

The Next Step

As You Begin...

This four-week curriculum is intended to move your group from Starting Point to what's next in your time at Northshore. You will spend some time together sharing more of your stories, discovering who you are, and seeing how you are created uniquely with a role here. We encourage you to do the homework, engage in the conversations, and begin your journey here with eagerness, anticipating what God is going to do in you and through you.

Before you meet each week, you will have some homework to do that furthers your conversation.

Homework

Before you begin meeting, each week you'll have homework to complete. Find all homework at:

northshore.church/the-next-step/

This week, watch a short video on the importance of stories.

Week 1

Connect

What is your favorite childhood story or book? What is special about that one?

Engage

- Share a recent photo you took. What was left out of the picture that tells more of the full story of what was happening when it was taken?
- What part of your story do you leave out when you share it?

Apply

Take time to share parts of your story as you continue to build relationships with each other. What one thing would you share from your past, and one from your present, and looking toward your future?

Pray Together

Jesus, thank you for your work in our lives. Thank you for the greater story through the Bible and how we are a part of it. Help us to see how you are working in our lives today and how we can love you more through loving others. We love you Jesus. Amen.

Homework

Watch Brene Brown's 15 minute Ted Talk on Vulnerability. Find it here: northshore.church/the-next-step/

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

Oscar Wilde

Week 2

Connect

When was the last time you laughed until you cried? The last time you cried until you laughed?

Engage

- In her talk on vulnerability, Brene Brown says, “Vulnerability is necessary.” Are you the kind of person who enjoys leaning into vulnerability or who tends to fight it?
- We were challenged to have the courage to be imperfect. What makes you pause in showing your imperfection? How do you feel when you see others’ imperfections?
- Brene says, “The one thing that keeps us out of connection is our fear that we’re not worthy of connection” and that “connection is the result of authenticity.” How have you seen authenticity create connection?
- Read **Ecclesiastes 4:9–12**. How does this section encourage you towards vulnerability and connection?

Apply

We are all more likely to connect if we are vulnerable. Is there more of your story that you would like to share, based on the challenge to be vulnerable?

Pray Together

Jesus, you are our safe place, our comfort, and our redeemer. Thank you that you are not done with your pursuit of us. Help us to respond to you by seeking you through vulnerable connection in community. Be honored in our lives this week. Amen.

Homework

As the Director of the Harvard Study of Adult Development, which is one of the most comprehensive longitudinal studies in history, Robert Waldinger shared about the secret to true happiness and satisfaction. Hear what the research indicates here:
northshore.church/the-next-step/

Week 3

Connect

Think of a part of your life in which you have experienced growth. How did that growth occur?

Engage

- Consider the statement “It’s possible to be informed about Jesus but not be transformed by Jesus.” Has there been a time that you’ve known something about Jesus’ way of living and you’ve had a hard time putting into action? In the video you watched for homework, the researcher shared that, “having community isn’t the same as having a network”. Thinking about the last few months, on a scale of 1-10, 1 being extremely lonely and 10 being extremely connected, where would you fall?
- The long-standing research showed that true community is necessary for health. Real community is also a key formational component in your relationship with Jesus. What else do you find to be an accelerator for growth?
- Read **Galatians 6:7–10**. The process of spiritual growth is compared to sowing seeds. Does it matter which seeds are sown? What are some examples of seeds sown to “please the sinful nature?” How about seeds “to please the Spirit?”

Apply

Being others focused is another key marker and multiplier of growth. Where are you already putting others first with your time, talents, and finances?

Where do you see areas in your life where you can increase your focus on others?

Pray

Jesus, you show us the ultimate example of how to put others first through your life and death. Help us to live in a way that loves others the way you love us. Thank you for loving us abundantly. Amen.

Homework

You have been created uniquely with purpose. Take a few moments and complete a survey about the spiritual gifts you have been given.

Connect to the assessment here: northshore.church/the-next-step/

Spiritual gifts are signs that God is at work in us and are to be used for the benefit of others. They can often be identified when you see a disproportionate response compared to effort invested for an eternal impact. Although the Bible does not show us an exhaustive list of spiritual gifts, there are many that are more prominently taught through Scripture.

Taking this assessment might help you determine where God could multiply your efforts. Remember that spiritual gifts are not ranked by their influence on numbers of people. Focus instead on how God is using your spiritual gifts to help others flourish.

Note your top three spiritual gifts here:

1.

2.

3.

Week 4

Connect

What is a unique experience you've had in the last 2 years?

Engage

Read **1 Corinthians 12:14–31**. How does this section challenge your thinking?

Apply

- According to the assessment you took, what are your top three spiritual gifts?
- Would a mentor or friend who knows you well affirm they have seen God use these gifts to change lives?
- Often your spiritual gifts are multiplied when they overlap with experiences you've had and things you are enthusiastic about. Consider these questions:
 - What fascinates you?
 - What burdens you?
 - What have you really loved doing?
 - What abilities do you have?
 - What experiences (either positive or painful) have shaped you?
- When you consider your role in the church, what does all this information point you towards? *(It is likely to be different than the person next to you!)*
- What next step do you need to take towards serving with Northshore?

Pray for each other.

“The space where someone’s need and your gifts meet is the space for service, an opportunity, and perhaps a calling.”

Dr. Henry Cloud

As You Wrap Up...

Consider committing to carry on in your journey together. You could continue as a Life Group who walks through the Message Study Guide each week alongside the Sunday Messages.

Don't let your journey pause—we believe that Jesus can change anything for everyone and He's just getting started here!