

Engagement Project-Tour 10 Articles

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The Engagement Project

Tour 10: Engagement - Final Thoughts, Part 2

Practical Wisdom from The Engagement Project - In the closing session of Tour 10 from Dr. Del Tackett's **The Engagement Project**, participants gathered for a profound Q&A, reflecting on the core call to love one's neighbor as an overflow of knowing God's character. Building on the project's ten-tour journey—a small-group worldview series designed to deepen believers' understanding of God's meta-narrative, their identity in Christ, and their mission in the world—this final discussion distilled practical, transformative insights. Tackett, known for his earlier **Truth Project**, guides everyday Christians to move from worldview foundation to active kingdom engagement, emphasizing that God entrusts primary ministry work to ordinary believers rather than clergy alone.

The conversation opened by recapping key realizations from earlier parts. Participants explored "our Jerusalem" from the project's vision statement, drawing from Acts 1:7-8. This modern application redefines the starting point of witness: not literal geographic Jerusalem, but each person's immediate sphere—neighborhood, workplace, and closest relationships. Two pivotal insights emerged: the indwelling presence of the full triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) in believers, which radically reshapes behavior when consciously embraced, and the freedom found in releasing self-centered "scripts"—preconceived expectations and personal agendas. Letting go shifts focus outward to others.

A crucial balance surfaced: truth and love are inseparable. Truth without love becomes harsh noise, "like a clanging cymbal" (1 Corinthians 13:1); love without truth drifts into sentimentality or even malevolence. The "one another" commands—love one another, forgive, bear with—primarily apply within the family of God, among believers, fostering mutual edification before broader outreach.

The group delved into biblical fruitfulness across three domains: physical (godly offspring through marriage and family), vocational (productive, God-honoring work avoiding harmful roles), and ministerial (advancing the kingdom via the royal law of love—loving neighbor as self). Tackett challenged cultural norms where singleness is default and marriage optional, contrasting this with Scripture's view: "It is not good for man to be alone" (Genesis 2). Forced singleness or child-free marriages strain God's design. In a fallen world, infertility or widowhood present barriers; biblical barrenness portrays God sovereignly closing the womb, inviting submission rather than forcing outcomes through extreme interventions.

Yet fruitfulness persists beyond biological limits. Widows can teach younger women (Titus 2); singles thrive in committed groups. Lifelong fruit involves nurturing biological and spiritual offspring through sustained discipleship in family and community.

Addressing couples facing infertility, Tackett offered hope: model agape love in marriage. Husbands are called to love wives as Christ loves the church—sacrificially seeking her shalom (flourishing, peace, well-being) with zealous commitment. This transcends gifts like chocolates or jewelry; it actively pursues the spouse's growth. Such marriages testify powerfully amid cultural divorce and dysfunction, inspiring young people and bearing fruit even without children. Tackett shared personally how his marriage has encouraged others, crediting his wife Melissa.

Participants confronted the temptation to "perform" neighborly love through rigid plans. One admitted fighting urges to script outcomes, anticipating obstacles instead of praying first. Tackett affirmed: avoid writing personal scripts for engagement. Prayer aligns with God's will, but obedience follows—availability over passivity. God leads uniquely; copycat approaches (like replicating a "turquoise table" idea) miss divine direction. Plans are fine if held loosely: "Not my will, but yours be done."

Reassurance came strongly: God's commands are not burdensome; if engagement feels heavy, revisit the foundation. It should excite and free. A young mother shared liberation from perfectionist hospitality scripts amid young children. A lived-in home—spilled Cheerios, running kids—signals authentic friendship more than clinical cleanliness, which can feel agenda-driven. Jesus welcomed children naturally; messiness fosters real connection, breaks ice, and reveals opportunities in inconvenient seasons. Dying to self removes image concerns.

The discussion turned to the church's vital role. Tackett distinguished "church" as both the universal body of Christ (ecclesia) and local congregations with leaders. Ephesians 4 outlines God's design: leaders equip saints for ministry work, which belongs primarily to believers. Today, this often inverts—saints expect staff to minister while supporting them—upside-down in a fallen world. Tackett envisioned restoration: congregations gather joyfully for worship, Lord's Supper, and baptisms. Pastors inquire about neighborhood ministries, learning from real encounters (e.g., a neighbor hating God after cancer loss) to equip targetedly—addressing suffering through empathy first. Pastors should know members' lives—not meddling, but understanding challenges—to provide relevant preparation. Without frontline insight, equipping fails. The church remains essential; abandoning assembly contradicts Scripture and likely follows independence scripts. Corporate joy and mutual strengthening persist, but aligned with biblical order.

Personal reflections tied back to Tackett's **Truth Project**: it refocused on God's unchanging nature amid chaos, clearing distractions. **The Engagement Project** builds on this—knowing God makes neighbor love natural, integrated into everyday relationships rather than compartmentalized. One participant likened believers to "nerve endings" in communities, sensing needs and relaying them to pastors, complementing rather than competing with ministry. Pastors, freed from sole burden, equip; saints turn the world upside down.

The session closed with encouragement: loving neighbors isn't a program to perfect or performance to stage. It flows from knowing God's character, dying to self, and availability to His leading. God invites people as they are—homes chaotic or spotless, with or without children, visible or quiet—to seek others' shalom. The work is His; the joy ours. Pray boldly, stay flexible, watch God transform ordinary lives through surrendered love.

"Now go love your neighbor."

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The Engagement Project

Tour 10: Engagement - Final Thoughts, Part 2

Loving Your Neighbor

Practical Wisdom from The Engagement Project

In the closing Q&A of Del Tackett's **The Engagement Project** Tour 10, participants distilled a powerful vision: loving your neighbor is not a program to perfect or a performance to stage—it is the natural overflow of knowing God's unchanging character and making yourself available to His leading.

Tackett reframed “our Jerusalem” (Acts 1:7-8) as each believer's immediate sphere—neighborhood, workplace, closest relationships—not a distant geographic location. True engagement begins by releasing self-centered scripts and preconceived expectations, freeing us to focus outward. Truth and love must remain inseparable: loveless truth clangs like a cymbal; truthless love drifts toward sentimentality or harm.

Biblical fruitfulness spans three realms: godly offspring in marriage and family, productive vocational work that honors God, and ministerial advancement of the kingdom through sacrificial love. Tackett challenged the cultural reversal that treats singleness as default and marriage as optional, affirming Scripture's design: “It is not good for man to be alone.” Even in seasons of infertility or widowhood, fruit abounds—through modeling agape love that seeks a spouse's shalom, mentoring younger believers, or nurturing spiritual children.

Authentic hospitality rejects perfectionism. A lived-in home with spilled Cheerios and running children signals genuine friendship far more than clinical cleanliness. Dying to self-image allows messiness to become an icebreaker and reveals opportunities in inconvenient seasons.

The local church remains essential. Pastors equip saints for ministry, not perform it themselves. Congregations gather for worship and mutual strengthening, while ordinary believers serve as “nerve endings” in their communities, relaying real needs back to leaders for targeted equipping.

Ultimately, Tackett encouraged: pray boldly, stay flexible, and trust God to work through ordinary, surrendered lives. The work is His; the joy is ours.

“Now go love your neighbor.”

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