# Cursed to Bless

# Series Intro

Episode: 0

Characters: - Host - Sam - Pastor - Ben - Pete - Ruth - Kate

Authors: - Martin Olmos - Richard Utber

Language: en-AU

### Intro

**ATMOS**: Theme music 5 sec, Host background music below host’s volume

**HOST**: Hello. My name is Mary, and I’m your host. I have a story to tell you. I’ve called it Cursed to Bless. You will find out why along the way. But first, let me tell you about Sam…

**HOST**: Sam left his village after finishing his matriculation. He wanted to find a better life in the big city, but things were hard. It made him question his faith in God. We are told that God pours out blessings, but it didn’t seem like that to him. He felt his life was cursed! Life was a burden. Could he really trust God? Was he saved? Did he have to work harder or do something to get God’s blessing?

**HOST**: Sam has two friends: their names are Ben and Pete. He has gone through many hard things, and these friends have helped him decide what to do. He likes them both, but they are very different: they usually argue and give him opposite advice! Ben and Pete also argue about God and the Bible, and Sam is not sure who is right.

**HOST**: In this episode, we will introduce everyone and explain how the lessons work. Next episode, we will start looking at the Bible.

**HOST**: Now, let’s talk about how the lessons works. Sometimes I will speak to you directly, like now. When I’m talking to you, listeners, you will hear this gentle music in the background:

**ATMOS**: Host background

**HOST**: Other times you will hear what happened with Sam and his friends at the Bible study group – as if you were there. We have two special sounds that will tell you when you are listening to something that happened, instead of me talking to you. When we start hearing something that happened, you will hear this sound:

**FX**: Flashback Intro. Fade in from last 3-5 seconds.

**HOST**: And when we return to me talking to you, you will hear this sound:

**FX**: Flashback Outro

**HOST**: Listeners, when Sam came to the city he met his two friends and lived in an apartment with them. They wanted to go to a church on the first Sunday so they decided to walk to a church nearby. Let’s listen to their conversation as they walked.

### Church Visit

**FX**: Flashback Intro. Fade in from last 3-5 seconds.

**BEN**: Hurry, we’re running late.

**PETE**: Does this shirt look OK?

**SAM**: Yeah, don’t worry about it.

**BEN**: It’s that building over there.

**PETE**: Hmm, that little one? You should have picked a bigger church Ben.

**BEN**: I feel a bit nervous going to a new church. Those people at the door will greet us, be friendly.

**PETE**: Look at that girl with the blue top. She’s smiling at me!

**SAM**: Maybe she’s just being friendly to everyone -

**PETE**: No, I think she likes me. I’ll talk to her.

**RUTH**: Welcome to our church, my name is Ruth.

**PETE**: Hello! My name is Pete.

**BEN**: We’re new to town, thank you.

**PETE**: I’m really good at soccer. Do you like soccer?

**RUTH**: (Laughs)
A bit. But you better go in. The singing is starting.

**SAM**: Come on Pete.

**FX**: indoor atmos, singing/music.

**FX**: Footsteps

**SAM**: OK boys, just copy what other people are doing.

**PETE**: Look at this table at the back! It’s full of food.

**BEN**: Pete, wait, I’m not sure you can take that.

**PETE**: Just a couple of sandwiches. I’ll put this one in my pocket for later.

**BEN**: Quick! Let’s go stand with the others and sing. Just follow the words at the front.

**FX**: Friends start singing, Pete tries to sing loudly with mouth full, starts coughing

**BEN**: Pete! Shush… People are turning around. Just stay quiet.

**FX**: fade out

**ATMOS**: fade in to small crowd chattering after service

**BEN**: Well, that was a helpful sermon.

**SAM**: Hmm, this food is nice - the people seem friendly.

**PETE**: Where is that girl in the blue top?

**BEN**: Oh, here comes the pastor. He’s looking straight at us.

**SAM**: Pete, you will get us kicked out.

**PASTOR**: Hello friends.

**BEN**: Hello pastor. I’m sorry about my friend. He didn’t know… Uhm, Pete, what do you say?

**PETE**: So- sorry pastor.

**PASTOR**: (Friendly)
No problem. You must be visiting us today. Are you from town?

**SAM**: Well, no, we arrived yesterday. We’ve all finished our matriculation, and we’re looking for work.

**PASTOR**: Ah, you’ve come to the right place then.

**PETE**: Will you pay us to come?

**SAM**: Pete!

**PETE**: Oh. Maybe just food then?

**PASTOR**: Well, we all share some food after our service. But I’m glad you came for another reason.

**SAM**: Why pastor?

**PASTOR**: I’m starting a bible study group at our home for new people. I’ve been praying that God would send people that are keen to learn. You’re invited. What do you think?

**SAM**: Ah… I’m not sure if we should, pastor. We’re still settling in.

**PASTOR**: Think about it. I’ll text you the details. What’s your mobile?

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: So that’s what happened. Back at the apartment, Sam and his friends argued about what to do. Pete felt he knew the Bible well enough, and he’d rather be making money than join the group. Ben liked the pastor and wanted to learn the Bible more deeply. Sam wasn’t sure, but he suggested they try it, and his friends agreed.

### Intro Format

**HOST**: Now, I want to explain how the questions work in Cursed to Bless. In their small group, the friends had questions to answer and discuss. I want you to answer and discuss these questions too, as if you were in Sam’s Bible study. Make sure you discuss the questions - they will help you learn. This is more than just a fun story; it’s an interactive lesson. Some questions are quick to answer and you don’t have to pause the audio. Say the answer to the question when you hear this sound:

**FX**: Response prompt

**HOST**: Other times you will need to pause the audio so you can read the Bible or discuss as a group. Please decide now who will pause the audio before you start the lessons. We have a different sound to remind you to pause. Pause the audio when you hear this sound:

**FX**: Pause prompt

**HOST**: Let’s practice with an easy question. What will we learn about in this drama? Will we learn about *soccer*, *Australia*, or the *bible*? Say the answer now.

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence.

**HOST**: The Bible. We will learn about the Bible in this drama. Sometimes more than one answer might seem true. Choose the *best* answer.

**HOST**: Discuss this question: Do you have any questions about these lessons? Pause now.

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence.

**HOST**: Thank you listeners. You are now ready to hear how our first Bible study went. Remember to respond to the questions when you hear the sounds! The three friends felt a little nervous when they arrived at the pastor’s house, but Pete was excited to see Ruth was there…

**FX**: Flashback Intro. Fade in from last 3-5 seconds.

### Bible Study

**SCENE**: Pastor’s house

**FX**: Knock on door, door opens, some chatter inside off mic, door closes 3 seconds after opening. Transition atmos to inside.

**RUTH**: Hello. Come in please!

**PETE**: Oh, hello Ruth! Remember me? Pete. We met at church.

**RUTH**: Yes, I remember your singing.

**PETE**: I didn’t know *you* were in this group.

**RUTH**: Of course. I think it’s a great idea. Don’t you?

**PETE**: Of course! I’ll get the best marks - you’ll see!

**PASTOR**: Ha! There’s no test like at school Pete, but I’m glad you boys are here. Come in, come in.

**SAM, BEN**: Thank you pastor.

**PASTOR**: I’m glad you’ve met my daughter already.

**PETE**: Ruth is your daughter?!

**PASTOR**: Yes! Please come in and sit. This is Kate. She’s in the group too.

**KATE**: Hello.

**BOYS**: Hi.

**PASTOR**: Please have a biscuit.

**PETE**: Oh, thank you, I love these!

**PASTOR**: First, let’s go round and say our names, something we like, and one thing we’re thankful for. That will help us get to know each other. Pete, could you start?

**PETE**: I’m Pete. I like soccer. I’m glad I’ve finished my matriculation. Now I’m going to get a job that pays a lot and buy a car.

**SAM**: I’m Sam. I like motorbikes and I hope I can buy one some day. I’m thankful for friends that help me make sense of moving to the city. It’s very exciting, but confusing also.

**BEN**: My name is Ben. I like learning. I’m thankful that God has looked after us in such a big city. I’ve already found friends, a church, and this group where I can learn.

**RUTH**: My name is Ruth. I love music and singing. I’m thankful for this group. Even though I grew up in the church hearing all the Bible stories, there’s still so much to learn.

**KATE**: I’m Kate. I like watching dramas on TV. I’ll finish my matriculation at the end of this year, and then I want to go overseas and make money. I’m thankful for my friends.

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone. My name is Job. I like reading good books. I’m thankful that you’re all here, so we can learn how the Bible fits together.

### Questions to Pastor and Application

**PASTOR**: OK, let’s talk about our Bible study now. I want us to learn God’s big story of salvation, with Jesus as the hero from start to finish.

**PETE**: Really? The Bible has so many books, people and places. How can it make sense as one story?

**PASTOR**: I know, it sounds so amazing! I hope by the end you will see what I mean.

**BEN**: How will we learn pastor?

**PASTOR**: We will read a Bible passage and talk about it. I will ask you some questions, and you can ask me your questions. How does that sound?

**BEN**: Sounds good! I hope we can come every night.

**PASTOR**: Do you have any questions for me? I like it when you ask questions, because it shows me you want to learn.

**RUTH**: What should we do before the study?

**PASTOR**: Please read the passage before you come. It will help you learn.

**PETE**: Pastor, I’ve already heard all the Bible stories since I was a boy. Why bother reading them again?

**PASTOR**: That’s a fair question. I’m glad you’ve heard all the stories. But often we don’t know how they all fit together into one *big* story and so we miss the main idea of the Bible.

**KATE**: We’re already going to church on Sundays. Why should we do this bible study also?

**PASTOR**: In our group, we can talk about the passage and help each other understand, in a way we can’t do in a big group on Sundays.

**PASTOR**: OK, let’s talk about our lives now. How do you feel about this group, now that we’ve met? Ruth, can you start?

**RUTH**: I’m thankful that we get to do this. Being a pastor’s daughter, I’ve been taught the Bible since I was little. But it’ll be good to learn more deeply together.

**PETE**: Will we get a certificate at the end? It might help me get a better paying job.

**PASTOR**: Ha, no certificate! But I think you’ll get something much more valuable!

**SAM**: I feel a bit dumb, I don’t think I know enough about the Bible and I don’t want to look stupid.

**PASTOR**: Thank you Sam. We’re all learning together, so I’m glad you’re here.

**SAM**: Thank you. I’m not sure how this is going to help me understand why life is so hard when God is so good.

**PASTOR**: Yes, that’s a very important question for all of us. I promise we’ll talk about it, and I’ll check you have a good answer by the end.

**BEN**: I’m excited, Pastor! I’ve never done anything like this, so I’m a bit nervous. But I’m feeling safe to ask questions and learn - thank you!

**KATE**: I’m here because Ruth invited me, so I’m not sure what to expect. But I’m happy to keep coming and learn what I can.

**PASTOR**: Thank you for your responses everyone. I’m excited about what we’ll learn together.

**KATE**: Thank you Pastor.

**PASTOR**: Each week, we’ll learn a verse that sums up what we’ve learnt. I’ll write it on this whiteboard. I’d like us to memorise it, and we’ll practice it the next week. Is that OK?

**ALL**: Yes, OK.

**PASTOR**: Great. Today it’s a a verse that sums up what we’ll learn in this series. It’s Luke, chapter 24, verse 27. Let’s read it together now.

**ALL**: “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.”

**PASTOR**: Let’s memorise that for our next lesson. Now, let me pray to finish: Heavenly father, thank you for each person in this group, and thank you for our time together. Please help us learn your big story of salvation. In Jesus’ name…

**ALL**: Amen.

**PETE**: Uhm, Pastor, can we choose who we sit next to?

**BOYS**: (Sniggering, ‘Pete!’ is whispered in embarrassed way)
Pete!

**PASTOR**: Pete, if you’re here on time, you can sit in any seat that’s available - even next to me!

**ALL**: (Laugh)

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone, see you next time.

**ALL**: Goodbye pastor.

### Interactive Questions

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: Listeners, it’s Mary, your host. Let’s answer some questions to help us learn. Say your answer aloud. Please my friends, don’t feel shy or silly answering the questions out loud.

**HOST**: Who likes music? Is it *Sam*, *Ruth*, or *Ben*?

**FX**: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence

**HOST**: Ruth. Ruth likes music.

**HOST**: And now, a discussion question. What is something you are thankful for? Pause and discuss now.

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence

### Outro

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: Listeners, now we’ve heard about Sam’s day, listen to what he prayed before going to sleep…

**ATMOS**: Soft prayer background effect

**SAM**: Dear God, thank you for my new church, and this Bible study group. I’m not sure I made the right choice. Please help us learn how the Bible fits together as one story. Amen.

**ATMOS**: Prayer background fade out

**HOST**: Now we’ve listened to today’s story, I want to tell you about how the lesson works.

**HOST**: Each episode, the friends attend their small group and learn a Bible passage. They read the passage and talk about it. I will ask you some questions and you answer them aloud to help you learn. The friends also ask the pastor some questions. At the end, he prays to God for help. In this episode, the friends had their first Bible study and learned how it would work.

**HOST**: Thank you listeners. You are now ready to listen to the next episode. Next time, we will study Genesis chapters one and two. We will see that God is a good creator who has blessed us. The Bible studies helped Sam understand the Bible and Jesus much better. That means he is more joyful, content, and able to love and serve our great God, even as he persevered through a hard life. Listeners, I hope Cursed to Bless is a blessing to you too. See you next time. Good bye.

**FX**: Theme music fade out