

0 (3s):

I love all my kids, but, but McKinley this week for, for my birthday, went to the store and picked me out some really cool new socks. Yeah. Do you like those? Can you get a close up on that? Can you see those Colorado socks? She picked those out. She like, she's like, I'm getting dad. Some socks took Melissa to the mall, got some socks for me. I love it. I'm so grateful for her. And now that she's five and a half, you know, we read the Bible every night and read some other fun stories every night. And, and the other day we were talking and, and she said, you know, Matt, and she has this friend, we'll call her Alice that lives across the street. They played together all the time. And, and she said, dad, and I told her, I, I asked her permission to share this story in case you guys are wondering.

0 (45s):

And she said, dad, you know, I haven't told Alice that I'm a Christian. And I was like, oh, okay, sure. I said, you know what, why haven't you? And she said, well, mad, I'm afraid. She said, dad not mad said, dad. She does call me Matt daddy sometimes, which I, like she said, dad, I'm, I'm afraid. And I said, well, well, what are you afraid of? She said, I'm afraid that she won't be my friend anymore. And I share that story because isn't that how all of us feel at times? Like I felt that way. And I'm like, girl, I feel you. Right.

0 (1m 25s):

I think we've all felt that way. We have fears. And maybe it's not fear that it will end the relationship necessarily, but we're afraid what people will think of us or how they'll respond or we're, we're afraid. Maybe they'll ask a question that I won't have the answers to. What am I gonna do in that situation? And a lot of times it's fear that keeps us from sharing our faith. But Jesus commands us to share our faith. It's not like an option. Like if you want, you can share your faith every no we're commanded, therefore go and make disciples. Two things that Jesus said before he left earth, like he's already died, risen from the dead. He's like two things. I gotta tell you one, go make disciples and one be my witnesses. Okay. So we're commanded to do this. He's like, I don't want you to forget this. And yet sharing our faith can be terrifying.

0 (2m 7s):

So we're just starting out by saying that every single one of us had had those moments of fear with friends, with family, with a coworker, what are they gonna think? What's my boss gonna think if I share my faith and, and so how do we get over those fears? And, and I can't, you know, just make you bold and courageous today. But what I we can do is talk about five simple ways to share your faith. And that's what this series is five simple ways to share your faith and bless is an aro stick and aro stick because I always get and mix up what that is in aro. Stick B L E S S. And it's very simple. So over the next five weeks, we're gonna learn one of each of these five simple ways. And it is one to begin with prayer, two to eat.

0 (2m 51s):

Yes, eat you guys like that in there. Somebody should cheer for eat. I skipped the EI didn't I, so everybody's so nice to me today. And I'm just messing up left and right begin with prayer, listen, eat. I should listen to myself, eat, serve, and story. And that last one is, share your story. So that's, we're gonna learn those five

things that we're gonna learn in this series. And it's just the real simple. And if you can learn to do these five things, you're gonna be amazed at how God uses those simple acts of faith to stir faith in other people, as we share it. And, and we see lives transformed by Jesus.

0 (3m 31s):

So this series, this acrostic actually comes from a great book called you guessed it. Bless can we get a close up on bless right there. This series by Dave and John Ferguson, pastors at a church in Chicago wrote this great book. It's so simple. I loved it. I read it earlier this year and I'm like, wow, this is so good. We gotta talk about this. So we're actually, even though we have our own series, but they're based on these five things. This book is so good that I want you guys to have it. So every week in this series, we're giving away a copy. Okay? So I have a little QR code up here where you can go to rise, Denver com slash book. And if you fill out that form, you can do it right now. I'll let you take out your phone every week. We're gonna pull another drawing. So we're gonna have a new drawing every single week, and it's gonna be like live. So if you're watching this online till midnight, tonight, midnight mountain standard time, okay, please enter right now.

0 (4m 14s):

If you wanna copy this book, but every week we're gonna be doing it. So enter now enter it every week. Okay. You can do that everybody. And if you're online, we will send it to you. Okay. Just because you're online doesn't you can still get this book. So, so please do that form too. It's a great book. In fact, we talked about it. We had the whole elder board and our staff read this book and, and we were talking about it at our elder prayer meeting this week. And Chris, can I talk about it? Chris was like, yeah, I, I read it. And then my mother-in-law took it and she read it. And then my wife took it and she was reading it, you know? And it's that grit of a book. So I want to encourage you guys to read it. Bless. Okay. So what to, we're gonna do today. We're gonna look at a passage from the end of Matthew chapter nine. So if you have a Bible, open it up with me to Matthew chapter nine, verse 35.

0 (4m 57s):

If you have the Bible app on your phone, the you version Bible app use that. You can find the rise church, Denver event and take notes right there and see the scripture that we're gonna be looking at today. And we're gonna learn four points about how to begin with prayer, cuz yes, that's the first one begin with prayer. And there's four things that I want you to start praying for. And there are things that come from this past with Jesus. And the first one, if we're gonna begin with prayer is that we need to pray for a heart of compassion, pray for a heart of compassion. So I'm gonna start reading in Matthew chapter nine, verse 35 says that Jesus went through all of the towns and villages teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing, every disease and sickness, verse 36 says when he saw the crowds he had, what, what did he have compassion on them?

0 (5m 55s):

Because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus sees all these people in all

these towns that he's traveling to. He's teaching them the good news of Jesus. That's his good news, the good news, the kingdom that you could be welcome to this kingdom through forgiveness and the holy spirit coming. And as he's teaching this, he has compassion on the crowds. This is the heart of Jesus, heart of compassion, heart that sees people. And doesn't think why can't you just take care of yourself? It doesn't say, why don't you just pull yourself up by your bootstraps, get your life together. So messed up. Why are you doing such stupid things? Didn't somebody raise you better than that.

0 (6m 36s):

You don't hear any of those things from Jesus. Do you? He has a heart of compassion. So what I think we need to do is pray that we would have the same heart. I think if we're gonna do these things that Jesus does and, and be able to share our faith, like he did so boldly and he commanded us to, we've gotta start by a heart of compassion because a lot of times we're more like that second type of person who sees someone like how could you be so stupid, right? Have you ever thought that about someone? What, what are you doing with your life? Like you keep making the same mistakes again and again and again, right? How many bad relationships do you have to have? This is what you're thinking in your head. Right? Sometimes we post about it on social media. Oh right. We're we're judgment. We're we're thinking about all the things this person has done wrong.

0 (7m 19s):

And a heart of compassion is different. A heart of compassion realizes that people are harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd they're sheep wandering as straight. If we could just see that in people's eyes and hearts and know in their life, yes. They're making bad decisions. Yes. Maybe they're sinning, but they're just like sheep wandering away and don't know any better. And people are harassing them. There are awful things happening to them. If you would've known what their parents did to them, you would not be so judgemental or the parents that they didn't even have, or the thing that happened to them when they were a high school senior, if you would know some of those stories, I think we would have the same compassion that Jesus did.

0 (8m 1s):

You realize, there's a reason why they're struggling. They've been harassed and they can't help themselves. That's what Jesus is saying. They're they're helpless. No one can save themselves. Did you guys know that no one can save themselves. The gospel of Jesus Christ means that he has to come down and save us because we were incapable of saving ourselves. We can't. Nobody can. So if you're like, why don't they just do it better? Like, well they can't. And what if we had the same heart that Jesus has? I think it would really transform how we interact with people around us if we had a heart of compassion. So that's what the first thing I'm gonna challenge you guys to, to have a heart of compassion.

0 (8m 45s):

You know, it's really interesting. The numbers are a little lower overall, but there, there was a study a few

years ago that looked at that, sharing your faith, this idea of telling other people that you believe in Jesus. And they should too, that 46% of my generation, we're the worst millennials. I'll I'll admit it. So I'm talking to you, millennials right here. Everybody else can just make fun of us for a second. Have a heart of compassion for us. Okay. But 46% of millennials think it is wrong to tell other people about Jesus. These are Christian millennials, 46%, almost half of us think it's wrong to tell another person about our faith. Some of you're kind of like, well, I agree about that.

0 (9m 25s):

That's because you're a millennial. Okay. But we'll have compassion on you. We're gonna teach you better. Okay. So here's the thing. 46% of people think that because there's a lot of things like, well, it's just arrogant or I don't wanna force my beliefs on somebody else or, or all whole host of different reasons. Why we think it's wrong to share our faith. But we have to share our faith. Not only are we commanded it, but it's the only way that people can be saved. The only way Jesus said, I am the way the truth in the life, no one comes to the father except they're me. There's one way. It's not many ways. And Jesus is one of them. There's one way, there is no other name given to men under heaven, by which we must be saved.

0 (10m 6s):

That's what it says in acts four 12, there's one name it's Jesus. So if we don't tell people, do you know where they're going? It's not gonna be pleasant. It's eternal separation from God. I was at the pool yesterday with our kids and we were out there and there was a kid just kinda like bobbing up and down. And I noticed this kid, all of a sudden was kinda struggling to get outta the water. Right. And was starting to get some water in his mouth and, and just like, couldn't get out. Really. And, and I looked at the lifeguard to make sure the lifeguard was paying attention. And the lifeguard was staring right at this kid doing nothing. And I was like, dude, aren't aren't you gonna do something as this kid just gets more and more water in his lungs.

0 (10m 50s):

And the lifeguard looked at me and said, no, no, no. That's arrogant that the there's gotta be lots of different ways to survive. You don't necessarily need, right. I don't wanna impose my salvation on that person. I'm just gonna let 'em drown. If they need help, maybe they'll ask me and then I'll go in there. Okay. That didn't happen. But what if it did, that'd be insane, right? If someone is dying, you save that person. Well, guess what? We have an entire world where people are dying and going to hell and there's one way to be saved.

0 (11m 31s):

It's not arrogant to save a person when they're drowning. It's not arrogant to tell someone about Jesus Christ as the only way to be saved. So millennials Let's step it up. It is good news. There's nothing better. Now, if you give to someone and they reject it, that's on them, but it's good news. Let's help people. We can save them. We can find a life transformation that changes their life now for the better and eternity for way better, for way better. So the first thing we've gotta do is pray for a heart of compassion, pray for a heart of compassion. And I, I say this because I have noticed that depending on which social media feeds you're

getting, or which prime time news you're watching people become angrier and angrier at other people in the world, you felt this in your own heart.

0 (12m 21s):

I have, I mean, there are problems and you watch it on prime time news. And I'm not even telling you which news source. It doesn't matter. You can watch all of them. There's somebody angry, yelling about how awful people are and how foolish they are and stupid. And when you watch that night after night for three hours, or you listen to a podcast with someone just griping about the world, or, or it's in your social media feed, you're getting angrier and angrier in your heart at people, instead of compassion, you're having a heart of hatred and division. How could they be so foolish to believe that? And to think that, see how I don't even need to say what kind of political stage it's both sides, right? It's both sides. And I've had friends that are like, I'm getting off social media because it's making me angry.

0 (13m 2s):

I'm not gonna listen to that, that news person that I really like because they're making me just angry at other people. So maybe instead of doing that, let's pray for a heart of compassion. God get me the same heart that you have to love people who maybe look differently than me. That talk differently than me that have different political ideologies than me. How could I have a compassionate heart for them? How could I have a heart of compassion for them? Even Christians that you're like, man, what are you doing? Have a hard compassion for the baby Christian who just needs to be helped and loved. So that's our first thing that I think if we're gonna begin with prayer and we're gonna really learn to share a faith, let's pray for heart of compassion. The second thing is that we need to start then praying for the hurting, praying for the hurting.

0 (13m 46s):

We're gonna start realizing those people are hurting. They're really hurting deep down, and then we're gonna start praying for them by name. And that's what I mean to begin with prayer, start praying for the hurting around you. Jesus showed this same concept in verse 35. If, if we jump back, you know, it says that Jesus went healing, every sick disease and sickness. So he's laying hands on people and praying for them, right? He's praying for the hurting. And he says that he, he saw the crowds and had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless. They use these are hurting people, right? And I think we have to realize that these are hurting people who need help.

0 (14m 31s):

And I want us to be a church that has a heart to pray for the hurting. I wanna show you this sign. This is a church here in Colorado. That's why I've this. Isn't a pot shop in case. You're wondering, no, you're here last week. You know what I'm talking about? But this is a church we love hurting people. There's two ways to read that sign. Isn't there. Just take it a second. If, if you need to, okay, we need to be the, the first kind that loves people who are hurting. We don't love hurting people. Okay. That's church here in Colorado. Hopefully they fix that sign now because we actually need to start praying for the hurting, okay. To love them. So now

we're, we're not adding to the, okay.

0 (15m 11s):

We're praying for them because we wanna help them. We wanna find healing for them and the healing that is found in Jesus and God's word to start praying for them. And, and I do think that, that we need to, to just like ask God. It's amazing. So to begin with prayer, a lot of times when you're sharing your faith, you're like, who do I share with, what do I do? How do, how do I do it? Just start like, God just like, show me who to pray for. Just show me who to share my faith with show, show me when and where to do it. In the book, blessed. They share a story about a guy named Louis and Louis was visiting the mall. And when he was in the wall mall, he just felt God telling him to go up to this man. He saw sitting on a bench by himself and to tell the man that God loves him.

0 (15m 56s):

So he did what any of, one of us would've done was he said, no, thanks. Then he kept walking, right? If you've ever felt a nudge from God. And you're like, I don't know. That seems so weird. So he did that and Lou kept walking and he went to his store and then he was at another part of the mall. He saw the same guy sitting on another bench, felt that same tug on his heart. God telling him, go to that person and tell him that you love him. So he shrugged it off a second time, went a around to the mall. And in a third part of the mall, he saw that same guy sitting there and he is like, fine. God, I'm gonna do it. So he goes up to this, this man sitting on the bench by himself. And he says, I know I'm gonna seem really weird that we said this, but I just need to tell you that God loves you.

0 (16m 36s):

And the man just had tears feel his eyes. And he said, you know, this morning when I woke up, I felt like I was at the end of my rope and said, I, I told God, if you're real, show me that you love me. And now you told me this. And you're the third person today to tell me, see, God is nudging us. If we would just begin with prayer, he'll lead us with this holy spirit to who is ready and who is hurting in that moment. And you would be amazed how many people are hurting. It doesn't matter how big their house are, who, how fancy their car is or how great their family photo looks on Instagram. If you've ever taken a family photo, you know it, life is not as good as the photo on Instagram, right?

0 (17m 20s):

Mom's like, look at the camera. Dad's like, come on. Okay, let's get this over with. Right. Just because it looks good on social media or it looks good when you're walking by their house on the street or you meet 'em and they're like, oh yeah, life's great. I'm just made, got another raise. Like that doesn't mean they're not hurting. You'd be amazed how many people are hurting. And there's like 220 million prescriptions for antidepressants in our country. 330 million people. People are hurting, right? People need help. People need hope. People are lonely. So if we start praying for those hurting people, we'll be amazed at what God will do in the process.

0 (18m 3s):

And I do encourage you to pray for people by name in, in their book, John and Dave Ferguson say this, if you are not regularly praying for people by name, I doubt God will use you to help change them. See, we gotta start praying for people by name. And it's a really powerful thing to do. I, I have an app on my phone called echo that I use, but you could use whatever way you want. And, and it reminds me who to pray for. So I put in people like the neighbors in our courtyard, I put their names in and, and when I learned something new about 'em, I put it in there to pray for 'em. So I can legitimately this last week, when I talked with one of 'em, who's a recovering alcoholic. He was sharing, you know, and he's, he's been in recovery for over a decade, which is awesome.

0 (18m 44s):

And I said, that's amazing. I've been praying for your sobriety. And he looked at me like what? And I was like, yeah, I really have. And I'm so glad that you're doing so well. That's awesome. And I can be honest about that in my conversations with him. And it's amazing the depth then that develops in the relationship when you're willing to tell someone, yeah. I'm praying for you in that specific thing. So I wanna challenge you guys to pray for people by name and pray for their salvation as well. If it is truly only God who saves people and we can't do it, pray for their heart to be opened. I pray for certain people, especially people with Muslim backgrounds. I pray for them to have dreams. God could do the supernatural dream, right?

0 (19m 25s):

I, I pray for certain people who don't believe in anything. They only believe in science. I'm like, God give them supernatural moments that they can't explain. I do. People are gonna be like mad. I saw a ghost the other day. I'm like, I don't know about the ghost, but there's a old ghost. Right? But if you start praying, if you start praying for people by name and praying for the lost, it'll be amazing because people are hurting in Romans 10. One. Paul taught us to pray this way in Romans ten one, Paul says brothers and sisters, my hearts desire in prayer to God on behalf of the Jewish people, is that they would be saved. This is his people group. He's like, I'm praying for them all the time that they'd be saved. So we should do the same pray for the loss that they might be saved.

0 (20m 8s):

So pray for a heart of compassion. One, pray for the hurting two and three, pray for more harvesters harvest harvesters. That's right, bud. Yeah, he's listening. I love it. You got a good one. Rema smart kid harvesters. Let's keep reading. Then in verse 37, it says, then Jesus said to his disciples, his followers, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few ask the Lord of the harvest. Therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field, he's saying, Hey, we need more people to go out there to work in the harvest. And if you've ever been around a farm and harvest time, that is like all hands on deck. Everybody gets out there.

0 (20m 47s):

There's so much work to do. Not enough time to do it. We gotta do it. Before winter comes and kills all the crops, get the harvest out there. And Jesus says right now is the time of the harvest. Now this is amazing because Jesus does not say pray for a harvest. Do you notice that he doesn't say pray for, for people's souls, that there would be a harvest. There already is a harvest. We just need to go out and work and harvest. That's why saying pray for more harvesters. We gotta get out there. There are hurting people all around us. They are lonely. They are lost. They know it deep down that they need something more in their life. There is a harvest ready to be reaped. So pray for more harvesters.

0 (21m 31s):

So that's what we need to pray. You know, I, I shared that stat, that 46% of millennials think it's wrong to share their faith with someone, but those same polls done on non-Christians unchurched. People say that 36% of those same millennials are curious and want to know more about other people's faith, 36% and overall 79% of people in our country. Wouldn't mind a conversation with you about faith. So 20%, you know, one outta five people might be like, I don't wanna talk about it. But four to five would be like, oh yeah, let's talk some more. See, there is a harvest. People are curious about spiritual things. They wanna know the deep truths of the world and what's really out there.

0 (22m 15s):

So we need to pray for harvesters and for more of them, pray for more harvesters. That's the third thing. But here's the way that Jesus works. And I love this passage because yes, Jesus is like, here's very clear, explicit, pray for more harvesters. Right? Simple. But then chapter 10 comes and, and we have these big numbers in our Bibles that like mark off chapters. But those were not originally there. Okay. They didn't get put in there until like a thousand years after the Bible was written, okay. That's not divinely inspired. They're just there to help us. So if you keep reading, you realize that Jesus is telling us a fourth thing and it's to pray as you harvest to pray as you harvest, we're praying for more harvesters.

0 (23m 2s):

God give us more harvest disciples, pray for more harvesters. But then look at chapter 10, verse one, it says that Jesus called his 12 disciples. These guys who was just telling to pray for more harvesters. And he gave them authority to drive out in pure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. And then it says in verse two, these are the names of the 12 apostles. Did you notice that he, he brought the disciples, which is a fancy word for followers learners. He brought them together and now he is giving them power to go out as apostles. Do you know what the word apostle means? It means one who is sent out. These guys just flipped. They were disciples. They were followers. Now they're apostles.

0 (23m 42s):

They're sent out. And then if you look down at verse five, after it names the disciples in verse five, it says these 12 Jesus sent out. He's like, guys, we really gotta pray for more harvesters. And they're like, yeah, they all huddle together. They have a great prayer sesh that felt good. Now. Jesus's like, okay, now you guys

are the harvesters. Go, come on, get to it. You've been praying for our harvesters. Guess what? It's you? This is what I love about how Jesus does this. Yes. We should always pray for more harvesters, more people on fire for Jesus, wanting to tell others about Jesus and share their faith to go to overcome those hurdles of fear. But we've gotta pray as we harvest because we will find out we're the ones involved.

0 (24m 23s):

We're the harvesters. Every single person who is a follower of Jesus will become one who is sent out. We are followers and we are sent out. We are disciples and we are apostles in the sense that we are sent out guys tracking with me on this. This is a tag your. And we are very much a tag at church. I remember Dwight came up to me one Sunday, cuz our parking lot was so packed. He's like Matt, our parking lot's too full. We gotta do something about it. I'm like tag your it. He's like what I was like. Yeah. So, so he's the one who, who so oversaw the whole thing so that we get this giant eight passenger golf cart and get it all secured here. He took care of all of that, which I'm so grateful for him because we're a tag your at church.

0 (25m 5s):

You're like, oh my gosh, there's so much, so many people hurting around us. So many people lost in going to hell like tag your it when you're like, okay, who's gonna tell my mom about Jesus tag your it. Who's gonna tell my neighbor who is into some weird stuff about Jesus tag your it. Who's gonna start a Bible study at my workplace, tag your it. Okay. Who who's gonna start working with those, those young parents. Like they don't know what they're doing, tag your it. What about all the single moms that are hurting? Like isn't anybody gonna help them tag your it? Okay. That's what Jesus is doing. That's why we need to pray as we harvest. Because sometimes that can be the most terrifying. Right?

0 (25m 46s):

Am I really called to do that? Am I really called to go talk to that random stranger? Yes. Yes. So in the book it really challenges to begin with prayer, with a simple prayer. And it's this pray for people to bless. Some of you already have some people in your mind, which is awesome. Praise God. But some of you need to just pray for people to bless. And even if you have a full list, pray for more people to bless. I've been praying this pray for the last few months, since I've been reading this book and it's been awesome that people that God has put into my past yesterday at the pool. Now this is a true story. I was at the pool yesterday and this is a true story. The other one was fake. I know this one is true.

0 (26m 27s):

Can ask Melissa. We at the pool. And I had prayed yesterday morning. First thing God gimme someone to bless was in my, my prayer app. And I prayed it. God gave me something to bless today at the pool, there was a, a little boy that came over and was trying to play with Keenan's car. My son he's two and a half. He was playing with these cars in the pool. Cause that's what you do in your two and a half. This boy came over and wanted to play with Kane's cars. And Kane was like, you know how we all are? Right. He knows he's got two sisters. He's like, nah, these are mine. But I was like, Hey, Hey KA, why don't we share a little bit? And

then that boy brought some cars and they were actually like, they didn't share necessarily, but they exchanged cars for a few minutes and they were playing together. And then the parents came over and I started talking to the parents, they had a hat on. I was like, oh, did you go to that school?

0 (27m 8s):

And we started talking and talking and at one point they were asking me the question, well, what do you do for work? And I'm like, well, I told them, and then there's like nothing. So sometimes that's like a conversation ender. I'm like, okay. But then a few minutes later they were like, well Matt, why did you decide to be a pastor? And I was like, it's like, well now I get to share you my testimony. I get to share my story. And I told a little bit about our church, but I didn't even invite him. Okay. I didn't do a good job. Right. That's what you're supposed to do. You're supposed to invite a friend. But after we got out of the pool, cuz it's some kid put, you know, I'm not making that story up.

0 (27m 47s):

Right. And we're, we're getting outta the pool and getting all our stuff together that mom comes over and she said, what was the name of your church? Again? We've been looking and I think we want to come we're outta town for a month, but we're gonna come check out your church. I'm like awesome. God gave me someone to bless yesterday. And like I was not looking to like form a friendship at the pool. Like I got enough kids to watch so that nobody's drowning myself. Cuz those lifeguards, I don't know. I'm kidding. Okay. Love the lifeguards. But if you start praying, God gimme something to bless. You'll be amazed at the people. God puts in your path who are hurting and that need Jesus.

0 (28m 30s):

So one pray for what? For heart of compassion, two, pray for the hurting. Pray for them by name, pray for that salvation three. We need to pray for more harvesters. We need more people out there. Keep praying that. And four, we need to pray as we harvest. I really think if we just started and said, Hey, I'm gonna do the B first. I'm gonna begin with prayer. We'll be able to love our neighbors and change the world. All right. I wanna show you a little video from Taylor Dennington if we can, can roll that video.

2 (29m 5s):

Hi, my name is Taylor Dennington. I've been attending a rise for over five years. And one of the things I've noticed is that when sharing your faith with somebody can be really intimidating and you know, it it's really a hurdle for a lot of people and sharing their faith. And for me, one of the things that I've found effective in overcoming that hurdle is actually praying, praying beforehand for help from God to gimme the right words and for the comfort, knowing that it's not necessarily up to me to convert somebody, but you know, at least to share the gospel with them or, or shown interest in them and their faith. So for me, I have a friend, a really close friend of mine.

2 (29m 46s):

I've known for several years who doubted Christianity. And one day we were out on a walk and I just asked him about his faith and, and how it was going. And this was after I had started taking my faith a lot more seriously. And you know, I kind of shared my, my history with him and my experience. And while we were on the walk, we actually just prayed. I just, I said, Hey, do you mind if we just pray? Like I know it can be uncomfortable. And I, I was surprised at how receptive he was to that. And so we stopped in the middle of the trail and just prayed that the holy spirit would show 'em the truth and, and help him with his faith. And so about a month or so later, I ended up getting a text from him saying that he had gone to Easter service for the first time in many years.

2 (30m 33s):

And he thanked me for, for having that conversation and for helping him in his faith, something that can just help you move forward and, and, and help share your faith is just, is turning to prayer. And I, you know, again, whether that's before having a conversation with somebody or just praying with an believer, you know, it is just something that I think a lot of people don't think about doing, but for me, it's been effective in helping me have those conversations.

0 (31m 3s):

All right. Thank you, Taylor. Okay. I want everybody to reach underneath their seats underneath your seats. There should be one of these cards with a pen underneath your seats. And if you're online, there's a link to this form or you can follow it at arise. Denver com slash bless find this form, this card, it says, bless on the front. And if you flip it around, it says, who is my neighbor? Okay. There's your house in the center? And there's four squares. We want you to take that pen and write down four names. Likely these may be your actual four neighbors around you. Okay. And you can put more than four. I just want everybody to start writing down four names that you're gonna start praying for. If you're like, well, I don't know. Should I do my house? Maybe for you, you're spending all your time at work.

0 (31m 43s):

This could be the people in the four cubicles around you. Okay? The four rooms nearest you, or maybe it's the four people that work out with you every time in the morning. I, I don't care. Who are those four people around you. I want you to take a minute and write those names in right now. And yes, it says, if you don't know their names, just be like, dude, that always wears a hat. Okay. Start praying for dude with a hat.

0 (32m 24s):

Okay. So I wanna challenge you to begin with prayer. After McKinley shared with me that she was afraid of what her, her analysis would think. I said, well, why don't we pray about it? And we prayed together. She prayed. And I prayed, you know, even for courage, you know, to, to overcome fears. Cause that's what courage is. It's not the absence of fear. It's overcoming the fears we have. And last night I overheard her telling Melissa, she said, mom, I'm gonna invite Alice to the splash bash.

0 (33m 8s):

And I was like, yes. Cause the splash bash on August 28th is gonna be awesome. And she knows that. She's like, I want my friend there, all my friend there. So I wanna encourage everybody to start praying. Just begin with prayer. Even if you're still terrified of the thought of sharing your faith, just start praying. Just start praying, begin with prayer. Now, if you're here, we're, we're about to wrap up with this last song, but some of you maybe haven't put your faith in Jesus Christ yet. So I wanna give you that opportunity. Maybe someone invited you here today and you felt hurting in your heart. You know that you're longing for something deeper and more. Well, that more is Jesus because he came down from heaven and he not only loved people and healed people, but he prayed for us even while he was on the cross dying For our sins.

0 (33m 55s):

He said, father, forgive them for, they know not what they do. And when Jesus died on the cross, he took our punishment for our sins and offers us forgiveness for all of our sins past, present, and future so that we can have eternal life with him in heaven. Isn't that amazing. Jesus saves you. All you have to do is receive. So if you're here and you need to put your faith in Jesus Christ, I wanna give you a simple prayer. And what we do here is I give you the simple prayer. It's not magical, but it's a simple way that you can accept that gift of eternal life. And if you're a follower of Jesus already say this prayer out loud to give courage to somebody who needs to pray it for the first time. So would you please bow your heads with me and please repeat after me, dear God, I'm a sinner.

0 (34m 36s):

I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me, heal me in faith. I declare Jesus is Lord help me to follow him. Fill me with your spirit and help me to share my faith with others. Now with eyes closed, nobody's looking around right now. And you said that prayer for the first time and Jesus is now your Lord and savior. I want you to put your hand into the air on the count of three and hold it up there. High 1, 2, 3, put your hand up in the air. Praise God. Let's welcome those people into the kingdom. Praise God, Lord God.

0 (35m 16s):

We're so grateful to worship you because you sent your own son Jesus to come down for us and you are so holy that yet you still die to sinner's death in our place that we could be forgiven and have new life heal us. Give us hope and help us to share that hope with those around us. Pray this in Jesus name. Amen.