

leader guide



northwest
bible church

Welcome

More than likely, you're holding this guide because you currently are a leader at Northwest Bible Church, or you have been asked to consider leading.

In 2011, a process for clarifying our vision prompted us to ask, "What does the community of Northwest Bible Church uniquely have to offer?"

From that question, we gained a greater sense of what we're about, where God is leading us, how we are to get there, and ways to make sure we're on the path.

And from that process, we also discovered a clearer understanding of what it means to serve as a leader in this community of believers.

As this guide explains, the heart of leadership at Northwest Bible Church is about being able to reinterpret brokenness —personally and corporately — as the workspace for Almighty God. Being a leader here isn't about having it all figured out.

We believe that leadership is about experiencing dependence on Jesus and inviting others into the joy of depending on him.

In the pages that follow, you are invited to process with us through the why's and the how's of leading at Northwest Bible Church. May God bless you as you seek to be faithful to what He's doing in your life.

Neil J. Tomba

SENIOR PASTOR





rescue

Welcome to the world of “fine.”

I’m fine.

You’re fine.

Together, we’re fine.

But we’re not fine, are we?

We live in a world where air-brushed models pass for the norm of beauty. Where flashing lights and constant noise distract us from what’s really important. Where a nice car, a nice home, and the right school for our kids make us believe that we’re going to be all right in the end. Comfortable. Safe. Secure.

CONFESSION

Jesus said, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted” (Matt. 5:4). *It’s only when we can be real about sin and its impact — our pain, our loss, our heartache — that we can begin to expose the lie and find restoration in Christ.*

Christ died on the cross because I’m not fine. You’re not fine. Together, we’re a mess because of sin.

But hope is at hand.

Jesus isn’t afraid of our mess. He knows we’re not fine, and that’s exactly why He came to rescue us. (Matt. 11:28)

GREATNESS

But the World of Fine tells us that if we are going to be somebody, we have to have a life that is well-put-together: You’re important because you’re the most well-connected. Or the hardest working. Or the most charming. You did it. You deserve it. You stay there because you can keep it together.

But Jesus' road to importance is quite different: **"Whoever then humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."** (Matt. 18:4) Humility is the pathway to greatness—at least, greatness before the One who truly knows us. It's not that we are the best at keeping up appearances. Rather, we admit that the One who runs the universe has given us the stewardship of leading His people. Everything is from His hand. All is by grace, so that much will be made of Jesus.

SUFFICIENCY

The Apostle Paul, one of the greatest leaders of the early church, knew what it meant to admit he wasn't fine. Paul suffered pain, faced persecutions, and struggled against pride — all in order that, even though he would be used mightily, he would stay humble. Broken. Weak. But Paul learned to rest in Jesus' words: **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** (2 Cor. 12:9)

Even as a leader in the church, "not fine" is expected.

In fact, it is desired.

You are free to lead in the reality that you are a work in progress. You don't have all the answers, and you don't have it all figured out.

All you have to do is invite others in to know a power that is made perfect in weakness, to know the all-sufficient grace of Christ, to experience the joy arising from abandoned reliance on Almighty God.

But it is impossible to lead others where you have never gone.

What is the source of your sufficiency?

Whose greatness are you seeking? How are you — really?

"I relied completely on Yahweh, and he turned toward me and heard my cry for help. May many see what God has done, so that they might swear allegiance to him and trust in Yahweh!" (Ps. 40:1, 3).

mission

Even if we admit we aren't fine, without direction we fail to move forward. Surely God wants to take us somewhere new, where we see His grace more clearly. He wants to give us a mission.

Or, simply put, He is leading the body of Northwest to be about . . .

“inviting people into the unexpected joy of desperate dependence on Jesus.”

When David experienced a low point in his life, he called out to the Lord. He was slipping further into the mire. He was nearly trapped. The Lord rescued him and restored him. In response he exclaimed, “May many see what God has done, so that they might swear allegiance to him and trust in Yahweh!” (Ps. 40:3).

David understood that his dependence on God was a story to be told, an invitation to be given to those around him. They, too, could rely on the Lord and be rescued.

Leadership begins with an invitation. “Follow me!” was Jesus’ simple call to his disciples (Matt. 4:19). When Jesus reinstated Peter after his denial, Jesus invited him again: “Feed my sheep” (Jn. 21:17). To the lukewarm church in Laodicea, the Risen Christ knocked at the door of their hearts, inviting them to experience a deeper, truer fellowship with him (Rev. 3:20).

The call to leadership at Northwest Bible Church is about faithfully holding out the invitation to experience Jesus more deeply.

*What about you?
Are you living out the mission?*

“Taste and see that the Lord is good! How blessed is the one who takes shelter in him!” (Ps. 34:8)

values

In any given day there are a thousand things clamoring for our attention. What we value will either direct us back toward center or divert us from what is truly worthwhile.

*As a community of believers at
Northwest Bible Church,
we affirm four core values:*

GOD OVER US

If we are going to see our brokenness as God's workspace, we have to first believe that His way is higher than ours. He is King. He alone is able to restore. (Col. 1:17-20)

GOD'S TRUTH OVER OUR OPINIONS

This means what God has to say is more important than what we have to say. As the Author of Life, God holds the unique position of defining reality. In a society that often puts more stock in knowing your mind, we at Northwest Bible Church affirm that God's Word has the final say. (Jn. 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

GOD'S PEOPLE OVER OUR PROGRAMS

Jesus came to save people. He didn't come to provide the best Vacation Bible School (though he did minister to children). He didn't come to teach the most popular Sunday school class (though his lessons were well-attended). Jesus came to free the captives, to heal the sick, to offer us peace with God. Therefore, in every program, we recognize it is simply a platform for inviting people to experience the unexpected joy of desperate dependence on Jesus. (Eph. 4:11-12)

GOD'S MISSION OVER OUR COMFORT

Finally, we recognize that — despite what society might tell us — our personal comfort is not our highest priority. Jesus himself, while residing in heaven as the All-Glorious High King, in perfect fellowship with the Father and the Spirit, considered our rescue important enough that He came down to earth to endure mocking, persecution, and a grisly, bloody execution. Because Jesus valued the divine mission over His personal comfort, salvation is available to all who believe. We affirm that no servant is greater than his master. As Christ has gone, so we go. (Matt. 28:18-20; Heb. 12:1-2)

We must be leaders who are compelled and gripped by these values.

*How do these values
lead and guide you?*

“You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had, who though he existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped (...) He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross! As a result God exalted him...” (Phil. 2:5-6, 8-9a)



strategy

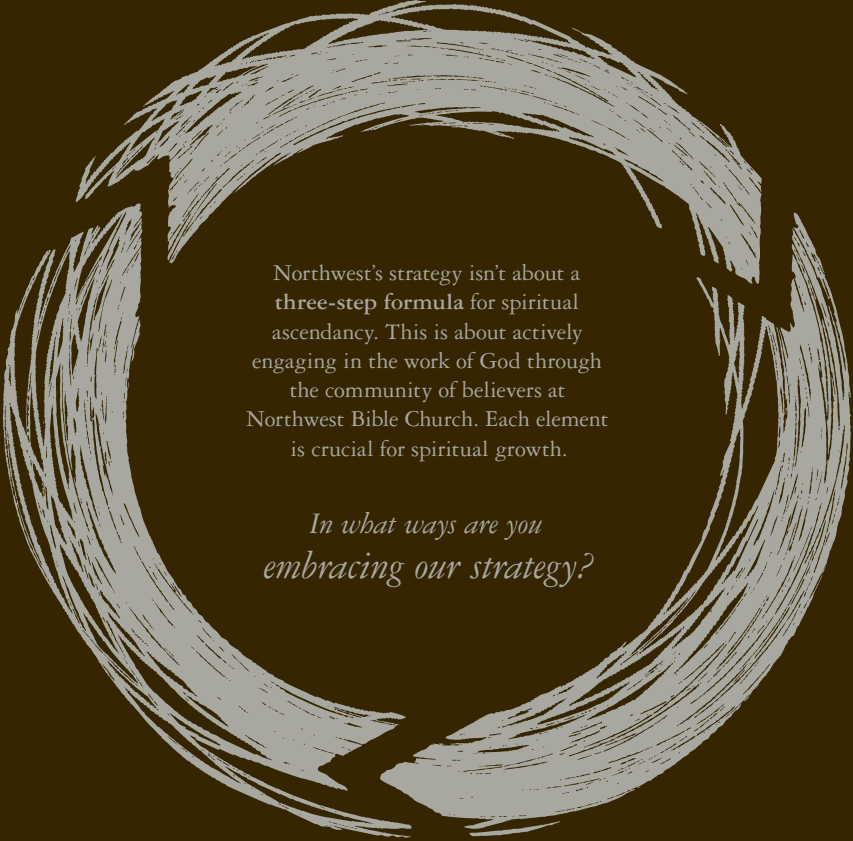
A carefully crafted strategy is the essential ingredient to a successful mission. Northwest's strategy for achieving our mission and living out our values has three components.



WORSHIP Every Sunday we stand together as a family of faith — to give God glory, to hear truth from his Word, and to encourage one another in relying on Jesus. In our worship, we see God at work among us. We express our value of God over us as we seek his Truth over our opinions. He is supremely important.

GROUPS We believe that no one pursues Jesus in isolation. Discipleship is done in community. We want to intentionally engage in groups that routinely provide the platform for spiritual transformation — a place where we are students of the Scriptures, we openly share our lives and our struggles, and we pray for one another. Here, we find spiritually edifying relationships as we value God's people over programs. Groups come in a variety of names, sizes, demographics, and affinities. But they all explicitly operate as vehicles for spiritual growth. This is where discipleship happens.

SERVE Serving can be defined as the giving of one's resources to advance the Kingdom of God — whether that's done inside or outside the church walls. You don't have to do it all. You can't. Do what God has called you to do, and invite others to experience Him with you. This is where we live out our value of God's mission over our comfort.



Northwest's strategy isn't about a **three-step** formula for spiritual ascendancy. This is about actively engaging in the work of God through the community of believers at Northwest Bible Church. Each element is crucial for spiritual growth.

In what ways are you embracing our strategy?

“And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.”

(HEB. 10:24-25)



measures

Is God really doing anything at Northwest Bible Church?

How will we know?

We will never publish enough newsletters or send enough emails to validate God's work in our midst. This isn't about what "should be" based on our mission and our values. It's about what is — what is happening in your life? What is changing in our community as a result of being desperately dependent on Jesus?

As a community of believers at Northwest Bible Church, we **expectantly anticipate that as we follow God's leading, we will each see clear evidence of His work.** As we "invite people into the unexpected joy of desperate dependence on Jesus," things will change. Growth will take place. Lives will be restored.

So these questions are for you:

- *Who are you inviting into conversations about Jesus?*
- *Where are you desperately dependent on Jesus?*
- *When have you taken a risk because of Jesus?*
- *How are you experiencing "unexpected joy" from Jesus?*

We want to be a church that perpetually asks these questions of one another because we believe they prompt us to remember our own desperate dependence on Jesus and to evaluate how we are achieving the mission of Northwest Bible Church.

"You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone, revealing that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets of human hearts." (2 Cor. 3:2-3)

The background features a light grey surface with several overlapping, hand-drawn circular lines. Some lines are a vibrant teal color, while others are a muted grey. The lines vary in thickness and opacity, creating a sense of depth and movement.

Growth
will take place.

Lives
will be restored.

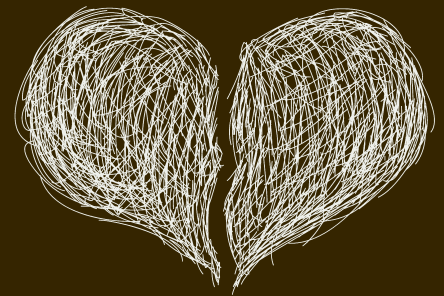
response

Leadership is never easy. It requires intentional discipline, preparation, and motivation. Jesus, “the author and perfecter of our faith,” (Heb. 12:2) endured the suffering and shame of the cross and came into his Father’s glory. The way is not without difficulty.

Leadership is no small task, but the invitation stands — an invitation to find his grace sufficient for you in fresh new ways. Perhaps God is working in your life right now and directing you to share your life with others.

You don’t have to know the answers to all the questions. You simply need to know the answer to one:

*Is God calling you to lead at
Northwest Bible Church?*



**“We proclaim him by
instructing and teaching
all people with all
wisdom so that we may
present every person
mature in Christ. Toward
this goal I also labor,
struggling according
to his power
that powerfully
works in me.”**

(Col. 1:28-29)

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