

# B.L.E.S.S.



*Have you ever set up a bunch of dominoes? It is mesmerizing to watch an incredibly long string of dominoes knock one another over in succession. The key to seeing them tumble over is the amount of space between each domino. The whole thing comes to an abrupt stop if they are too spaced out. When it comes to making disciples, if we want to have an impact on someone else, we need to be relationally close enough to people to make a difference in their lives.*

## WHERE TO START WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

*Every follower of Jesus I know would agree with the idea that we should invest in others, that's not the problem. The issue is something that we have heard over and over again in response to challenging people to go make disciples: "I don't know where to start." We all have friends, neighbors, coworkers and family members that we deeply care about. We want them to know Jesus but the idea of evangelism seems like a massive leap. Explaining the Gospel to a friend or having to defend our faith with a coworker seems unbelievably intimidating. What if we told you that those big, scary steps aren't actually the first step in the process? Use this simple five step framework to begin investing in the lives of those that you love and begin to make an impact in their lives that pushes them towards hope in Jesus.*

**Use this simple five step process to begin taking steps toward reaching those you love with the Gospel.**

### STEP 1:

### BEGIN WITH PRAYER

*This should be the most obvious first step, but it is usually the one that gets the least attention. Pray for the people you want to come to know Jesus. Not just once...REGULARLY. We would do well to remember that God is the only one who can turn the hearts of men toward Him.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Take time to think about the people in your spheres of influence. (For a helpful resource, check out our [prayer calendar](#).) Take time to write down the names of the people closest to you that don't know Jesus and devote a few minutes to pray for those people. Keep that list somewhere you will see it regularly and continue to pray for those people as time goes on.



## STEP 2:

### LISTEN...more than you talk.

*We will never be able to make an impact in the lives of others if we never take the time to listen to what matters to them. Become someone who asks questions about their hobbies and habits, families and fears. Listen to their stories. Being present and listening to others is one of the greatest gifts you can give a person.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Look at the list of names you wrote down. How much do you know about these people? Do you know the names of their spouses and children? Have you taken time to listen to their stories? Begin brainstorming questions you can ask to learn more about their lives.

## STEP 3:

### EAT

*One thing you have in common with every living person on this planet: food consumption. The average person spends around four years of their life eating. Utilize this opportunity to spend time with people. Make it a regular practice in your life to invite a neighbor over for a meal, ask a coworker to go get lunch, or grab a bite to eat with a friend after work. If you look closely at the Gospels, you will regularly find Jesus sitting around a table with others sharing a meal. Let's follow in His footsteps and spend time eating with others.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Choose someone on the list to invite out for a coffee, beer, or meal over the next few weeks. As you continue to build these relationships, consider inviting them into your home and make them feel welcome in your life.

## STEP 4:

### SERVE

*As you listen to others, take note of things that they might need or enjoy. If your neighbor says they are going out of town for a summer vacation, offer to mow their lawn or water their garden. If your kids are on sports teams, volunteer to take some of the other kids to practice for another family. Take note of someone's coffee order and pick up their favorite drink one morning on your way to work. The key here is to be attentive to the needs of others and then be generous with your time and/or money to serve them.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Choose someone on the prayer calendar and do a random act of kindness for them. Continue to look for ways to serve others on a regular basis.

## STEP 5:

### SHARE

*When Jesus was here on earth He told a lot of stories. Stories have a way of gripping people's hearts. We believe that one of the best ways to share the Gospel is to share the story of how God has changed our lives and is actively at work in our story. If you have been praying for a person, listening to their needs, spending time eating with them and actively serving them, then eventually there will be an opportunity for you to share your story with them. When that time comes, be bold, share what Jesus means to you and trust the Holy Spirit to lead that conversation wherever He wants it to go.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Whenever you have an opportunity to share about the way Jesus has changed your life, be bold and use your story as a bridge to sharing the Gospel with those close to you. If you haven't already, use our **storytelling tool** and begin understanding how to share your story more naturally and effectively.

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## TRUST GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND ACT WITH URGENCY.

*The church has always been plan A for making disciples. If we don't take responsibility for reaching our friends and neighbors, no one else will. This is a high calling, but it is easier to begin than you think. Use these five simple BLESS steps to begin making a difference in the lives of those you love.*

*And remember, the pressure is off. God is ultimately the one in control of bringing people into a relationship with Him. Trust God's sovereignty and act with urgency.*

*One other thing that we want to make sure to mention. Maybe you read all of this and think, "That's great, but I really don't know anybody who doesn't already follow Jesus... How do I become friends with non-believers?" Great question. Or maybe you have a few people you are investing in but have the capacity to expand your sphere of influence to include more overlap with people who don't yet know Jesus. If this is you, we would encourage you to **join a "missional community."***

### MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

*A simple understanding of a missional community is a social group or activity that you are intentionally invested in so that you can build relationships with non-believers. Here are a few examples to get you started thinking in the right direction: join a short-term club or sports league, start a neighborhood book club, attend regular community events for something that interests you, take an exercise class (zumba, cycling, etc.). Other examples of missional communities are groups of people you already overlap with, but could simply become a little more intentional about meeting others. Other parents from your kid's class or sports teams, coworkers, people at the gym or anywhere else you spend regular time. We could give more examples but the idea is to simply be on mission for Jesus wherever you are and trust God to use you to reach more people with the Gospel.*

