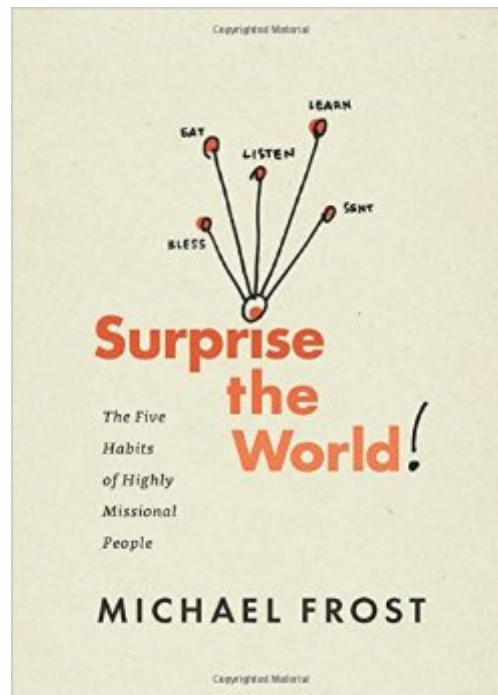


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# Surprise The World: The Five Habits Of Highly Missional People



## Synopsis

Christianity is a surprising religion. It has changed the world in remarkable ways throughout history simply through Christians living out their faith. More recently, we've become afraid of a habituated Christianity, thinking that routines will rob our faith of its vitality. The net effect is that we've replaced the habits that surprise the world with habits that mimic the world—and both we and the world suffer for it. Integrating the five habits in the BELLS model—Bless others, Eat together, Listen to the Spirit, Learn Christ, and understand yourself as Sent by God into others—will help you spread the gospel organically, graciously, and surprisingly. Michael Frost, a world-renowned expert on evangelism and discipleship, makes evangelism a lifestyle that is fulfilling, exciting, effective, and easy to live out!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

[Note: This book has been provided free of charge by Tyndale Blog Network/Tyndale Press/NavPress in exchange for an honest review.] In many ways, this book is clever written and ought to appeal to believers who come from a social gospel perspective. The book provides a great deal of praise for people like Stott and Jim Wallis and N.T. Wright, who come from a more radical perspective. The book itself advocates an approach to Christian living that is deliberately designed to provoke question from others, something some of us happen to do well on our own but which some people would need the sort of help and encouragement that this book provides. In terms of its broad focus, this short book, which began its life as an online guide for churches wishing to promote "missional" thinking among their brethren, and which even with its appendices only takes up about 125 very small pages and makes for a very small and handy guidebook for those who want to

be up-to-date on the practice of politically left-wing Christianity. In terms of its contents, this book focuses on the five habits of highly missional people, itself an unacknowledged crib of Stephen Covey's seven habits. The five habits themselves are simple and straightforward, and described with some Bible references, which are noteworthy and worthwhile, as well as references to various jargon that is less rooted in scripture and more rooted in politics and even occasionally New Age culture. The five habits are as follows: We bless people, both in and outside the church, we eat together, sharing meals with believers and nonbelievers, we listen to the guidance of the Holy spirit in private meditation, we intimately learn Christ as our leader and model, we see ourselves as sent by God to everywhere life takes us.

One aspect of being a Christian is to reach out to the world and try to show them the love of Christ and lead them to Him. There are many books on how to do this. Some take a more methodological approach, teaching us steps to evangelize. Others are more inspirational, trying to work up more of a desire in us to evangelize. I'm not sure I've ever read one quite like one I received from Tyndale Publishers and NavPress. "Surprise the World: The Five Habits of Highly Missional People" by Michael Frost is in a category of its own. Rather than teaching us a method for sharing the gospel or trying to excite us and remind us of why we should, Frost's book goes more to the heart of the matter, helping us develop habits that will naturally lead to an increased desire to share Christ and the ability to do so more naturally. Frost is quick to point out in the book that not everyone is gifted as an evangelist. We are all, however, meant to be evangelistic as we live our lives. Frost explains that "the biblical model is for leaders to (1) identify, equip, and mobilize gifted evangelists (who then take a leadership responsibility for the church's evangelism) and (2) inspire all believers to live questionable lives. If all believers are leading the kind of lives that evoke questions from their friends, then opportunities for sharing faith abound, and chances for the gifted evangelists to boldly proclaim are increased." (p. 5) I agree with his take on this. We are all to be evangelistic, looking for opportunities as they arise, while some are more gifted to evangelize in more major ways. To help believers live a questionable life, Frost offers his acronym: BELLS.

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