

B.E.L.L.S. || Missional Rhythm & Accountability
(adapted from Michael Frost)

BLESSING

The Hebrew word for “*blessing*” (barak) means “to empower to strength”. We seek God’s blessing and pass that blessing on to others.

Bless (at least) one person this week (preferably a non-Christ follower.)

Eating

Sharing food has always been central to a life of community. We want to place worship and communion back where it began, as a provider’s delight in the middle of the shared table.

Eat with one person this week (preferably a non-Christ follower.)

Learn

We desire to take on the image of God and to participate in His plan. We seek out knowledge about God to help us to do this.

Study Jesus’ life a little bit each week from the Gospels. How did he live? With whom did he interact? What were his commands? Then “go” live like Jesus did.

Listening

We believe that God is capable of speaking to us. We do not confine Him to any particular medium, but we try to be attentive to His voice, wherever and whenever it speaks.

Take time to listen to God for one hour each week (listening, not talking.)

Sent

We are ambassadors who bear God’s image in the world. Remind yourselves regularly that we are “*sent*” to participate in God’s activity and mission in the world.

Take time each day to reflect on the question: “How have I worked with or resisted Jesus today?”

Living missionally is not a new add-on, but a way of life focused on the mission of God and others. We grow as we practice spiritual disciplines, or practices or a spiritual rhythm. **BELLS** roots us in God and what he calls us to be.

At OCC we think a lot about the church, the mission of God, and the countless calls in Scripture for Christians to look like Christ (some say the term ‘Christian’ originally meant ‘little Christs’ and was used as a negative slur but became a badge of honor to followers of Christ).

I first came across the formula given by Alan Hirsch in his book **The Forgotten Ways: reactivating the missional church** (2006). It goes like this: Christology → Missiology → Ecclesiology.

Our God is the one who determines the mission (it’s God’s Mission) which then determines or shapes the church. It is to say: “the church doesn’t have a mission, but the mission has a church.” Our God is a missionary God, or a God on mission. We, the Church, are God’s instrument in fulfilling His mission in the world “to seek and to save those who are lost” (Luke 19:10). We need to be centered or grounded in God’s mission and his mission should shape everything we do, we have been chosen as God’s ambassadors to the world to fulfill his mission. Our lives should resemble Christ. As followers of Jesus, the Living God lives within each of us through the Holy Spirit. We reflect (or reflect poorly) the image and character of God to those around us. If you are a follower of Christ, do people see Jesus when they look at you?

To help us engage in the mission of God and reflect Christ more fully we are using the **BELLS** model of missional rhythm and accountability.

BELLS is an acronym from Michael Frost’s books

- **EXILES: living missionally in a post-christian culture** (2006);
- **The 5 Habits of Highly Missional People: taking the BELLS challenge to fulfill the mission of god** (2014) (available as a pdf <http://occweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/The-5-Habits-of-Highly-Missional-People-11.pdf>);
- **Surprize the World: the five habits of highly missional people** (2016);

which give practical steps in becoming salt and light to and in our neighbourhoods and our city while aligning our lives to be more like Jesus.