



Week Four

If you and your group are part of a different EastLake Church location — like Venice Church, EastLake Temecula, EastLake Imperial Beach, EastLake Online, or any other EastLake — adjust the questions below to reflect your local church, neighborhood, city, or location. Your local church will also have it's own unique website. See your local staff contact for help.

Opening Prayer

God, thank you for the gift of our story and the journey you invite us into. May our time together be blessed as we look at the gift of our stories and how you might want to use them for your good.

“I Heart Chula Vista” Series Overview

We are in week four of a series called, “I Heart Chula Vista”, where we look at the wisdom of good neighboring and join together to show Chula Vista just how much we can love others. As a body of Christ we will be looking at ways we can bless our community and then on October 27- 29 we will be intentionally gathering outside the walls of our church to serve others. For more information, visit iheartCV.com.

Talk It Over

This series we've looked at various actions the “B.L.E.S.S.” strategy encourages each of us to take — to begin with prayer, to listen well, to eat with others, to serve, and share our story. Today we specifically looked at the “story” step.

This “B.L.E.S.S.” strategy is not meant to be some weird prepackaged program or religious checklist to convert people. This strategy is simply a tool to help us intentionally love more like Jesus who blessed people everywhere he went.

- Can you remember what each letter of the acronym B.L.E.S.S stands for? See if you can collectively come up with those words as a group.
- Which one are you struggling most with and which is easiest?

Read Romans 10:14-15 and 1 Peter 3:15-16 (NLT)

Sharing our Jesus story allows us to help others get to know who he is and helps us in our healing journey. When we take the time to explore what has made us and how Jesus has been at work in our lives, we recognize what a gift our relationship with him truly is. An easy way to share our Jesus story is to think in these three phases: before, during, after.

- Have you spent time exploring your Jesus story? If so, what was that process like.
- Can you see areas of change or growth when you reflect on the before, during, and after? Tell us what sort of changes and growth you experienced.
- Reflect on the time you first met Jesus; share one word or phrase that comes to mind.

Read Psalm 139:13, 15-16 (The Voice)

Before: The before stage most often involves childhood and may continue into adulthood for many of us. Whether you met Jesus as a child or as an adult, reflecting on the “before phase” of our story often involves covering where we came from and what our family of origin was like. This can involve blessings, wounds, and transitions. God seems to often use transitions to help shake us up and reshape us.

- Tell us how you can see how your family of origin played a role in your faith journey.
- Is there a transition or a wound you can identify that played a part in you finding Jesus? If so, tell us about you experienced.
- Share two minutes of your “*before* story”. If you are not ready to share feel free to say “pass”.

Read Psalm 139:7 (The Voice)

During: God is always at work. When we begin to be open, we can see and experience the presence of God in various ways. This is such a special part of our stories. The God of the universe loves you so much he not only pursues you, he also has special experiences just for you.

- Can you remember what it felt like to experience God’s presence in the middle of your “during stage”? What words would you use to describe that phase?
- Can you remember a time you felt God’s love in an undeniable way?
- Share two minutes of your “*during* story”. If you are not ready to share feel free to say “pass”.

Read Philippians 1:6 (The Voice)

After: Ideally, meeting Jesus and community go hand in hand. We all need support and safe places to explore. This is not always an easy, idyllic community relationship, but rather it’s often an invitation to continue to grow by interacting in community and with Jesus.

- In what ways has community been a gift to you?
- In what ways have you had to wrestle with community?
- Share two minutes of your “*after* story”. If you are not ready to share feel free to say “pass”.

SERVE WEEKEND- October 27-29th

- We are ready to jump in and serve this weekend! What are you most looking forward to? What are your biggest concerns or fears?
- If you haven’t signed up for a project on the iheartCV.com website, take a look at the website after prayer. Feel free to sign up of a project as a group or as individuals. If you do this by Wednesday at midnight you can still get in on the serve weekend.

Closing Prayer Jesus, thank you for finding us. Thank you for our stories. Continue to help us explore how you are at work in our lives. Help us to be present to the journey we are on with you and help us know when you want us to share that with others. Be with us as we meet new people and serve our city this weekend.

How To Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group connect in friendship and grow faith.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don’t feel pressure to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith for your specific group.

Spend some time praying about your group, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance regarding your specific group.