

## Christ Community // B.L.E.S.S. Community Group Guide // May 2-8, 2021

### Take some time to share:

One thing that you are thankful for this week.

One thing you are in need of (try and stick to one thing and personally related).

How can the group help?

### Week 4 – Eat

**Message Big Idea-** In order to BLESS our neighbor, Jesus invites us to share meals together.

**Scripture -** Matthew 9:9-13

**Icebreaker -** If you had to eat the same meal once every day for the rest of your life, what would it be?

**Opening Thought -** To live out our mission to help people find their way back to God, we can use the BLESS acronym. This week we focus on “E” for eating. Often in our culture, and many others, sharing a meal is a great way to get to know someone better. Eating isn’t just another item on the to-do list, but it is often something we enjoy and do multiple times a day! How can we be a blessing to someone while we eat?

### Bible Discussion

1. Read Matthew 9:9-13. Why do you think that Matthew followed him? What do you think they discussed at Matthew’s house?
2. In this passage, what could Jesus mean by, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick? But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”
3. Read the Henri Nouwen quote below and discuss how it intersects with Jesus method of “eating with sinners.”

***“When we invite friends for a meal, we do much more than offer them food for their bodies. We offer friendship, fellowship, good conversation, intimacy, and closeness. When we say, ‘Help yourself... take some more... don’t be shy... have another glass...’ we offer our guests not only our food and drink but also ourselves. A spiritual bond grows, and we become food and drink for one another.” -Henri J.M. Nouwen***

### Life Application

4. Share a time that you had a meal with someone that you remember as being a special event for you or your relationship. What made it so special?

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5. What are the barriers in your life that may keep you from inviting someone to share a meal with you? How might you break down some of those barriers?
6. How often do you share a meal with someone during the week? Are there times that you could invite others to join you that wouldn't be too difficult?
7. Who comes to your mind when we discuss our mission of helping people find their way back to God? How could you plan to bless them through eating?

**Challenge** - Who has God been calling you to bless and help to find their way back to him? Continue to pray for them, listen to them, and this week, invite them to share a meal with you. Next week share with the group how it went.

*"There is something profoundly satisfying about sharing a meal. Eating together, breaking bread together, is one of the oldest and most fundamentally unifying of human experiences." - Barbara Coloroso*

### Week 4 – Leader's Guide

**Icebreaker & Opening Thought** - Begin with a lighthearted discussion about food and people's favorite meal. Discuss how sharing a meal with people is a great way to get to know one another. We often are not intentional with our meal planning. What if we view our eating as an opportunity to bless someone and be intentional about it? What a difference we could make in the lives of others!

**Bible Study** - As you read the passage in Matthew, discuss what Matthew might have been thinking about Jesus' invitation to follow him. Why did he follow him? Discuss what the conversation may have been like at Matthew's house with Jesus and the "sinners." How would it compare to the Pharisees and their interactions with sinners? Jesus is calling them out – memorizing passages, following rituals and shunning who we think of as sinners, or the equivalent of tax collectors in today's society, is not what we are called to do. Jesus lives out the principals he preaches and encourages his followers to do the same.

**Life Application** - Begin the discussion sharing with one another memories from a special meal. Are there commonalities amongst group members that made the meals special? Can we replicate that to BLESS someone else? Use that discussion to begin to brainstorm what is currently holding us back from inviting others to share a meal. How can we overcome these barriers so that we can help people find their way back to God and not just hope they do!

**Challenge** - Challenge the group to invite someone that God is calling them to Bless to share in a meal together. Have them share their experiences next week.