



ORE LESS IS MORE LESS

PARENT GUIDE

## **Less is More**

As Christians, we are called to live a life that Jesus modeled during his time on Earth. That life included compassion for others, a desire to serve and a humility that came before honor. In 2022, we often don't face the challenges of living without the basic necessities but instead face a reality of 'too much/many.' Too many things, too much pressure from the world around us, and too much self-fulfillment. All of these things combine to create a life distracted from what is essential in our lives as followers of Jesus and difficulties in our pursuit of the Lord. What would it look like if we took on the mentality that less of these things mentioned above results in more of what truly matters – eternity and Jesus? Over the next three weeks we will be diving into ways to rid ourselves of the desire for more, the desire to belong to the world and be accepted, and the desire to take it upon ourselves to meet our own needs.

### **Week 1:**

This week we will focus on the relentless hunger for more that so many of us battle on a day-to-day basis. Jesus calls us into a life of pursuing what is essential which does not often include the luxuries in our shopping carts. Our goal this week is to show our students their need for Jesus in the context of a world that is pursuing status, material possessions, and treasures here on earth that will eventually come to break, rot and disappear.

**Text:** Matthew 19:16-26, Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 6:24

**THP (Take Home Point):** Less in the World is More in Heaven

**Week 2:**

This week we address our basic human need to belong. There are multiple places for our students to belong to, but are they pursuing the right ones and for the right reasons? The world gives us a checklist of items to obtain first in order to belong; status, wealth, a certain moral compass, or mindset on what truth is. Jesus asks us to come and belong to his family which was only made possible through his life, death and resurrection. The goal of this week is to get our students to identify things they are doing in their lives to belong with a certain person or group of people and make a shift towards a desire to belong to the family of God while operating a willing obedience.

**Text:** John 15:18-21, Matthew 5:14-16, John 3:17

**THP (Take Home Point):** Less of the World is More of Jesus

**Week 3:**

This week we turn our focus towards the struggle with temptation of self-sufficiency and self-understanding. As Americans, we live in a very individualistic society where most of the focus is on making a name for ourselves, getting what is ours and accomplishing goals we have set for ourselves at all costs. It is only when we shift the focus away from ourselves and towards Jesus that we find what it really means to be the person we are created to be. We are called to pick up our cross daily, die to ourselves and live in obedience to the will that God has for us in our lives. The goal of this week is to clearly communicate the need to understand that we should not and cannot do this life on our own. There is a calling placed on our lives as followers of Jesus to put ourselves to the side in the name of glorifying the One who created each of us.

**Text:** Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 2:20, Luke 9:23, Galatians 5:24, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Mark 8:35

**THP (Take Home Point):** Less of the Self is More of Jesus

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# A Guide For Conversation

## 1. Get Prepared

- Read the overview for the week to get a basic grasp on what is being taught.
- Have the THP (Take Home Point) memorized so that you can bring it up with your student.
- For bonus points, read some/all of the Scriptures listed and do some research on what's being communicated!

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## 2. Get Curious

- Start slow and light. Maybe ask an icebreaker question such as: "Did you meet anyone new tonight?" "What was the highlight of the night?" "Was there any good food?"
- Ask a specific question regarding the THP (Take Home Point). "Hey, I know the THP for tonight was \_\_\_\_\_. What did you take away from that?"
- Pay attention to their answer! Use their answer to draw out follow up questions. "You mentioned it challenged you in the area of devotion. Where do you feel like you could be more devoted this week?"
- Ask them how the message can apply to their everyday life THIS week: "In light of feeling challenged to be more devoted, what if you devoted yourself to homework before video games this week? Or your Bible before your phone?"
- Partner with them: "In light of being challenged to be devoted, what if we-together-devoted ourselves to eating dinner at the dinner table 3 times this week?"



### 3. Get Beneath the Surface

- This step—admittedly—will take time and will depend on the type of relationship you have with your student. However, consistency is key. The more you practice, the better you'll get!
- Notice their body language, tone of voice, and other non-verbal cues. What are they projecting? Stress? Anxiety? Anger? Sadness? Joy? Ask a specific question to draw that out: "How are you feeling after tonight?"
- Are they closed off to conversation or open to it? If closed off, ask them if there's anything they'd like to discuss. If they still don't budge, use your judgment on whether to press again or let the conversation be.
- Reaffirm your availability. "If there's anything more you'd like to talk about, I just want you to know that I'm here for you."

#### 4. Get Vulnerable

- As you wade into deeper conversation, offer a appropriate amount of vulnerability.
- Begin to share your own experiences regarding the subject being discussed (i.e. “when I was in High School, I had a really difficult time not giving into peer pressure. Here’s how I got help to make better decisions.” Or, “here’s what I wish I would have done to avoid the consequences that naturally came as a result of my poor choices.”)
- Allow your student to see your humanity. Invite them in to a story of relationship that you can write together, in real time.

#### 5. Get Practical

- At Northview, we always talk about moving people to their “NEXT.” So, for your student (and you!), what is going to be their NEXT after having this conversation?
- Do they need to apologize to someone? Do they need to confess something? Do they need to express gratitude for something? Help them determine what their NEXT is going to be.
- Finally, hold them accountable. Follow up! Make sure that they come through on what it is that they said they’d do.



## CONVERSATION TIPS

### If/When They Disagree

What do we do when there is pushback and rebuttals? How can we avoid letting this conversation become a wedge in the relationship?

#### BE RESPECTFUL, NOT DISMISSIVE.

We cannot act quickly to dismiss our students as ignorant or be too harsh when responding to their rebuttals. If we do, it will close them off and truth cannot walk through a closed door.

Keep your emotions in check (Don't freak out).

Refuse to get defensive. Don't allow your student to feel as if you're against them. Calmly, politely, wade through the conversation even if you feel them getting hyperemotional.

#### FIND AND MENTION COMMON GROUND

In her TED Talk on debate, Julia Dhar says, "...the way to reach people is by finding common ground." We have to intentionally find places to use the phrase "I agree that\_\_\_\_\_" or "I can see how \_\_\_\_\_ can make sense."

Where is it that you and your student can find common ground? Finding common ground can look like: "I can see how you would see it that way." "I can tell you've thought about this." or "I can tell that you have been thinking about this."

## PROBE A DISAGREEMENT WITH QUESTIONS

Questions are usually a better use of rebuttal than spitting out our thoughts. Ask them,

“Where did you learn that?”

“How do you see it differently?”

“What brought you to this conclusion?”

### **Resources You Can Buy:**

Less is More – Joshua Becker

Essentialism – Greg McKeown

Ruthless Elimination of Hurry – John Mark Comer

Congratulations on engaging in an intentional conversation with your student! Whether you made it through step 1 or all 5 steps, give yourself a pat on the back. Every conversation must start somewhere. Your relationship will be better for it in the long run! You’re doing the hard work!

## WHEN FAMILIES WIN, WE WIN!

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