



Surprise the World!

The Five Habits of Highly Missional People

MICHAEL FROST

Group Discussion Guide

Get the most out of this series

These group studies could be used as a standalone bible study series but they are designed to be used in conjunction with a Sunday sermon series and personal reading of Michael Frost's book "Surprise the World." The book is not long or difficult to read and the benefit of doing the extra reading will enhance group discussion.

This series is about developing habits to help us be more effective in living out God's mission. Habits are not always easy to develop so the series will be most fruitful if the group commits to working on the habits together. Gracious, constructive accountability can be very helpful in living for Christ.

The group studies involve watching a brief video. These can be viewed and downloaded for free from the Crossover website <http://www.crossover.org.au/surprise-the-world/>

Paperback copies of the book "Surprise the World" are available from Christian bookstores or you can purchase an e-book version.

Some e-book options include:

<https://www.navpress.com/p/surprise-the-world/8725/e-book>

Or

<https://www.koorong.com/search/product/surprise-the-world-the-five-habits-of-highly/9781631465178.jhtml>

Week 1

Habits of People on Mission

- 1) Have you met people who seem to be good at evangelism? Why did you think they were good at it?
- 2) When have you seen people's actions or character used by God to point to Jesus?

Read Colossians 4:2-6 (read it at least twice in the group using two different translations if possible)

- 3) Why do you think watchfulness and thankfulness (vs 2) might be important in prayer?
- 4) In verses 3-4 Paul has some specific prayer points for him and his party of traveling missionaries. What are they and why might they be important for an evangelist to pray for?
- 5) In verses 5 and 6 Paul gives instruction to those who are not Apostles or missionaries but people seeking to live for Christ in their "everyday" lives. As a group summarise verses 5& 6 in your own words.
- 6) Look at the quote and chart from author Michael Frost below. Michael draws a distinction between those who are gifted evangelists and those who are evangelistic, but not necessarily gifted evangelists. Does this twofold approach to evangelism line up with what we have studied and with your knowledge of Scripture?

“...the apostle Paul assumes a twofold approach to the ministry of evangelism. First, he affirms the gifting of evangelists – interestingly, not the gift of evangelism but the evangelist herself is the gift (see Ephesians 4:11). Second he writes as though all believers are to be evangelistic in their general orientation.” Michael Frost, “Surprise the World” page 2

Mike suggest the following

Type of Minister	Priorities	Type of Spoken Ministry
Gifted Evangelist	Clarity in the Gospel; Alertness for Opportunities	Bold Proclamation
Evangelistic Believers	Prayer, Watchfulness, Wise Socializing.	Gracious Answers

From “Surprise the World” by Michael Frost

- 7) Using Colossians 4 as a base Mike suggests that priorities for evangelistic believers in witness should be prayer, watchfulness and wise socialisation. What might this look like in our lives?

Watch the Introduction video

- 8) Does anything stand out for you in this video?
- 9) What habits or rhythms have you found helpful as you have sought to follow Jesus?
- 10) Do you agree that there are habits that could help you be more effective in living on mission?

Over the next five weeks we will be exploring 5 habits that can help us live the kind of lives that have an impact, the kind of lives that may get people curious. The

habits are biblical and can be summarised using Mike Frost's BELLS model. **B**less people. **E**at together. **L**isten to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. **L**earn Jesus Christ. And see ourselves as **S**ent by God.

This Week

Read chapter 1, 2 and 3 of "Surprise the World" (they are short chapters)

If you have time - Look at 1 Peter 3:15-16. What similarities do you see with Colossians 4:5-6?

Pray

Read Colossians 4:2-7 again and this time let it to prompt the direction of your group prayer time.

Pray that the Holy Spirit would work in people's lives drawing them to faith.

Week 2

Habit 1: Bless

- 1) When have you felt blessed by someone? What made you feel blessed?

Read Romans 12:9-21 (read it at least twice in the group using two different translations if possible)

- 2) Blessing others is directly associated with loving others. The word bless is only used in vs 14 (in NIV translation). Brainstorm what other instructions could be seen as blessing in these verses.

Watch Video on Habit 1: Bless.

The Old English Word for Bless means _____

Three ways to bless

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

- 3) What stands out for you in this video teaching?

- 4) Even a surface reading of the New Testament reveals that Christians are meant to be a blessing to those around them. What kind of things might keep us from blessing others?

“...the key to successful blessing is that the recipient must *feel blessed*. Remember, our actions ought to add strength to their arm. If people feel manipulated or used

by our blessing, those blessings can hardly be considered as such. Giving gifts in order to get a return from someone (like bribing people to attend our churches) leaves a nasty taste in people's mouths. Keep Paul's words in Philippians 2:3-4 in mind:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Even if no one asks us about our motives, we resolve to live out a habitual rhythm of gift giving, time spending, and affirmation sharing." Michael Frost "Surprise the World" page 36-37

5) What kind of things might stop people feeling blessed?

6) How does Romans 12:14 intensify the challenge of blessing?

7) What might it look like for you, if you developed this habit of blessing?

8) What might it look like for our Church if most people shared this habit?

This Week

Read chapter 4 of "Surprise the World"

Will you take the Bless challenge? Will you start asking God about who you can bless this week?

If your group is up for the challenge keep each other accountable. Begin each group meeting by asking who have you blessed this week? This kind of accountability should not be about legalism or guilt but if done well will help you and the whole group develop this powerful habit.

Pray

Pray that the Holy Spirit would be working in people's lives drawing them to faith.
Pray for God's help to develop this habit in you and the Church.

Week 3

Habit 2: Eat

- 1) Who have you blessed this week? Any Blessing stories?
- 2) What makes a great mealtime experience?
- 3) If you read the Gospels you see that Jesus often ate with a whole variety of people. Why do you think this is?

Read Matthew 9:9-13 (read it at least twice in the group using two different translations if possible)

- 4) What stands out for you as you read this story today?
- 5) Why might Matthew have invited his friends to a meal with Jesus?
- 6) Why did the Pharisees get upset that Jesus was eating with “tax collectors and sinners”?
- 7) Is there still something special about eating with people?

Watch Video on Habit 2: Eat

Eating with people could include a full meal or just a coffee around a table.

Mike's challenge is to eat with three people every week. One from your church, one from outside the church and one other from either category.

8) What stands out for you in this video teaching?

9) What kind of things might stop you from developing a habit of regularly eating with others and how can you as a group help overcome those barriers?

10) What might it look like for our Church if most people shared this habit?

This week

Read chapter 6 of "Surprise the World" on Learning Jesus. (Don't worry, we haven't forgotten chapter 5. We will come back to it.)

Will you take the Eat challenge? Your situation or personality might mean that the suggested 3 people a week is too much. Set your own target to build a habit that is sustainable for you. It might be one person a week or 3 people a month. The important thing is to build a sustainable habit.

This week will you start asking God about who you can invite to eat with you?

As a group you might consider developing a once a term habit or rhythm of inviting others for a BBQ or party together. Make sure you invite people outside the church.

Pray

Pray that the Holy Spirit would be working in people's lives drawing them to faith.

Pray for God's help to develop this habit in you and the Church.

Week 4

Habit 3: Learning Jesus

- 1) Who have you blessed this week? Any Eating stories?
- 2) Is there a celebrity or historical figure who you know a lot about? Share with the groups some “fun facts” or quotes.
- 3) If you had 2 minutes to describe Jesus to someone, what kinds of things would you say?

Read Philippians 3:7-14 (read it at least twice in the group using two different translations if possible)

- 4) These verses are part of a larger passage where the apostle Paul is arguing against a works based legalism. What strikes you most as you read this passage today?
- 5) Paul is clearly excited about the forgiveness and acceptance that Christ has brought (read verse 9 aloud). His point is he has gained this through faith in Christ not by working hard. Yet in verse 10 there is a sense of Paul striving. What is he striving for?
- 6) How can we know Christ more?

Watch Video on Habit 3: Learn Jesus

Mike challenges us to make regular time just to read the Gospels. We can't answer the question 'what would Jesus do?' if we don't really know what Jesus did.

- 7) What grabs you most in this video teaching?

- 8) What kind of things might stop you from developing this habit? How can you as a group help overcome those barriers?

- 9) What might it look like for our Church if most people shared this habit?

This Week

Read chapter 5 of "Surprise the World" on the next habit -Listen

Will you take the Learn challenge? Why not find time to read at least 1 Chapter from one of the Gospels. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and read in a way that allows you to pay attention to Jesus.

As a group you might consider studying a Gospel after this series finishes.

Pray

Pray that the Holy Spirit would be working in people's lives drawing them to faith.

Pray for God's help to develop this habit in you and the Church.

Pray for God to show you who to bless and eat with.

Week 5

Habit 4: Listening to the Holy Spirit

- 1) Do you have any blessing or eating stories to share? How did Learning Jesus go this past week?
- 2) Have you ever had an experience where you felt that God clearly spoke to you or prompted you to do something? What was that like?

Read John 15:26-27, 16:7-15 (read these passages at least twice preferably in two different translations)

- 3) These verses are part of a larger teaching of Jesus as he spoke to his disciples about his impending death, and the nature of their ongoing service. Does anything grab you in these verses as you read them today?
- 4) In verse 7 Jesus makes the extraordinary claim that it is beneficial for the disciples that he go away. Why?
- 5) What does Jesus say the Spirit will do? (As a group make a list)

Watch Video on Habit 4: Listen

- 6) Mike speaks of the tension of being “in the world but not of the world”. How can this tension play out in everyday life?

- 7) Some people are concerned that they may mistake their own thoughts, fears and desires, or the promptings of the Devil for the voice of the Holy Spirit. How might we safeguard against this?
- 8) What kinds of things can hinder us from listening to the Holy Spirit and how can we overcome them?

This Week

Read chapters 7 & 8 of “Surprise the World” on Sent and accountability.

Will you take the Listen challenge? When you sit down to “learn Jesus” why not spend extra time asking God to speak and become attentive to His promptings.

As a group you might consider starting your prayer time with a couple of minutes of silence just asking the Holy Spirit to lead you as you pray.

Pray

Pray that the Holy Spirit would be working in people’s lives drawing them to faith.

Pray for God’s help to develop this habit in you and the Church.

Pray for God to show you who to bless and eat with.

Week 6

Habit 5: Sent – See yourself as a sent one

- 1) Do you have any blessing or eating stories to share? How did 'Learning Jesus' go this past week? Have you sensed the Holy Spirit's leading this week?
- 2) Brain storm. What ideas or images come to mind when someone says 'Mission Field'?

Read Matthew 28:16-20 (read this passage at least twice preferably in two different translations)

- 3) This passage is very familiar for many Christians. Does anything stand out as you read it today?
- 4) Why is Jesus statement in verse 18 important? What difference does it make?
- 5) Jesus gives three instructions and one promise in verses 19-20. What are they?
- 6) What do you think it means to makes disciples?

- 7) Baptism is a symbol of belonging to Christ and also belonging to the Church. Why do you think this sense of belonging is an important part of being a disciple?

Watch Video on Habit 5: Sent

- 8) What do you find most challenging in this video?
- 9) If our mission field is all the places we go and people we are involved in, in the course of our day to day lives (work, school, TAFE, clubs neighbours etc.), brainstorm as to all the mission fields people in your group are involved in.
- 10) What difference might it make to live out the habits we have been studying in your mission fields?
- 11) What difference does the last sentence of Matthew 28:20 make?

Where to from here?

The challenge of the past six weeks is to form ongoing habits that will help us have a greater impact for God right where we live. The habits mean little if they are talked about and then forgotten. As a group talk about how you might pray for each other and hold each other accountable to living a life on mission. Why not make it a part of your group life to regularly ask some simple questions?

Who have you blessed this week?

Who have you eaten with lately?

Have you sensed the Holy Spirit saying anything and what are you discovering about Jesus?

These questions are not about making people feel guilty and should always be asked in a climate of grace and encouragement, but unless we help each other we may well fail to develop these great habits.

Pray

Pray that the Holy Spirit would be working in people's lives drawing them to faith.

Pray for God's help to develop these habits in you and the Church.

Pray that God would work through you and beyond you in your mission fields.