

Senior Transition Seminar

Introduction

The highlight of this series is not the Bible studies themselves. It is getting together in a safe place to talk about fears and dreams with people who are in the same stage of life with similar hopes and concerns. Gathering helpful information and scriptural foundations is extremely important, but it comes alive in a community discussing it together. Sharing a meal together is important. Plan for 2½ hours together for each session, beginning with dinner together. (Please check the last page of this guide for more leader/facilitator tips.)

SESSION 1: Community/Church

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE (ALLOW 90 MINUTES)

- Prepare the “Community” Bible study
- Take a spiritual gifts inventory and the short (online) version of the Myers-Briggs test if you haven’t taken them recently.¹

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS OVER DINNER (ABOUT 60 MINUTES)

- What concerns do you have about leaving your community and finding a new one?

- What is your Meyers Briggs type? Does that surprise you? Why or why not?

- What did you learn about yourself from the spiritual gifts inventory?

AFTER DINNER

1) READ AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING “ALUMNI TIPS”

“I wish I had known...

...that life was about to completely change. Seek out those close relationships that you know will always be there for you and do anything for you: parents, close friends, family, of course JESUS, and make them a priority.”

...that when you get to a new place, you should put some roots down. Don’t leave every other weekend!”

...that my new work demands and living environment (less flexible schedule and NOT being on campus) would make it difficult to meet people and it would take longer to build close, open relationships.”

¹ The Myers-Briggs is available at www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp. An easy to use gifts test is available at www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcF_MYCS_030526_Spiritual_Gifts_Survey.pdf

Read the following passages. In what ways does the Lord ask us to relate to one another? (Highlight key words and phrases). For each passage, look carefully at the broader context: who is God asking us to relate to in this way?

- John 13:34-35 – “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

- Hebrews 3:12-13 – “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.”

- Hebrews 10:24-25 – “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching.”

- Romans 12:10 – “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

- Romans 15:7 – “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”

- I Thessalonians 5:11 – “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

- I Thessalonians 5:15 – “Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.”

- Galatians 5:13 – “We, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.”

- Galatians 6:2 – “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

- James 5:16 – “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

- Colossians 3:13 – “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

- Colossians 3:16 – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”

- Ephesians 4:32 – “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you.”

- Ephesians 5:21 – “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

- I Peter 3:8 – “Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.”

- I Peter 4:8-10 – “Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins, Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”

Discuss

- What phrases stand out to you the most in the “one-another” verses?

- What aspects do you appreciate the most in your relationships?

- Which is the most difficult for you to offer others?

- How do you balance your need for community with believers with the need to reach out to not-yet-believers?
- What are the good and bad affects of technology on finding community?

3) ANTICIPATE TOGETHER (15 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION)

As you think about life after college...

- What things about community will stay the same for you?
- What things do you anticipate will change?
- What can you do now to prepare?

4) DISCUSSION OF MBTI AND SPIRITUAL GIFT INVENTORY RESULTS (ABOUT 20 MINUTES FOR DISSCUSSION)

How might the things you have learned about yourself from these tools apply to your contribution to community?

5) READ THROUGH AND DISCUSS THE TOPIC OF CHURCH (ABOUT 15 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION)

One of the most important things you can do during your transition time is to find a church to get connected with.

“Each Christian should select his church because he is convinced that within its particular structure he will find the greatest opportunities for spiritual growth, the greatest satisfaction for his human needs, and the greatest chance to be of helpful service to those around him.” (Billy Graham, *Peace with God*)

Some questions to consider

- Are you looking for a specific denomination?
- Do you have specific beliefs your church would need to match?
- Do you prefer a particular type of worship style?
- Are there ministries /programs that you could see yourself involved with?
- Do you prefer a smaller or a larger church?
- How important is the location of the church in relationship to where you live?

Practical tips

- If a church has a website, check it out before you visit, maybe even before you move there.
- Plan what church you will visit before the weekend. Sunday morning isn't a good time to decide that!
- Ask people you meet in the area for recommendations.
- Take a friend with you if possible.
- Check online or ask when you visit for the church's mission statement and doctrinal beliefs.
- Narrow your search down to 2 or 3 churches and attend each for 3 or 4 weeks in a row before making a final decision.
- Realize that no church is perfect, but look for the one that fits you best.
- PRAY...for wisdom and discernment in choosing a church and for patience as you look.
- Live fully in the place where you are. (Because you can't live where you are *not*!)
- *Pray* for new relationships and for wisdom in where and how you become involved.
- When you choose a church, get involved, but avoid making too many commitments all at once. It's almost always best to start by choosing one study/activity/service area and do it well.
- Avoid becoming isolated.
- Be willing to take some risks. It can be hard to feel like you are always initiating or stepping out of your comfort zone, but know that it will pay off.

6) TAKE TIME TOGETHER TO JOURNAL (ABOUT 10 MINUTES FOR WRITING/REFLECTION)

- What are your biggest fears about life after college?

- What did you learn about yourself from the MBTI and spiritual gifts inventory?

- What is one thing you could begin to apply right now from the Community Study?

- If you were graduating and entering the work world tomorrow, what is one thing you would hope to apply from this session?

- What scripture influenced or encouraged you the most from this session?

REMINDER: ASSIGNMENT FOR SESSION 2 (ALLOW 90 MINUTES TO PREPARE)

- Prepare the "Work" study
- Prepare the "Insider" study

SESSION 2: Work/Insider

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE (ALLOW 90 MINUTES)

- Prepare “Work” study
- Prepare “Insider” study

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS OVER DINNER (ABOUT 60 MINUTES)

- What is the scariest part about entering the work world for you?

- Describe what your dream job would look like?

AFTER DINNER

1) READ ALUMNI TIPS

“I wish I had known...

...that working 40 hours a week with all non-Christians would be challenging. I couldn't choose to eat lunch or take a break with a Christian friend to re-charge. I really felt like I just struggled to live out my beliefs, let alone share them.”

...that a 40+ hour work week and no semester and summer breaks would take some time to get used to.”

...that the workplace doesn't operate under the same principles as the Nav community. Living out your faith is hard.”

...that pursuing excellence in your career is a good thing.”

...that love is an action, a decision, an obedience, a follow through, a grace, NOT a feeling. This is especially true when you're forced to work with people you don't like and who may not like you.”

...that the hardest part of the transition for me would be adjusting to a huge increase in my workload and in my stress. I'm more aware of my opportunity to be an insider to my coworkers now in my second year of teaching when my life is a bit less hectic, but it's still challenging to reach out to them. I wish I would have been trained more in how to reach out to people naturally in a working environment.”

2) DISCUSS WORK BIBLE STUDY (ROUGHLY 60 MINUTES TO PREPARE/20 MINUTES TO DISCUSS)

Work is an important part of your life. You will spend about 30% of your life at work! What does the Bible say about the purpose and dignity of work in these passages?

- Mark 6:3

- Ephesians 4:28

- I Thessalonians 4:11-12

- I Timothy 5:8

Don Eberly, who served as deputy director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives under George W. Bush, has this to say about work:

“The sense that all of life must be lived for God opens all vocations to the possibility for spiritual influence. Thus, believers must permeate society. Christians need to live with integrity and make distinctive contributions in the social, scientific, artistic, educational and political life of the nation.” (Don Eberly, *Restoring the Good Society*)

What does this perspective (combined with the scriptures above) say about the importance of the career you are considering and preparing for?

How we work is also important. Record observations from the following passages that relate to employee-employer relationships, work ethics and attitudes.

- Nehemiah 4:6

- Proverbs 22:29

- Ephesians 6:5-7

Jesus called some of His disciples to “come follow,” but there were others that He did not ask to follow Him. Why?

- Mark 5:14-20
- John 4:28-30, 39

How should we relate to the non-believers around us?

- Matthew 5:13-16
- Matthew 9:9-13
- Luke 6:27-36
- Luke 14:12-14
- “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” (John Maxwell)

What did Paul expect of local believers?

- Romans 12:14-21
- I Corinthians 5:9-13
- Philippians 2:14-16
- Colossians 4:2-6

The concept of being an “insider” challenges traditional ministry assumptions:

- the ordinary believer has a key role (it’s *not* just the pastor’s or staff’s job)
- the ordinary believer is a vital participant (not just a spectator)
- the ordinary believer is a minister (not just a helper)
- the Holy Spirit oversees the ministry (not just the Pastor)
- all can play a part (not just the gifted speakers or leaders)
- minister where you are (this isn’t limited to running programs at church)
- minister with what you have right now (a lot of training is not necessary)

What steps will you take after college to make sure that you are developing authentic relationships with not-yet-believers? What might that look like?

4) ANTICIPATE TOGETHER (ABOUT 15 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION)

- What things about how you approach your school work (and any other work you do) “will stay the same for you after you graduate?”
- What things about the way you reach out to others will stay the same for you?
- What things do you anticipate will change?
- What can you do now to prepare?

5) TAKE TIME TOGETHER TO JOURNAL (ABOUT 10 MINUTES TO WRITE/REFLECT)

- What fears do you have about developing work relationships after college?
- What are other concerns do you have about entering the work world?
- What is one thing you could begin to apply right now from this session?

- What is one thing you want to remember during your transition away from campus?

- What scripture influenced or encouraged you the most from this session?

ASSIGNMENT FOR SESSION 3 (ALLOW 90 MINUTES TO PREPARE)

- Prepare the “Money” study.
- Prepare the “Time” study.
- Read *Tyranny of the Urgent* (a booklet by Charles E. Hummel, Intersity Press).

SESSION 3: Money/Time

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE (ALLOW 90 MINUTES)

- Prepare “Money” study
- Prepare “Time” study
- Read *Tyranny of the Urgent*

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS OVER DINNER (ABOUT 60 MINUTES)

- What are the most common ways for you to waste time?
- What are the most tempting things for you to waste money on?

AFTER DINNER

1) READ ALUMNI TIPS REGARDING MONEY

“I wish I had known...

...that I should make getting out of debt a priority. Live as frugally as possible...young is the best and easiest age to do it even though it may seem hard. Just because you NOW may have a stable income, don't expand your living and spending to it. Get out of debt, save and give. Dave Ramsey's book, a *The Total Money Makeover*, has been very helpful to us.”

...not to go into debt. Only spend what you have. Even if you THINK you can pay it off next month, don't use a credit card!”

...that I should have developed a budget right away! You'd be surprised where the money can go after a month of shopping for “a few little things”.

...how helpful it would be to start off with a budget right away. I wasn't used to being responsible for so many different expenses and household costs and I could have gotten in to some serious credit card debt if someone hadn't told me to establish a budget.”

...that being responsible for providing for myself would be a bit overwhelming. I was no longer dependent on my parents.”

2) DISCUSS MONEY BIBLE STUDY (ABOUT 40 MINUTES TO PREPARE/30 MINUTES TO DISCUSS)

What Is God's perspective on money and possessions? Read through these passages (from the ESV) quickly and highlight any principles or observations about money that you see.

- Proverbs 3:9-10 – “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.”

- Proverbs 11:25 – “Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.”

- Proverbs 21:17 – “Whoever loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.”

- Proverbs 22:7 – “The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.”

- Proverbs 23:4-5 – “Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven.”

- Ecclesiastes 5:10 – “He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.”

- Matthew 6:19-21 – “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

- Matthew 6:24 – “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

- Matthew 6:33 – “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

- Luke 16:10-13 – “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

- Luke 21:1-4 – “Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, and He saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. And He said, “Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

- Acts 20:35 – “In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 – “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

- I Timothy 6:6-10 – “But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”

- I Timothy 6:17-19 – “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”

- Hebrews 13:5 – “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”

Based on what you’ve read, comment on four of the following money related topics:

Greed	Idols	Wealth
Contentment	American advertising	Giving
Trusting God for needs	Impulsive spending	Poverty
Possessions	Debt/student loans	Saving

1.

2.

3.

4.

- As you look to your future, how do you hope to view money?
- How can you keep from being “possessed by your possessions”?
- What practical steps can you take now as you examine your view and use of money?²

3) READ/DISCUSS ALUMNI TIPS REGARDING USE OF TIME

“I wish I had known...

...that I would struggle a lot with time management. I have a hard time making myself stop working and I don't always prioritize my health (physical, emotional, and spiritual) over work. I think it would have been helpful to talk about the balance between doing 'whatever you do as working for the Lord and not for men,' and realizing that 'you yourselves are God's temple and God's spirit lives in you.'”

...my limits and that I would need to set good boundaries on my free time.”

...that having very clear daily priorities would be a huge help in being efficient with a limited amount of time. No matter what method of time management you use, you can still only get so much done in a day.”

² For additional resources on financial management and budgeting, check Dave Ramsey's *The Total Money Makeover* (available at crown.org) or *Dave Ramsey's Complete Guide to Money* (available at DaveRamsey.com)

What does the Lord say about rest?

- Matthew 11:28-30

- Mark 6:30-32

- Hebrews 4:9-11

How might time management and rest look differently after college? What is one thing you would want to apply from this study?³

5) DISCUSS *TYRANNY OF THE URGENT* (ROUGHLY 20 MINUTES TO READ/15 MINUTES TO DISCUSS)

6) ANTICIPATE TOGETHER (ABOUT 15 MINUTES FOR DISCUSSION)

- What things about your use of money will stay the same for you?

- What things do you anticipate changing?

- What things about the amount of time and your use of it will stay the same?

- What things about your time do you anticipate will change?

- What can you do now to prepare for these things?

³ For more help thinking about time and time management, check *Margin* by Richard Swenson. This book is a guide to creating “the emotional, physical, financial, and time reserves” you need.

7) TAKE TIME TOGETHER TO JOURNAL (ABOUT 10 MINUTES FOR WRITING/REFLECTION)

- What fears do you have about managing your money and time?
- Where do you think you will be most vulnerable in the areas of money and time?
- What is one thing you could begin to apply right now?
- What is one thing you for sure want to apply after college?
- What scripture influenced or encouraged you the most from this session?

8) ASSIGNMENT FOR SESSION 4 (ALLOW 90 MINUTES)

- Prepare the "Walking with God" Bible study (30 minutes).
- Set aside at least 30-40 minutes to work through the "Vision" page.
- Take time to pray through the "Show Stoppers" page and identify the issues that you think might affect you the most.

From the following scripture, write down any observations or principles you see that are necessary for someone to be moving forward spiritually.

- John 12:24-26

- I Corinthians 9:24-27

- Ephesians 5:15-17

- Hebrews 12:1-3

What “habits” or “disciplines” have you established that have helped you to grow spiritually during your college years?

It is absolutely essential that you place a high priority on the Word of God if you are going to continue to grow in your faith. If you are not in the Word, you will not be growing in your relationship with the Lord, and if you aren’t growing in relationship, you will not be able to trust Him and grow in your faith...and your love for Him will grow cold. What will you do to make sure that you take the habits/disciplines that you have developed with you when you leave the campus?

Consider these comments on faith from Richard Halverson, late Chaplain of the US Senate:

- “Think of faith as an accepting–growing–deepening relationship with Jesus Christ.”
- “The object of faith determines the validity of faith.”
- “To live by faith – to walk by faith – is to trust – to rest – in the faithfulness of God, the trustworthiness of Jesus Christ, the sufficiency of His love and grace, the certainty of His promises.”
- “Authentic faith depends upon the Word of God no matter how strong one’s feelings may be to the contrary.”
- “One cannot have faith in what one does not know!”
- “Faith is not something that can be generated within one by struggle or effort. Faith comes with knowledge of that which is trustworthy.”

Write some goals to help you move toward your vision regarding...

- The Word of God

- Community

- Lifestyle

- Accountability

What obstacles do you foresee and who could help you with them?

4) “SHOW STOPPERS” – THINGS THAT COULD DERAIL YOUR VISION (20-30 MINUTES TO PREPARE/10 TO SHARE)

Highlight the 3-5 things that you feel pose the biggest threat/temptation for you?

Find scripture to memorize and pray for yourself in each area you highlight.

(It's ok if you need to add something not on the list.)

- Materialism
- Dating relationships
- Purity issues
- Extreme focus on leisure activities
- Taking too much liberty in gray areas
- Lack of fellowship/accountability
- No time invested in walk with God
- Success at work/over working
- Post Modern thinking/New Age
- Addictions
- Good Causes
- Bitterness/unforgiveness
- TV/video games
- Time spent on the Internet/social media
- Undisciplined sleep schedule

5) ANTICIPATE TOGETHER (15 MINUTES TO DISCUSS)

- What things about your walk with God will stay the same?
- What things do you think might change?
- What things will stay the same about your Vision?
- What might look different?
- What can you do now to prepare?

6) TAKE TIME TOGETHER TO JOURNAL (ABOUT 15 MINUTES TO WRITE/REFLECT)

- What do you think it will take for you to continue to walk with God after college?
- What plan do you have to make this happen?
- What concerns do you have about the “show stoppers”? What help will you need?
- What scripture would you like to begin to pray into your life?
- What vision do you have for how you would like to see God use your life?

7) FINAL APPLICATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLANS (ABOUT 10 MINUTES)

Read your previous journal entries in this document and highlight key applications. Use these key ideas to make an action plan for next steps.

- What are some first steps you could take to work toward a healthy and growing transition?

- What would you especially like to ask people to pray for you? Who will you ask?

8) PRAYER/SEND OFF (ABOUT 15 MINUTES DEPENDING ON THE SIZE OF THE GROUP)

Pray over each individual one at a time as a group, if possible.

Tips for Facilitators and Leaders

Getting Started

- Plan for 2½ hours together for each session, beginning with dinner together.
- Meet monthly over the course of the spring semester. This allows students to stay in their regular Bible study group without being overwhelmed.
- Invite those who will be graduating in May and in the following December.

Before You Meet

- You will need to purchase copies of *Tyranny of the Urgent* to add to the materials.
- Feel free to add additional content as you wish on each topic, but beware of piling on too much at this point in students' academic and ministry journey.
- Consider bringing in outside experts to present things such as gifting, interviewing, writing resumes, budgeting, etc.

Meeting Together

- If necessary, divide into smaller groups for the Bible study discussion portion. The Bible studies are designed to give them a scriptural foundation for each topic. They are not designed for depth (as there will be people at all places in their walks with Christ in this group).
- The journal questions at the end of each session are an important part of building Biblical convictions. They are designed to be answered at the end of each session while the group is still together.

Other Materials

Other resources from The Navigators' *God's Calling and Your Vocation* series:

- *A Biblical Perspective on Calling, Vocation and Work* by Ronni Bernardy, Dean Storelli and John Teten
- *Nehemiah: When God's Call Comes Calling at Work* by Wayne Kuna
- *Daniel: Thriving at Work as an Exile* by Ralph Ennis