

WITNESS

One of the principles for Witness is, *“I will consistently serve those in my communities and share the message of the gospel where I live, work, and play.”* In this resource, we will be addressing the most natural way to go about serving through hospitality. We will be addressing two simple principles of hospitality that can take your ministry with your neighbors a long way: **Bless** and **Eat**.

BLESS YOUR NEIGHBORS

The first way that we can reach those in our communities is by blessing them, which looks like serving them in some way or meeting a physical need. For clarification, a physical need doesn't just mean that it has to be resolved with money, although that can be a great way to meet a physical need. A physical need could also be met with encouragement or prayer. In light of encouragement, Ephesians 4:29 paints the picture as to why it can be so powerful:

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

You never know what words can do to change the trajectory of a person's day on a smaller scale, or on a much larger scale, even their life through the hope of the gospel. In light of things that you can physically do for people, you could cut someone's grass, shovel their driveway, pay a bill for them, or buy them coffee. Grabbing coffee with someone can go a long way in a society where we are the most “connected,” yet the loneliest.

This is an exciting thing to do, and obviously makes us feel good when we are able to meet the needs of another. However, this cannot be the primary reason why we bless those around us. The reason why we bless is to **speak the name of Jesus**. No one should ever question where you stand when it comes to your faith in Christ. No one should wonder, “Is his person a Christian, or just a ‘good person’?” Leave them with no misconception and use these opportunities to let them know that Jesus loves them and that you're trying to serve them the way Christ has served you.

EAT WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS

Blessing is so important, but I would say eating with people could have an even greater impact. I am not saying this because I am a “foodie,” but because the Lord has designed the table to be a place where vulnerability happens. We need to have **rhythms of a lifestyle of love, not just duties**. Eating with someone will allow for you to go deeper in conversation with them than you would have been able to standing at their door. Serving someone a meal allows for them to experience Christian hospitality, which the Lord has designed to be a beautiful gift. Inviting others into your home shows that you genuinely care about them and desire to truly get to know them. Let’s be a church body who is less about inviting people to the church building to hear the pastor talk about the Lord, and more about inviting people into our homes to let the Lord move in a mighty way **through us**, simply being obedient to His commands.

My challenge to you is to look to **bless** and **eat** with an unbeliever once a week. This doesn’t have to be a lot, but it can be within the confines of your schedule. Grab lunch with an unsaved co-worker and pay for it. If you’re grilling out at home, invite over your neighbors. Keep it simple – invite people into what you and your family are already doing! You will be amazed at what the Lord can do through blessing and eating with the community that God has placed in your life.