



12th March 2017

It's the last week of 'BLESS' — and 'S' is for



Arguably, this week will be the most challenging topic of 'Called to BLESS.' We have made many excuses why we cannot, or do not need, to talk about Jesus: "I don't know enough," "I'm not good with words," "I don't want to come across too strong and turn them away," "We have to 'always preach the gospel, and if necessary, use words'—which means, I don't necessarily *ever* have to use words."

If this is true, then I have three questions:

"For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

How then can they call on the one they have not believed in?

And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?

And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" - Romans 10:13-14

You have been sent: the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), the Jesus Mission, is very clear, very personal and not optional for disciples — followers — of Jesus. Jesus promised us, in Acts 1:8, that we will receive power when we receive the Holy Spirit—and we will be *His witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth*. This means telling His story. It'd be pretty hard to be a witness, and tell His story, without using words — don't you think?

The gospel must always be preached in word and in deed. The first four weeks of 'Called to BLESS' prepared us to line up our good deeds as those that reflect Jesus' nature in light of His mission: to help people find their way back to God. This last week prepares us to line up our words with our actions.

Are we really so concerned about being laughed at, or thought of as some kind of Jesus freak, that we would keep the greatest story ever heard and ever told, to ourselves? Dave Ferguson challenges us on this: 'Are you more concerned about what people think of you, than whether or not they find their way back to God?'

The story of a changed life is the best evidence of true salvation and witness to a true, real, loving, saving God. *Your story of your changed life* is important! Your story doesn't need to be full of drama, or convincing and well-rehearsed arguments: your story must be honest, and point to God. You cannot be a follower without having experienced Jesus, and been changed by that experience. If you haven't been changed, it wasn't Jesus you met. You understand what it is to know God; keep it real and tell your story.



share your highs and lows.



read a verse or passage of scripture in your Bible.

*This week has a focus on Nicodemus talking with Jesus
in John 3:1-17*



talk about how the Bible passages relate to your highs and lows, or ideas from your further reading.

*What is something that you heard today, that challenged your perspective,
or helped you to see something in a new light?*

Tell your story. If this is something new to you, you could try following this outline, to help you share your story: **Before**—My story before I committed my life to following Jesus: what was missing? **During**—My story of how Jesus made the difference: what did this cause in you? What commitment did it bring? **After**—My story after I made a commitment to following Jesus: what is different now in your life and for eternity? Remember to point to Jesus—this is about Him!

Read 1 Peter 3:15—16. When you have set Christ apart in your heart, it makes a difference and changes how you live. You know grace, and forgiveness, and your purpose. You have hope. You live your relationships differently. You make financial decisions differently. You approach your career differently. Have you *really* set aside Christ as Lord in your heart? Is Jesus the Lord and leader of your life?



pray for your highs and lows, for your family, and for the world.

Pray for willingness to meet challenging needs, in selfless service to others.



bless one another—in your words, listening, eating and serving!