

**WHAT'S YOUR  
NEXT STEP?**

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



**MIDWAYCHURCH**







# A YEAR OF BLESSING!

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no greater commandment than these." - Mark 12:30-31*

*What a beautiful command but what a hard task to live up to. The B.L.E.S.S. initiative is a guide to a sincere approach on how to intentionally and sacrificially love those you get to be a witness to where you WORK, PLAY, AND LIVE. Your neighbor is not just the person you live next door to but also the person with whom you live with, work, and play.*

*Use this book as a tool to identify who your neighbors are, how to begin praying for them, how to listen to their story, what it might look like to serve them or share a meal with them, and, finally, begin to share your testimony. By consistently living this way we believe that not only will it affect your life but also your entire neighborhood and community - one person at a time.*

*- John Theisen*

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Lead Pastor

# WHAT IS B.L.E.S.S.

**BLESS** is an approach to prayer and evangelism. It's more about loving our neighbors well and less about downloading information or memorizing scripts.

**B**egin with prayer



**L**isten



**E**at



**S**erve



**S**tory



*"...you must worship  
Christ as Lord of your  
life. And if someone  
asks about your hope  
as a believer, always  
be ready to explain it."*

*1 Peter  
3:15*









# **B** LOVE *egins with prayer*

Prayer is connecting to the Source that will change you! When you begin with prayer, God begins to change your heart, and **you begin to feel what God feels for other people**. They are no longer projects. When God's spirit allows you to feel what God feels, you get ideas that come from God, like "Send a text to your neighbor to see how he's doing" or "Ask your friend if she's got time for coffee this week." **God uses prayer to change others, but He also uses it to change you!**

**In prayer, we open ourselves to God and the leading of His Spirit.**

**In prayer, we focus our minds to recognize His promptings.**

**In prayer, we receive the direction we need to discover the people God is calling us to bless.**

"One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles..."

-Luke 6:12-16



# WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



The center square represents where you live. The eight surrounding houses represent your neighbors. Write each of your neighbors' names in the surrounding eight squares. Don't get hung up on being geographically accurate; just think about the eight people who live closest to you. Just ask yourself "Who is my neighbor?" and write in their names.

LIVE

WORK



PLAY



JESUS INVITES  
YOU TO

*Listen*



We live in a world where hardly anybody really listens to each other. If you want to love your neighbors and bless people God has put in your path, you have to become intentional about listening and listening to understand.

Living a life of blessing others, like Jesus did, is not a journey of the spectacular. In fact, it's usually best lived out in the regular. In the everyday. In these seemingly mundane moments of life, we can get within arm's reach of another person and actually listen to what's going on in their hearts and thoughts. That's when we may have our greatest opportunity to love and bless someone.



"All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas."

*- Acts 17:21*

# LISTENING TO THE HEART

Listening is not a talent some are born with and some are not. It is a skill that we develop and get better at over time.

So how do you develop it? One way is to come prepared to every conversation to use the four H's of listening. These are categories of questions that you can always ask:

## History:

"Tell me your story. Where did you grow up?"

## Heart:

"What's your favorite  
(team, restaurant, vacation destination)?"

## Habits:

"What are you into?"  
"What do you like to do with your free time?"

## Hurts:

"How are you doing with (name the situation)?"



**Listen**



**Being Known**



**Loved**



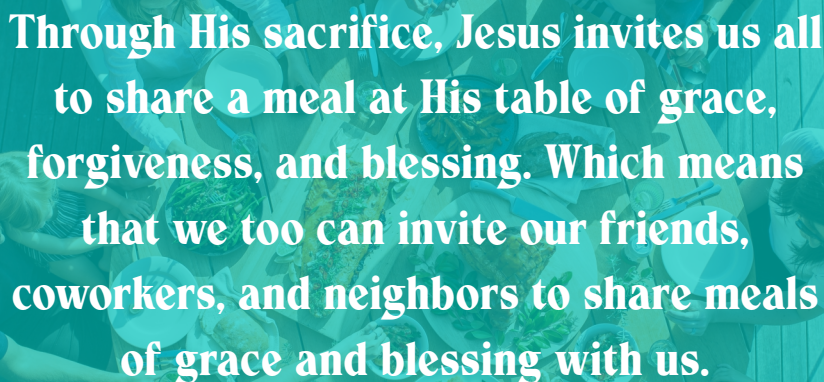
# AN OPPORTUNITY



# TO *Eat*

The missional practice of eating doesn't have to happen only in your house or on your dime! In fact, it can happen when you get invited to someone else's party and they are paying for it! Jesus is a great example of this.

Sometimes He hosted dinner for others (Matthew 14:13-21) and sometimes He got invited to parties (Luke 5:27-32, John 2:1-11). Whether it was dinner at His place or out with friends, He saw them as missional opportunities to deepen relationships and make friends.

A teal-tinted photograph of a group of people, including children and adults, sitting around a large table and sharing a meal. The table is set with various dishes, plates, and glasses. The image is partially obscured by the text overlay.

**Through His sacrifice, Jesus invites us all to share a meal at His table of grace, forgiveness, and blessing. Which means that we too can invite our friends, coworkers, and neighbors to share meals of grace and blessing with us.**



# MEAL CALENDAR

B.L.E.S.S. practices are not a program but a new way to live your life. Most of us eat three meals a day, seven days a week. You do not have to do anything different-just use any of the twenty-one opportunities to bless a friend or neighbor by sharing a meal. Use the chart below to write people's names down who you can share a meal with.

EAT	S	M	T	W	R	F	S
Breakfast							
Lunch							
Dinner							
Coffee							



# WE ARE SAVED TO *Serve*

Serving together can be a tremendously bonding experience. The missional practice of serving doesn't have to be only you serving your neighbor; it can also be you and your neighbor serving alongside each other. Look for opportunities to serve your community (Shepherd's Storehouse, PowerPacks, Denton Freedom House, etc.) and invite your neighbors to join you.



"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve..."

*- Matthew 20:28*



# R-P-M-S



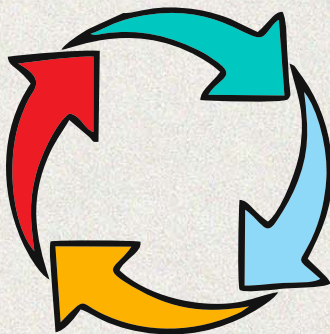
Just as RPMs (revolutions per minute) can help you gauge the health of an engine or motor, a similar acrostic can be used to monitor your own personal well being for many years. This simple tool of R-P-M-S can help you discern how to serve your neighbor.

## Relational

How are my neighbors doing relationally? How is their home life? Do they have close friends?

## Spiritual

Do they sense something is missing in their life?  
Are they willing to have you pray for them?  
Do they initiate spiritual conversations?  
Are they moving closer to God?



## Physical

How is my neighbor's health?  
Do they mention not being able to sleep? Does their energy level seem good?

## Mental

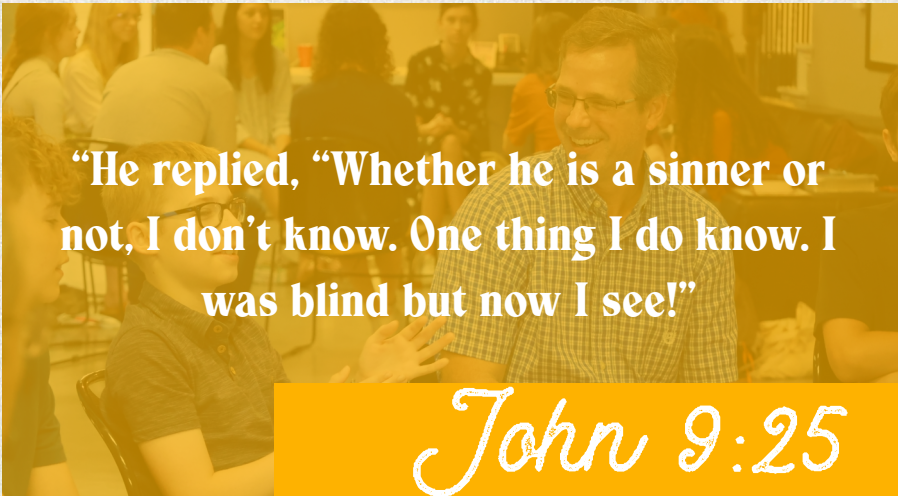
Are there any signs of anxiety? Is there any indication of depression?



# IT'S TIME TO SHARE YOUR *S*tory



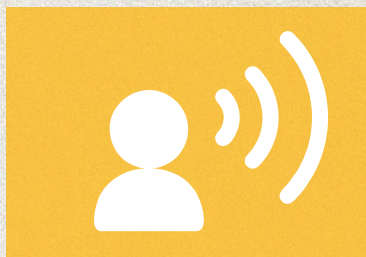
Storytelling is an art. Every great story has characters, a setting, a plot, a conflict, and a resolution. The character is who the story is about. The setting is the place where it happens. The plot is the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Conflict is the problem in the story, and the resolution is how the problem gets worked out. Without these elements, our stories can become rambling, disconnected, and uninteresting. By simply telling your story in the three parts on the next page, you will include all components of a great story and share yours in a way that is clear, concise, and compelling.

A background image with an orange tint showing a man and a woman in conversation. The man, on the right, is wearing glasses and a plaid shirt, smiling and gesturing with his hands. The woman, on the left, is also wearing glasses and a dark shirt, looking towards the man. They appear to be in a casual setting like a cafe or a meeting room.

**“He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”**

*John 9:25*

# THREE PART STORY



## *1. Who you were before you met*

What was your life like before Jesus? Or if you grew up in church knowing all about Jesus, what was your life like before you got serious about following Him?

## *2. How you met*

How did you become a Christ follower? Did you go through a particularly tough time in your life that led you to God?

**JESUS**

## *3. What your life has been since*

What difference has following Jesus made in your life? How has knowing Him impacted how you walk through both the good and the hard times in life?



## **MORE QUESTIONS?**

If you have more specific questions or are ready to take the next step as a Christ follower, make sure to visit our Next Steps Center in the foyer or email us at [info@midwaychurch.org](mailto:info@midwaychurch.org)

You can always text "reachmidway" to 84576 and click on the reply link for further questions.