

# HERE TO BLESS



VILLAGECHURCHAZ.COM

Welcome to the BLESS Guide – your roadmap to spreading the light of Jesus and growing in relationship with Him!

This guide is here to empower you with a straightforward and effective method for sharing Jesus with others and deepening your connection to Christ. Remember, growth is a journey that requires dedication and effort, and these questions are the stepping stones to that journey.

On Page 1, you'll discover the BLESS GUIDE, featuring two sets of three questions each. These questions serve as your compass, guiding you and your group towards accountability in sharing Jesus and strengthening your bond with Him. Whether you cover just one set or both during your meetings, what truly matters is the consistency in asking them.

If someone in your group doesn't have an immediate answer to a question, don't worry. This is an opportunity for gentle exploration and learning. Asking "why" can often lead to valuable teaching moments that enrich everyone's spiritual understanding.

Embrace this guide as a tool for not only spreading the message of Jesus but also for fostering personal and collective growth in faith. You're embarking on a journey that's both fulfilling and transformative – one where every question asked brings you closer to the heart of Christ.

The rest of this guide contains a breakdown of the BLESS Acronym – a proven method for reaching those around you with the message of Jesus in a natural and effective manner.

To kickstart your journey, we begin with the Top 5 Worksheet. This simple tool is designed to help you identify the individuals in need of encountering Jesus whom God has already placed in your life. By filling out this worksheet, you'll gain clarity on those whom you can begin to reach out to and BLESS.

# BLESS GUIDE



## SHARING JESUS

1. WHO ARE YOU PRAYING FOR TO KNOW JESUS?
  2. HOW HAVE YOU POSITIONED YOURSELF IN THEIR LIVES AS A LISTENER AND/OR FRIEND?
  3. WHAT PLANS WILL YOU MAKE TO BLESS SOMEONE YOU ARE PRAYING FOR BETWEEN NOW AND THE NEXT TIME WE MEET?
- 



## GROWING WITH JESUS

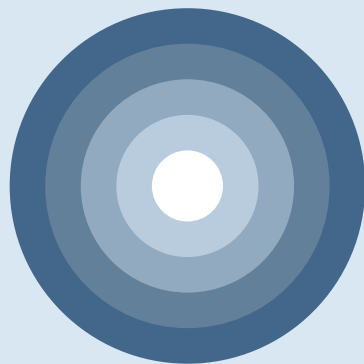
1. WHAT ARE YOU READING/LISTENING TO THAT IS HELPING YOU GROW WITH JESUS?
2. WHAT IS GOD SPEAKING TO YOU THROUGH YOUR CURRENT READING AND LISTENING?
3. WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT?

**B.L.E.S.S.**



# TOP 5 WORKSHEET

This activity will help you identify your circles of accountability, also known as our Spheres of Influence. Take note of the non-believers with whom you can build intentional relationships. Pray for them, get to know them, serve them, and find opportunities to share Jesus with them.



- Family
- Close Friends
- Co-workers/Neighbors
- Acquaintances/Old Friends
- Others

## Family:

Non-believers	Believers

## Close Friends:

Non-believers	Believers

## Co-Workers/Neighbors:

Non-believers	Believers

## Acquaintances/Old Friends:

Non-believers	Believers

## Others:

Non-believers	Believers

## MY TOP 5:

Of your relationships with non-believers, choose the five top priorities for prayer.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_





# B: BEGIN WITH PRAYER

So you've identified the five people you most want to see come to know Jesus, but... now what?

When praying for those in your life who are far from God, where do you start?

Here are five suggestions on where to begin:

- God is already at work in the lives of those you are committing to pray for. So, consider asking God to reveal to you how he is already working in their lives and how you can simply join in that work.
- Pray for the needs they have mentioned to you in casual conversation. Maybe there are health issues, worries, or struggles they are dealing with. Commit to praying over those things and checking in with them on how those things are going.
- Ask God to give them a hunger for the things of God — to seek to know him. Pray that they might have a desire for more than this world has to offer.
- Pray that God would bring additional people into their lives to love them and help lead them to Jesus.
- Spend some time being still before God. Ask him to give you creativity on how to bless your friends and grow a heart of compassion towards them.
- Commit to praying daily for them. You don't have to pray drawn out prayers every time. Lift their names before the Father with a heart to see them saved and add any specific requests you have discussed with those on your list.





# L: LISTEN

In order to BLESS our neighbors, friends, or coworkers, we need to listen with intention.

We need to listen to understand their hearts, their fears, their dreams, their disappointments, their hopes, and their longings. And fundamentally, we need to listen with the simple goal of getting to know them better.

But not everyone is a confident and charismatic conversationalist. So, if you need some help knowing where to begin, here are some conversation starters...

1. Tell me your story. Where did you grow up?
  - What's your favorite part about living here?
  - What do you miss from home (if they moved recently)?
2. What do you do for fun? How do you spend your free time?
  - What are you reading?
  - Are there any Netflix/Hulu/television series you'd recommend?
3. What's your favorite (team, Burger, BBQ or Mexican food restaurant, vacation spot, etc.)?
4. What kinds of jobs have you had? Which did you like best? Which was the hardest?
5. What are your dreams for the future?
6. Have you traveled anywhere interesting lately?
  - If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would you go? Why?
7. What brings you joy?
8. What is your spiritual background?





# E: EAT

The experience of a shared meal serves as an invaluable catalyst for establishing meaningful connections with others. The act of dining with others creates an environment that fosters a genuine openness in conversation that is often much more difficult to experience in formal settings.

Consider this: as individuals, we engage in meals or coffee breaks approximately four times daily. That's 5,840 opportunities each year to invite others into those moments. Try setting a personal goal to invite someone you are praying for to join you for a meal on a weekly or monthly basis. These invitations don't need to be elaborate; a simple lunch break or coffee invite can provide ideal occasions for meaningful connection.

The key lies in the art of attentive listening, actively seeking opportunities to show compassion and care to those God has placed around you. If you feel ready to add a faith element to the meal, consider incorporating a prayer before eating or gently inquire about their spiritual background. The ultimate objective is to cultivate a deeper relationship, allowing conversations about faith to organically begin to emerge. This is the stage where you might begin sharing about your story with Jesus in the hopes they might want to begin their own story with him.





# S: SERVE

In John 13:1-17, we witness a profound act of service performed by Jesus during the Last Supper. Despite knowing the imminent betrayal and suffering awaiting him, Jesus humbly washes the feet of his disciples, exemplifying the essence of Christian service. This act challenges conventional norms, revealing that true greatness is achieved through humility and selflessness. Jesus, the Son of God, willingly takes on the role of a servant, teaching us that significance is found in how we serve others, not in how they serve us.

Reflecting on this passage, consider your own attitudes towards serving others. Just as Jesus set the example for his disciples, he sets it for us as well. We are called to follow his lead, embracing opportunities to serve those around us with love and compassion. Through acts of service, we not only impact the lives of others but also experience personal growth and blessings from God. By focusing on relational, physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, we can effectively serve our neighbors, enriching their lives and strengthening our communities.

As we strive to emulate Jesus' example of servanthood, we approach each day with a mindset of humility and willingness to put others before ourselves. Whether it's through small gestures of kindness or larger acts of generosity, may our lives reflect the love and grace of Christ, bringing hope and healing to those in need.

The next page offers some practical examples of how you can serve those around you.







# S: SERVE

## **Relational:**

**Invite Them Over:** Host a casual dinner or barbecue at your home.

**Offer Support:** Take time to listen attentively when they share their joys or concerns, offering empathy and encouragement.

**Initiate Social Activities:** Organize group outings such as hikes, game nights, or community events to foster relationships and connection.

## **Physical:**

**Assist with Tasks:** Offer to help with practical tasks such as grocery shopping, lawn care, or household repairs, especially for those who may be elderly or facing physical challenges.

**Provide Meals:** Prepare and deliver homemade meals to individuals or families experiencing illness, grief, or other difficult circumstances.

**Offer Transportation:** Offer rides to appointments or errands for those without reliable transportation, ensuring they can access necessary resources.

## **Mental:**

**Be a Listening Ear:** Engage in meaningful conversations and actively listen without judgment, allowing them to share their thoughts and feelings openly.

**Share Resources:** Recommend books, podcasts, or workshops on topics of interest or personal growth that you have found valuable.

**Offer Encouragement:** Send uplifting notes or messages expressing appreciation and affirming their strengths and accomplishments.

## **Spiritual:**

**Pray Together:** Offer to pray with them or for specific concerns they may have, demonstrating care and solidarity in their spiritual journey.

**Attend Christian Gatherings:** Invite them to attend church gatherings with you, providing opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth.

**Engage in Spiritual Conversations:** Initiate discussions about faith, values, or even existential questions.





# S: STORY

In the simplicity of three sections, our stories unfold:

Before Jesus

How I met Jesus

Who I am now because of Jesus

These concise narratives echo the transformative power of grace, from being lost to being found, from blindness to sight. The familiar hymn, "Amazing Grace," encapsulates this journey—a wretch once lost, now saved and found.

Imagine breaking your story down into a similar simplicity: "I once was addicted, then I met Jesus, now I'm free." Or, "I once was hopeless, then I met Jesus, now I am filled with joy." These snippets capture the essence of personal transformation, painting a vivid picture of life before encountering Jesus and the profound change that follows.

Psalm 107:2 calls us to let the redeemed tell their story. This aligns with the goal of sharing our stories with Jesus as the centerpiece. As we engage in prayer, attentive listening, and acts of service for our neighbors, the ultimate aim is to offer the greatest blessing—to share our stories with Jesus so that others can have their own stories with Him. Use the following guide to write down and practice sharing your story so that you will be ready when an opportunity arises.





# S: STORY GUIDE

Before Jesus:

How I met Jesus:

Who I am now because of Jesus:



# 2 QUICK TIPS

Here are two simple mistakes to avoid when reaching your Top 5.

## 1. TREATING PEOPLE LIKE A PROJECT

We must be careful not to think of the people on our Top 5 as projects.

They aren't just names on a list.

They are friends, family members, coworkers, and neighbors.

These are people we love – because they are worth loving, regardless of what they believe.

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us."

You have been entrusted with a message, not assigned a project.

When our loved ones celebrate, we celebrate! When they grieve, we grieve. When they need support, we serve. We do this because we love the people in our lives and because that's the kind of people we are.

We love because he first loved us. And we pray that through our relationships, God will speak grace into hearts.



# 2 QUICK TIPS PART 2

## 2. NOT BEING READY TO SHARE YOUR STORY

The passage above from 2 Corinthians says that we've been entrusted with a message of reconciliation. At some point you will have an opportunity to talk about Jesus with someone.

What will you say?

You don't have to know everything about the Bible or have a comprehensive understanding of systematic theology to share the message of Jesus. Although you should be growing in your knowledge of the Bible and understanding of God, you don't have to have it all worked out before you share the hope that you have in Christ.

1 Peter 3:15 says, "...in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you..."

For starters, all you need to know is why you have hope in Christ.

*What has he done in your life?*

*How have you experienced healing and freedom?*

*Why have you put your trust in Jesus?*

Peter says we should always be prepared to share the hope in us.

A little preparation goes a long way. Take a few minutes to write out your story. It could be as simple as looking back at the story from your baptism, or jotting down something God has done in your life recently. Knowing in advance what you want to say will serve you well when the opportunity presents itself.

When it comes to reaching our Top 5, we love the people in our lives like Jesus would, and we rest knowing that he is the one who will transform their heart.



# HERE TO BLESS



VILLAGECHURCHAZ.COM