

# The B.L.E.S.S. Practices

**Begin with Prayer → Listen → Eat → Serve → Story**



As believers, we are all called to share the gospel! In Matthew 28:19-20 we are told to go into the world and make disciples, baptizing and teaching them. We hear Pastor James talk about sharing the gospel, but sometimes, it is difficult to know where to start. If you struggle with this, the BLESS practice will be very helpful! Each week, we will unpack a piece of the BLESS acronym.

**This week, we are talking about BEGIN WITH PRAYER.**

We may know we are supposed to begin every area of life with prayer. But, in the busyness of life, sometimes praying can be pushed to the side. The reminder that sharing the gospel is a work of prayer is incredibly important. Beginning with prayer is to prompt us to ask God who and how He wants us to go about sharing His love with the people around us!

In the book [BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World](#), Dave Ferguson says this about beginning with prayer.

*"Prayer is both how you discover your mission and how you live out the mission. Over and over again, we see Jesus retreating to pray. If you're not sure who God is calling you to bless or where God is calling you to go to be a blessing, you can begin with prayer. And if you know the people you want to bless, begin praying for those people now."*

This week, begin praying about who God would like you to BLESS. This could be a neighbor, coworker, family member, or friend. If you already know who that person is, begin praying for them. Pray over every area of their lives.

If you know who this person is already, share their first name with the group so they can ask you in the weeks to come how your BLESSing is going!

Spend this week practicing the act of praying daily for your BLESS person!

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**This week, we are talking about LISTEN.**

In the book BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World, Dave Ferguson says this about listen.

*"Asking questions and then listening was central to Jesus's life and teachings. Consider the blind man in Luke 18. Jesus didn't assume the blind man wanted to see. First, He asked, 'What do you want me to do?' Then He listened (more on this story later). In the Gospels, Jesus asked many more questions than He answered. Of the 183 different questions He received, Jesus answered only a handful. Any relationship starts with listening to someone's words and life. True listening may be the kindest and most loving gift you can give someone."*

Go around the group and ask how BEGIN WITH PRAYER has gone for everyone.

Ask if there are new insights or names that have been given as their BLESSing assignment.

Discuss a time when you realized the power of listening as a way to serve someone.

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**This week, we are talking about EAT.**

This tends to be everyone's favorite step!

In the book BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World, Dave Ferguson says this about eat.

*"Jesus liked to eat! Over and over, as in Matthew 9, we find Jesus with tax collectors and sinners... doing what? Eating! There is something about sharing a meal together that moves any relationship past acquaintance toward friendship—faster than just about anything else we can do."*

Go around the group and ask how the B and L parts of BLESS are going so far.

Ask if some new insights or names have been given as their BLESSing assignment.

Discuss a time when you realized the power of eating with someone as a way to build a relationship.

Do you have any personal examples of how a meal changed your perspective or relationship with someone? Do you have any concerns or questions about this step?



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**This week, we are talking about SERVE.**

In the book *BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World*, Dave Ferguson says this about serve.

*"Jesus told us straight up, 'The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve....' (Matthew 20:28 NIV). He modeled for us that once you begin with prayer, listen, and eat with someone, there is a good chance that you'll discover how you can best serve the person God is asking you to bless."*

- Go around the group and ask how the B, L, and E parts of BLESS are going so far.
- Ask if some new insights or names have been given as their BLESSing assignment.
- Have you ever served someone, and it built your relationship in a surprising or significant way?
- Talk about examples of what this "serve" step could look like practically.

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**This week, we are talking about STORY.**

In the book *BLESS: 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World*, Dave Ferguson says this about story.

*"When people were ready to listen, Jesus would share His story. Like when doubting Thomas came to him asking, 'How can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me' (John 14:5-6 NIV). When you befriend and bless people, they feel relationally safe and want to know your story. Then, and only then, you can tell them how the love of God and Jesus's life, death, and resurrection have changed you."*

- How has the discussion of the BLESS practices changed your perspective of how to walk out the Great Commission given to us by Jesus?
- Has one of the letters stood out to you as more easy to accomplish? Why?
- Has one of the letters stood out to you as more difficult to accomplish? Why?
- Have you begun to put this into practice? If you have, share how it is going!
- Each week come prepared to share about your BLESS person.