A Series Study Guide

Fall 2026

SAY → YES

BECOMING A PERSON OF BLESSING

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

SERIES INTRODUCTON

Week 1 –
Begin with Prayer
Mark 1.32-39; John 5.16-20

Week 2 –
Listen
John 4.4-30, 39-42

Week 3 –
Eat
Matthew 9.9-13

Week 4 –
Serve
John 13.1-7

Week 5 –
Share
John 1:35-49

NEXT STEPS



See what God can do with one small “yes”

Most of us want our lives to make a difference. We want the people around us to experience the love of Jesus. We want our neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and ordinary relationships to be touched by the presence of God.

But somewhere between that desire and actually living it, we often get stuck:
“I would, but I’m too busy.”
“I don’t know enough.”
“I’m not good at talking about faith.”
“I don’t really know my neighbors.”
“I wouldn’t even know where to start.”

Before long, “I can’t because…” becomes the end of the conversation.

Jesus invites us into another way.

When you watch Jesus in the Gospels, His mission often unfolds through surprisingly ordinary things: a prayer, a

conversation, a meal, a towel, an invitation. Jesus pays attention to the Father, notices the person in front of Him, makes room at the table, responds to real needs, and invites people to discover the life of God for themselves.

That is the heart behind BLESS:

B — Begin with Prayer
Pray for neighbors, family, co-workers, and friends who don't follow Jesus. Ask God where He is already at work.

L — Listen
Give your attention to the person in front of you – listen to them and listen for the Spirit.

E — Eat
Life happens around the table. Connect with others by sharing a meal.

S — Serve
Respond with love to the needs God puts in front of you.

S — Share the Story
Tell how you have experienced Jesus and invite someone to come and see.

These aren't five steps for becoming better at evangelism. These are practices that help us **live and love like Jesus**. They train us to become prayerful, attentive, hospitable, helpful, and ready to speak naturally about the One who is changing our lives.

Often this all begins with a simple change in perspective.

Throughout this series, we are going to practice moving from "I can't because…" to "I can if…"

That doesn't mean pretending our limitations aren't real. Your schedule may actually be full. You may not feel confident. Your home may not be impressive. You may not

know what to say. The question isn't whether the constraint exists. The question is whether the constraint gets the final word.

I can if... I attach prayer to something I already do.
I can if... I ask one more question.
I can if... I make room at the table I already have.
I can if... I respond to one need in front of me.
I can if... I simply share what Jesus has done in my life.

Small acts of obedience become places where we learn to recognize and join what God is already doing.

For these five weeks, we're practicing one thing: the courage to say yes to the way of Jesus.

Yes to prayer.
Yes to people.
Yes to love in action.
Yes to sharing the hope we've found in Him.

One faithful yes at a time, we learn to live and love like Jesus. What could be possible if you simply said yes to the invitation of Jesus?

Additional Resources

B.L.E.S.S. 5 Everyday Ways to Love Your Neighbor and Change the World, Dave and Jon Ferguson

Surprise the World: The Five Habits of Highly Missional People, Michael Frost

The Forgotten Ways, Alan Hirsch

A Beautiful Constraint, Adam Morgan and Mark Barden

Say Yes
Week 1

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: Mark 1.32-39; John 5.16-20

SERMON TITLE

Begin with Prayer

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“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.”

- Jon Ferguson

“Look to see where God is working and join Him.”

- Henry Blackaby

Week 1: Reflect and Discuss

1. What “I can’t because…” thought most often keeps me from joining God’s work?

2. In Mark 1:37, the disciples say, “Everyone is looking for you!” What expectations or pressures are they placing on Jesus?

3. How does Jesus respond to those expectations? What surprises you about His response?

4. What would it look like for prayer to become the starting point of mission rather than a last resort?

5. As you sit with this passage, what might the Spirit be showing you about your current pace or priorities?

6. In John 5, Jesus speaks about watching for what the Father is doing. Where might God already be at work around you that you have not yet noticed? Ask God to show you.

7. Who are five people/households I can begin praying for by name this week?

8. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

9. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Begin with Prayer

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark,
Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place,
where he prayed.” - Mark 1.5

Most of us don’t need to be convinced that prayer matters. The challenge is making room for it.

We tell ourselves:
I can’t because my mornings are rushed.
I can’t because I forget.
I can’t because I’m not very consistent.
I can’t because I don’t know what to say.

But what if we stopped waiting for the perfect prayer life and asked a different question: How can I make prayer possible in the life I actually have?

Maybe:
I can if I pray during my commute.
I can if I set a reminder on my phone.
I can if I keep five names beside my coffee maker.
I can if I pray while I walk the dog.
I can if I start with five minutes instead of waiting for thirty.

The goal is not to become impressive at prayer. The goal is to become a person who prioritizes seeking the Father’s heart. According to John 5, this was the foundation of Jesus’ ministry.

Prayer Practice: Bless Five
Choose five people or households who are close to you relationally and are not currently following Jesus. Reflect on the **places and faces** already in your life.

Consider the **places** you go each week: your neighborhood, workplace, school, gym, coffee shop, kids’ activities, or favorite hangout. Then notice the **faces** connected to those places. Who do you see regularly? Who do you already know by name?

Who might God be inviting you to notice and pray for more intentionally?

You don't need to find five strangers. Start with your everyday "places and faces" in your life. Choose five names. Then pray: 5 people. 5 minutes per day. 5 days a week. For 5 weeks.

As you pray, begin with blessing.

Blessing prayer is simply asking God to bring His goodness into someone's life. Pray for their relationships, work, health, home, burdens, hopes, and spiritual hunger. Ask God to meet them, encourage them, provide for them, and reveal His love to them.

To bless someone in prayer is to ask God for His good in their life — and to make ourselves available to join Him in that good.

That posture matters. We are not praying for people as projects. We are learning to want God's good for them and to see them with greater love and attention.

Over time, prayer may begin to change the way you see them. You may notice a burden you missed before, a need you could respond to, an opening for conversation, or just a deeper compassion growing in your own heart.

Keep their names somewhere visible. Keep a notebook of what God is doing in you and in them. Pay attention to answered prayers, repeated nudges, changing circumstances, or moments when the Spirit brings them to mind.

I Can If...

What usually keeps you from praying consistently?
I can't because _____.

Now look at the life you actually have. What would have to be true to discover your "yes" to God's invitation to pray?
I can if _____.

Say Yes
Week 2

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: John 4.4-30, 39-42

SERMON TITLE

Listen

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“The first act of love is attention.”
- Dallas Willard

“Hearing is an act of the senses, but listening is an act of the will.”
- Adam McHugh

“Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable.”
- David W. Augsburger

Week 2: Reflect and Discuss

1. As you look at John 5, what barriers are present in this encounter, and how does Jesus move toward her anyway?

2. What do you notice about the woman’s response as the conversation unfolds?

3. What is the difference between listening to someone and simply waiting for your turn to speak?

4. What makes you feel anxious or inadequate in spiritual conversations?

5. What might it look like to listen both to the person in front of you and to the Spirit at the same time?

6. What question could help you become more curious about someone’s story this week?

7. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

8. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Listen

"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak,
and slow to become angry." - James 1.19

Listening sounds simple, but it can be surprisingly difficult. We rush. We interrupt. We prepare our response while the other person is still talking. Sometimes, especially in spiritual conversations, we feel pressure to have the right answer or steer the conversation somewhere specific.

That pressure can sound like:
I can't because I don't know what to say.
I can't because I'm not good at spiritual conversations.
I can't because I don't want to make things awkward.

This week, try a different posture:
I can if I become curious enough to ask one more question.

Jesus often loved people by asking questions and making space for them to answer. He asked, "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mark 10:51), "What are you looking for?" (John 1:38), and "Who do you say I am?" (Matthew 16:15). His questions were not a technique for steering people toward a predetermined response; they drew people out, exposed what was happening beneath the surface, and invited honest engagement.

Practice: Make Space for One Conversation
Think about the five people you began praying for last week. Choose one person and create space for a real conversation. You don't need an agenda. Start naturally.

How have you been doing lately?
What has life been like for you?
What has been bringing you joy?
What has been hard?
Is there anything I could pray about with you?

Then practice one simple thing: Ask one more question.

Instead of fixing, teaching, correcting, or turning the conversation toward yourself, stay curious:
“Tell me more about that.”
“What was that like for you?”
“How has that been affecting you?”
“What do you hope happens?”

Listening communicates something powerful: You matter. Your story matters. I’m not trying to get somewhere else.

You don’t need to force a spiritual conversation. Aim for a meaningful conversation. A meaningful conversation moves beyond casual talk by getting genuinely curious about someone’s story—their relationships, joys, struggles, hopes, and what matters most to them.

Three simple steps:

- Be present. Put away distractions and give the person your full attention.
- Stay curious. Ask open-ended questions, then ask one more instead of rushing to respond.
- Listen beneath the words. Notice what keeps coming up (their hopes, hurts, questions, and longings) while quietly asking the Spirit, “What are You helping me notice?”

You are not trying to manufacture something. You are learning to become present enough to recognize where Jesus may already be present in the person’s life.

I Can If...
What usually keeps you from listening well?
I can’t because _____.

Now think about one person God has already placed in your life. What would have to be true for you to stay curious, ask one more question, and trust the Spirit with the conversation?
I can if _____.

Say Yes
Week 3

Date:
Speaker:
Main Scripture: Matthew 9.9-13

SERMON TITLE

Eat

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“The table ought to be the primary symbol of the Christian gathering. It represents hospitality, inclusivity, generosity, and grace.”

- Michael Frost

“The great thing about using meals to do community and mission is that it doesn't add anything to your busy schedule.”

- Tim Chester

“In Luke’s Gospel Jesus is either going to a meal, at a meal, or coming from a meal.”

- Robert J. Karris

Week 3: Reflect and Discuss

1. What do you notice about who is at the table with Jesus in Matthew 9:9–13? What seems to bother the Pharisees about Jesus’ choice of table companions? What does Jesus’ response reveal about the kind of people He moves toward?

2. What assumptions do you carry about what “good hospitality” is supposed to look like?

3. What part of hospitality feels hardest for you: time, space, energy, confidence, mess, or something else?

4. Where might you be tempted to wait for someone to change before making room for them?

5. Is there someone you’ve been praying for who you could invite into a meal, coffee, walk, or family rhythm?

6. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

7. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Eat

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking,
and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard,
a friend of tax collectors and sinners."
– Luke 7.34

Hospitality does not have to mean a spotless house, a perfect meal, or adding another event to your calendar.

Jesus regularly made room for people around tables. He ate with tax collectors and sinners, accepted invitations into people's homes, and let ordinary meals become places of grace, friendship, and discovery. Around the table, people were seen, welcomed, challenged, and invited closer to God.

Jesus shows us that hospitality does not have to be impressive to be meaningful. Sometimes simply sharing what we already have can become a way for someone to experience the welcome of God.

So this week, the invitation is simple: Make room in the life you already have.

Practice: Eat
Think about the five people you have been praying for. Is there one person you could invite into something you are already doing?

Maybe:

- coffee before work
- lunch with a coworker
- dessert with a neighbor
- pizza in the backyard
- an open seat at the family table
- joining someone else in their home or space

The goal is not to impress anyone. The goal is presence, friendship, and welcome.

Keep It Simple
Ask yourself: What am I already doing that could include one more person?

Hospitality becomes much more possible when we stop thinking, “What do I need to create or curate?” and start asking, “Where could I make room in what I’m already doing?”

You may not have the perfect home, schedule, or anything. But you may already have a table, a coffee break, a lunch hour, a front porch, or an evening that could hold one more person.

When you are together, resist the urge to make the moment “spiritual.” Be present. Listen. Enjoy the meal. Ask questions. Let the person feel that they are not an interruption.

It Takes Time
Research on friendship suggests it takes roughly 40–60 hours together to move from acquaintance to casual friend, around 80–100 hours to become friends, and more than 200 hours to become close friends.

In other words, relationship takes time.

And if disciple-making happens through relationship, then there is a cost to joining Jesus in His mission: our attention, our availability, our schedules. If we want to see the life of Jesus take root in the people and places around us, we have to make room for people.

Love takes time. So we have to choose to give it.

I Can If...
What usually keeps you from practicing hospitality?
I can’t because _____.

Now look at the life you actually have. Where could you make room for someone else in a the things you’re already doing?
I can if _____.

Say Yes
Week 4

Date:
Speaker:
Main Scripture: John 13.1-7

SERMON TITLE

Serve

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“Relationships are more effective than programs because they are organic and ongoing.”

- Jay Pathak & Dave Runyon

“We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God.”

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“Never think that a small action done to your neighbor is not worth much … it is not how much we do that is pleasing to God, but how much love we put into the doing.”

- Mother Teresa

Week 4: Reflect and Discuss

1. What do you notice about what Jesus knows in John 13:1–3 before He gets up to wash the disciples’ feet?

2. What does foot-washing communicate in that culture about status, humility, and relationship?

4. What do you notice about the fact that Jesus washes the feet of people who will fail Him, misunderstand Him, and betray Him?

5. Where do you see the difference between serving someone and trying to control or fix them?

6. What is one need God has already helped you notice—and what is one small thing love could do about it this week?

7. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

8. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Serve

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
- Mark 10.45

By now, you've been praying for people, listening more carefully, and making room in your life. Over time, something begins to happen: real needs become visible.

We're not talking abstract needs or problems around the world. We begin to see the hurts and needs of the people we're praying for.

Someone may need encouragement during a tough week. Someone may need help thinking through a big decision. Someone may need a ride, a meal, or an extra set of hands. Someone may need a friend who will sit with them in grief. Someone may simply need a friend who remembers what they said last week and asks how they're doing.

This is where serving begins.

Jesus did not love people in the abstract. His love took shape in front of real people, in real moments, with what was needed then. Sometimes He healed. Sometimes He fed. Sometimes He touched. Sometimes He stopped. Sometimes He simply stayed present.

Serving does not always mean fixing a problem. Often, it means responding with what love requires and what you actually have to give.

Pay Attention to What You've Heard
Think back over the people you have been praying for and the conversations you have shared.

Ask: What have they actually told me?

What do they seem to be carrying right now?
What would communicate genuine love?
What could I offer with the time, wisdom, presence, skills, relationships, or resources I already have?

Resist the temptation to decide what someone needs without listening. Good service grows out of relationship.

And remember: sometimes the most loving thing you can offer is not a solution. It may be your presence. Your encouragement. Your experience. A helpful connection. An hour of your time. A willingness to show up again.

Practice: Do One Thing
You do not have to solve everything. Choose one humble, practical response to a real need you have noticed.

Send the text. Make the call. Bring the meal. Offer the ride. Share what you know. Sit with them. Help with the project. Make the introduction.

And whenever possible, don't only serve for people. Serve with them. Let the relationship remain mutual, dignifying, and human.

Ask the Spirit: "What would love do here—and what have You already put in my hands?" Then do that.

I Can If...
What usually keeps you from responding when you notice a need?
I can't because _____.

Now think about the people God has already placed in your life. If you stopped trying to solve everything, what small act of love could become possible?
I can if _____.

Notice the need. Use what you have. Pick up the towel.

Say Yes
Week 5

Date:

Speaker:

Main Scripture: John 1.35-49

SERMON TITLE

Share the Story

Main Points | Verses Used	Notes

REFLECTIONS

Reflect on how to apply today's sermon to your life

Quotes:

“Our responsibility is not to persuade, or to convince, or to defend. Our responsibility is to be a witness.”
- Scot McKnight

“Your story is the best evidence you can offer anyone!”
- Dave Ferguson.

“How can we help them take the next step toward Jesus?”
- Don Everts & Doug Schaupp

Week 5: Reflect and Discuss

1. What do you notice about how Andrew responds after spending time with Jesus?

2. Who has helped you move toward Jesus simply by sharing what they had experienced?

3. What fear most often keeps you from sharing your story or extending an invitation?

4. What could “come and see” look like for someone you know: a meal, a prayer, a Discovery Bible Study, a gathering, or another conversation?

5. What would it look like to trust the Spirit with the outcome instead of feeling responsible for someone’s response?

6. You don’t have to share what you don’t know. What do you know about Jesus that is yours to tell?

7. How is God calling you to respond to this passage? Try writing an “I will” statement (“I will _____”) that captures your response. Then, go and do!

8. Who can you tell about how God has met you in His Word? Pray for an opportunity to share it with them.

Practice: Share the Story

“Come and See”
- John 1.46

For many of us, sharing our faith can feel intimidating—or even wrong. We do not want to pressure people, make things awkward, or turn a friendship into a project. And sometimes we assume that talking about Jesus means jumping too quickly into a spiritual conversation before trust has had time to grow. But healthy spiritual conversations usually develop more naturally than that.

They often move from:
Casual conversation — everyday life, shared interests, what is happening around us.

Meaningful conversation — joys, struggles, hopes, relationships, and what really matters.

Spiritual conversation — questions about faith, God, purpose, pain, prayer, or what gives life meaning.

Discovery conversation — opening Scripture together, praying, asking honest questions, and helping someone discover Jesus for themselves.

You do not have to force that progression. You simply stay present, listen well, and notice when a deeper door opens.

That is what we see in John 1.

Andrew finds Simon and tells him what he has discovered: “We have found the Messiah.” Philip finds Nathanael and points him toward Jesus. When Nathanael pushes back, Philip does not win an argument. He simply says: “Come and see.”

They share what they know, and they invite someone else to discover Jesus for themselves.

You do not have to share what you do not know. You do not have to answer every question. You can simply bear witness to what you have experienced.

Practice: Share The Story
Take a few minutes this week and prepare a short version of your story with Jesus.

< Before
What was happening in your life? What were you longing for, struggling with, or experiencing?

+ Encounter
How did Jesus meet you? What did you begin to discover about Him?

> After
What difference is Jesus making in your life now? How are you still being changed?

Come and See
A story can open a door, but you do not have to force someone through it. Stay curious.

You might ask:
“Have you ever experienced something like that?”
“What has your experience with faith been?”
“Would you ever want to explore that together?”
And when it feels natural, offer a simple come and see invitation.

I Can If...
What usually keeps you from talking naturally about Jesus?
I can’t because _____.

Now think about what you actually know and have experienced. What would have to be true for you to share one honest part of your story and offer one simple invitation?
I can if _____.

Next Steps
As we wrap up our series, what's your next step in the direction of Jesus?

Take the Next Step: House Church
Following Jesus was never meant to happen alone. House Churches are small communities of everyday disciples learning to live and love like Jesus together.

We gather around tables, Scripture, prayer, friendship, and mission, encouraging one another to notice where God is already at work and practice saying yes in the places and relationships He has given us. If you're ready for a simple next step, find a House Church near you and join the journey.

Find your House Church: www.findcommunity.com/housechurch

Begin with Prayer: The Prayer Practice
If we want to begin with prayer, we have to learn to make space for it. The Prayer Practice is a four-week workshop designed to help you move beyond simply learning about prayer and actually practice being with God, listening for His voice, enjoying His presence, and learning to join Him in the world.

If your "I can't because…" is I don't know how to pray or I struggle to make space for prayer, this could be your next yes.

Thursdays, October 8–29 | 6:30–8:00pm
Register: www.findcommunity.com/events

Friends on Mission: Disciple-Making Cohort
Want to grow as a disciple-maker alongside other practitioners?

Disciple-Making Cohorts are small groups of practitioners who meet for coaching, encouragement, and accountability as we learn to make disciples in everyday life. Cohorts meet at various times throughout the week.

Email Pastor Brett [BrettSanner@findcommunity.com] to get connected to a cohort that fits your schedule.

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