"Who is My Neighbor," the Lawyer Asked ...  
So Today, Who is Your Neighbor?

Fits Story in Her Life

"I did a sample STS at a home Bible study before I left on a trip. The group was pleading with me to have a group meet at my home to use or teach STS.

“So now that I am back, I am having a Simply-The-Story home meeting this Friday. I’m having a potluck, do some worship and plan either to present a STS Bible story or teach the people how to learn and present a story. Depends on who shows up.”
GH, CA

Neighborhood Applications

“I taught the Good Samaritan story at Sunday School this morning. During application time, one lady shared about a black man moving into her neighborhood and the prejudice that she felt, but that God had dealt with her when the man knocked on the door one day and told her that her trash can was on fire. It turned out he was a neuro-surgeon at the hospital.

“I really appreciated her honesty and transparency on how the Holy Spirit was working to remove prejudice from her heart, like how Jesus challenged the lawyer's prejudice by making the Samaritan the hero of the story.

“One thing that really jumped out at me in this story is that, according to Jesus, the lawyer answered His question about the law correctly, but his heart was obviously wrong. How many times do we think that salvation is all about having the right set of answers to a certain set of questions? I think that Jesus shows us here that there has to be a real change of heart resulting in real action to our faith.

“Anyways, this story has really touched me. On the way to church, I passed up a Navajo hitch-hiker that was out in the cold. I thought to myself, I'm about ready to teach a story on the Good Samaritan and I can't even stop to pick up a guy that's heading in the same direction I'm going? I turned the car around and picked the guy up.
Aaron T. New Mexico, USA
A Wee Report on the Story Fayre

“It was on a Saturday evening, 6-8PM, in our home.

“We spent the day gutting the living and dining-rooms of furniture and preparing. People started to arrive all at once about 6.05PM. We had 27 people turn up in the end. One young couple and one large family were unable to make it at the last minute. Age range: two to eight-five years old!

“As people arrived my wife and I received everyone (largely through the kitchen with their pot luck contributions), and by 6.20 PM we were serving food to everyone, who then gathered in our living and dining-rooms and sat on the chairs we had placed round the walls in both rooms. Our daughter Jessica began to play the harp and continued for about an hour, much to the delight of several people who had wanted to hear her play.

“Just about 7.10PM I headed upstairs from the noise and bustle down below to get a little 'gathering time' with the Lord. At 7.20PM I was downstairs again, stood on the threshold of the two rooms, thanked everyone for coming, for bringing food and wished them all Happy New Year. I then introduced the story: Blind Bartimaeus. I gave two brief intro comments about "Bar-" and "Son of David" and then headed into the story. The story went well and flowed.

“I asked for a volunteer to tell the story back as there were several there who were STS grads and others who have been keen participants in the past (including kids). BUT ... everyone was very shy and so I slipped into getting them to tell it in twos round the room, which went well.

“During this stage one of the little kids, Andrea, aged 9 who is a daughter of an STS grad and member of our church, got very confident and wanted to tell the story. So I had her come up and do so, before I did the 'lead-through'. She did a great job but got shy again about half way through and stopped. There was thunderous applause all the same! ;-)

“I did the 'lead-though' and there was some good interaction and enjoyment beginning to come through. This spilled nicely over into discussion and I did spiritual observations on Bartimaeus first, then the crowd and finally Jesus.

“One fellow, who would not describe himself as walking with God, was engaged quite a bit and began at one stage to go into application - describing a very moving personal interaction with a beggar - and I let it go. The way he ended it allowed me to slip easily back out into observations and we continued there for awhile more.

“One woman, in her mid-70s, and our neighbour has had a missions prayer meeting in her home for 50 years (!). She made a very poignant observation about how no one led Bartimaeus to Jesus (crowd shut him down, and disciples did nothing) when Bartimaeus was clearly in need of Jesus' touch. This came out when we were discussing the low-value, outcast character of Bart.
“The spiritual applications were easy to flow into too. Again we focused on Bartimaeus, crowd and Jesus.

“I ended the discussion 3 or 4 minutes after the hour and thanked everyone for coming. One fellow publicly asked about when he could get training to do this too. Others were sorry there were not more stories and asked when we’d do it again!

“No one, not even our non-believing neighbours, rushed away. Some stayed for more coffee and dessert. Others hung around and chatted. Two families stayed at least an hour longer and one family helped us clean up and put the living and dining-rooms back together again! I was amazed, blessed and thankful that it was all done so swiftly.

“So ended the Story Fayre.”
Ireland

Our neighborhood might be wherever God takes us. For example, see some stories on Outreaches.