KAREN WILK'S GUIDEBOOK gives us 123 pages of practical help on how to obey Jesus' strong reminder that we are called to love our neighbours.

By the time you've read and worked through this 8-week guidebook with your small group or with other believers who live in your neighbourhood, you'll be well on your way to living a richer, more rounded life – simply because you've begun to relate with your neighbours. You've invited them to know you and to be known. Karen's guidebook lays out this understanding with fresh insight and lots of testimonies: Neighbours aren't projects and loving them isn't a concept or program. It's building true, honest one-step-at-a-time relationships with people who may be agnostic, atheistic, never-go-to-church, of another faith – it doesn't matter. "How could this be?" you may ask. "And why would I want to?"

You'll have to read the guidebook and plan to attend our meet-the-author chat later this fall to learn more, but as Karen posits in her introduction, *"What if believers who lived in the same neighbourhood formed a community with a mission right where they lived, whose purpose was to make their neighbourhood a place where the values of God's kingdom become more visible and real?"*

Karen taps into a long-overlooked fact here: Most of our neighbours want the same things we do for our neighbourhood. We may actually share more than a street name; we may share values, and a common desire to see good happen on our street, and the next one over, and the next, and the next.

This guidebook "invites you to pursue the calling and challenge of loving your neighbor, not just with words, but with postures and practices." To that end, Karen lays out four pursuits to be done each week for eight weeks – a weekly group meeting, plus daily in-depth devotional readings, experiences in spiritual disciplines and thought questions – all to help you and your group grow in your relationships with God, in your spiritual lives, and in love with your neighbours.

Yes, you'll cover a lot of theological, spiritual formation, prayer and community-building ground over the eight weeks. I enjoyed how Karen's teaching on the spiritual disciplines highlighted their importance to our call to love our neighbours. In fact, she covers practices some of you may already know from Soul Sisters, Complete and the Sensible Shoes book clubs: breath prayer, lectio divina and more. We cannot be missional women unless we are empowered by the Spirit and equally important, know how much each one of us is God's Beloved.

I did lose my way at times as I read through the guidebook though perhaps this was simply a case of how the pages are laid out. Even so, this guidebook is well worth the read and a great gathering tool for your groups this fall. Buy it if your group is looking for a practical, experiential, biblically-grounded and in-depth guide on how to really step into its calling to transform the world. That world is a doorstep away. ①

Order your copy from Read On Bookstore and receive free shipping.

**Mark the date! Join us to meet author
Dr. Karen Wilk on November 9 at 7:30p.m. EST.**

We'll have a chance to ask Karen about the book's content, her writing process and more. ED Helena Bergen will facilitate this meet-the-author chat. Not to be missed!

Online registration opens in September at
baptistwomen.com/events