

# GRIP GUIDE

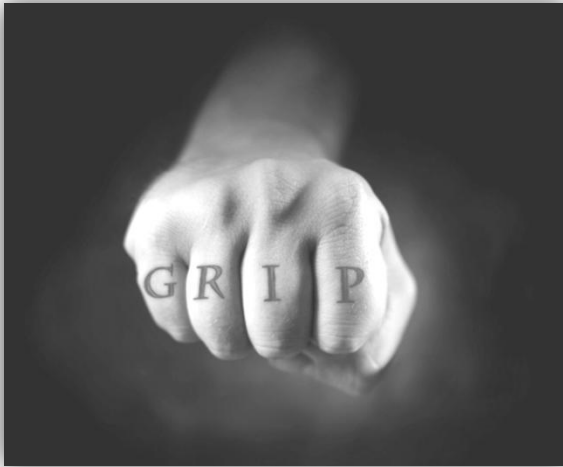
FALL 2021



A SEASON OF DISCIPLESHIP

# GRIP Discipleship

## Fall 2021



**When my heart is gripped by God's hands...**

*"Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." (Luke 23:46)*

**then my hands will do what's on God's heart!**

*"I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." (John 8:29)*

### DATES

**8/30(SG) 9/13 10/4(SG) 10/25 11/15(SG) 12/6**

**SG = Meet with your GRIP team small group off-site**

# My GRIP Commitment

## I am willing to take ownership of my spiritual growth by

watching the 'Introduction to GRIP' video. I understand and agree to the commitment.

pursuing God with unhurried times alone with Him, including journaling, at least 5 days/week

deliberately pursuing the action points God puts on my heart

attending the 6 GRIP gatherings (once every 3 weeks)

**8/30(SG) 9/13 10/4(SG) 10/25 11/15(SG) 12/6**

setting aside 4-6 hrs for a personal retreat to listen to God about some life action points

## I am ready to commit myself to the spiritual success of one other man by

- ☐ meeting with my GRIP partner at least once between each gathering (large group or small group) for the purpose of encouragement, challenge, accountability, and prayer
- ☐ doing my part to build up the men in my small group

## My sharing during small group times will be

**Real** (authentic, “no bologna zone”)

**Focused** (on topic)

**Brief** (so others can share too)




# Men Need a Plan

GRIP is a word that brings to mind a tight hold. God's in the business of getting a tight hold on our heart – transforming it and conforming it – so it becomes more and more like Jesus' heart. As God grips our heart, we increasingly value the things that God values. Loving Him and loving others is at the Core of God's heart.

As He grips our heart, God calls each of us to leverage our lives for His Kingdom. We at Focused Living believe that each Christ-following man can be leveraging his life towards at least one other man on an ongoing basis. For many of us, it's the start of making Christ's last command - make disciples - our first concern. So, ***who is your man and what is your plan?***

Who might God be calling you to walk alongside in this next season of your life? What potentially FATR man (Faithful, Available, Teachable, Reproducible) has God sovereignly placed in your circle (Church, Small Group, Ministry Team, Focused Living Men's Forum, etc)? Can you envision making yourself accessible to him, and finding a way to intentionally spur one another on toward maturity in Christ?

**Figure A** on the next page illustrates the variety of GRIP partnerships. Some GRIP pairings are between a spiritually more mature man ("Paul") and a newer believer ("Timothy"). Other pairings are characterized by a mutual spiritual relationship like the Biblical example of "Barnabas and Paul" or "Onesiphorus & Paul" as they mutually strengthened each other's hands. As a man progresses in his walk with Jesus, we strongly encourage the whole spectrum of intentional spiritual relationships in his life:

-  **Timothy** – a man you are intentionally leading in discipleship
-  **Barnabas / Onesiphorus** - a mutual relationship of intentionally spurring each other on
-  **Paul** – a man who is intentionally discipling, mentoring, or coaching you.

The key word in all of these kind of relationships is **intentionality**. Disciplers are intentional!

**Figure B** on the following page reflects the mindset of intentionally "moving a man to the right." Followers become Disciples and Disciples become Leaders and Leaders grow in their domain of influence and become Kingdom Builders. In all of these stages, spiritual maturity is marked by bringing others along with us.

Pursue a

**PAUL**

I Cor 11:1

II Tim 2:1-6

Become a

**BARNABAS**

Acts 9:26-27;

13:2, 42 (16x)

Become an

**ONESIPHORUS**

II Tim 1:15-18

**YOU**



- ◆ Encourage
- ◆ Challenge
- ◆ Pray

Teach/Train a

**TIMOTHY**

Acts 16:1; Phil 1:1;

Col 1:1; I Thes 1:1;

I Tim 1:2; 4:6-16;

II Tim 2:1-6

Figure A

# Moving Men to the Right

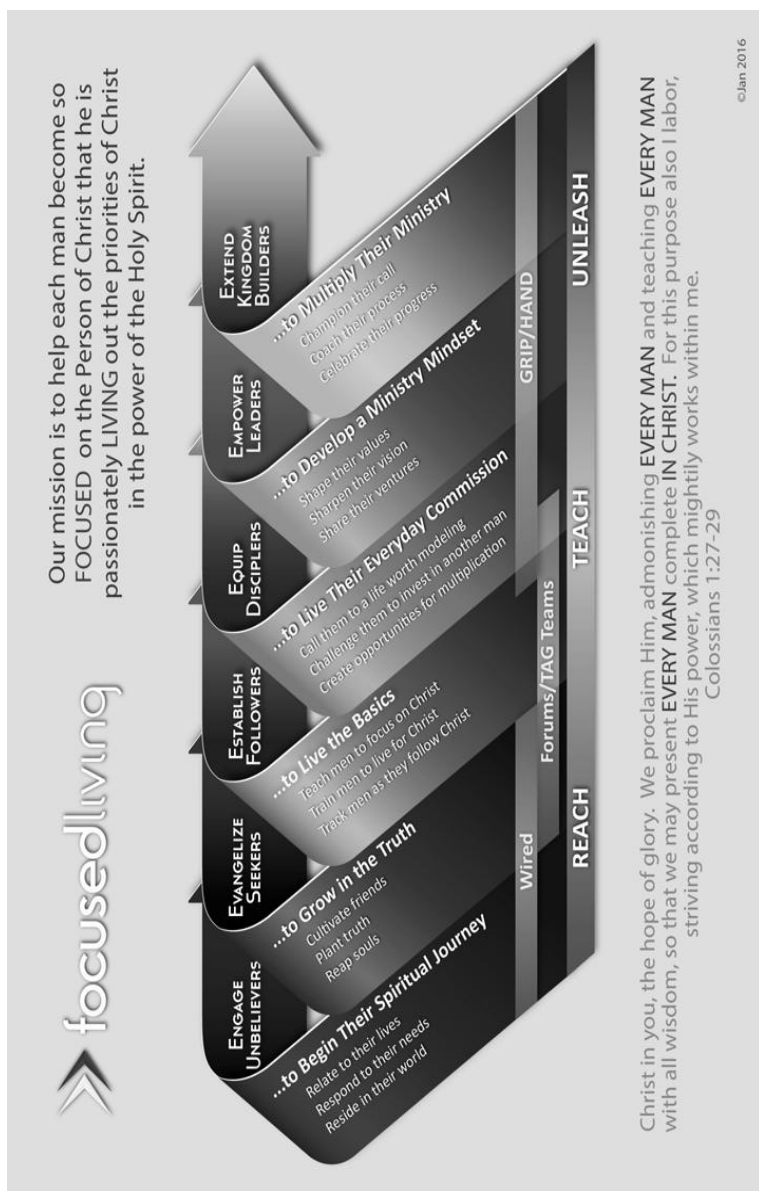


Figure B

*Once I have a man, now what? How do I actually 'walk alongside' him in his spiritual journey?* Without a plan, discipleship rarely moves from intention to reality. There are so many other things, often good things, vying for our time and energy. It's so easy to get distracted from that pursuit of investing in another man for spiritual growth and maturity. So, having some set of tracks is essential to not only starting the discipleship relationship, but fueling it forward.

GRIP is one set of tracks to assist you in your disciple-making efforts. It's not the only way. We don't even claim it's the best way. But, our way of doing it is better than your way of not doing it ☺. So, if you haven't landed on a way to intentionally relate to other men for the purpose of spiritual maturity and see them, in turn, multiply into other men, then we invite you to experience GRIP.

Bottom line: We know you have a lot of moving parts in your life. We feel called by God to champion you as a discipler and help you prioritize your obedience to the Great Commission reflected by investing in one other man!

The purpose of these pages that follow is to summarize GRIP discipleship. We want each man to enter in with his eyes wide open.

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Thanks to Richard Germain (See Mark 10:25)

01-10-2007

**YET ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO FIT A CAMEL  
THROUGH A NEEDLE**

# The Big Picture of GRIP

*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. **Ephesians 1:7-8***

*“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. **John 15:5***

*discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness... in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe... Take pains with these things... so that your progress will be evident to all. **1Timothy 4:7-15***

As we soak in the reality of God’s love and grace lavished on us, our love and affection for Him grows. We increasingly desire to put ourselves in a position, through abiding and through discipline, to let God GRIP our heart and conform us to Jesus.

Each season of GRIP discipleship emphasizes 3 core rhythms that position us for growth:

**Meeting with God** - Regular unhurried time alone with God in His Word and prayer, abiding in His love and cultivating a heart that delights in obedience.

**Brother to Brother** – Regularly meet with at least one other brother where encouragement, challenge, and prayer can happen.

**Action Points** - Identify and pursue a few personal growth action points to align myself with God’s desire for the Key Relationships and Key Resources in my life.

Some men participating in GRIP are a long way down the road to owning these three core rhythms. Others have been exposed to them, and perhaps have practiced them for short seasons in their past, but their lives are not currently characterized by them. For several men, these will be brand new practices. Our prayer is that this GRIP season will help you own these three rhythms, and that you will pass them on to other men as well.

Here’s a brief overview of how these 3 core rhythms will specifically be incorporated into this GRIP season.



# Rhythm #1 → Meeting with God

*“The first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord.”*

George Mueller, May 1841 diary entry.

Apart from daily reading God’s Word with a posture to know Him, love Him and obey Him, it’s highly unlikely that a man will ever be a vibrant disciple, let alone a disciple maker.

God has graciously given us His special revelation in the Bible (2Tim 3:16). It’s the **ONLY** source where you can learn God’s character, learn God’s Gospel, and learn who you are in Christ. As we read the Scriptures, they read us (Heb 4:12). The Holy Spirit, who resides in each believer and mediates the presence of Christ to us, ministers the Word to us as we read and reflect. He corrects our wrong thinking; He convicts us of sin; He reminds us of God’s promises; He speaks courage to our heart; He makes our heart happy in the Lord! Why not make this season of GRIP discipleship your “stake in the ground” for personally owning the practice of regular unhurried time alone with God in His Word every day?

**Bible Reading Plan** Every Christ-following man needs to “feed himself” from God’s Word. This GRIP guide will help you be in God’s Word at least 5 X per week.

**Warning:** If you already have a robust daily Bible reading plan, don’t attempt to “add” the GRIP reading plan on top of that. Either set aside your plan for the GRIP season, **OR** read and journal from your plan while also journaling **1 day per week** from the GRIP reading plan.

**Journaling** Reading God’s Word is a necessary start. But reading is not the same as meeting with God. Our goal in reading is communion with God and application of what He presses into our hearts. So, we will encourage you to process and respond to what you read by journaling. This looks different for each man. If you are new to journaling, try writing out a prayer of response after your time in the Word. On the next page you’ll find templates that may help guide your journaling. We’ll also provide a few “prime the pump” questions for each Bible passage.

**Passing On** To seal in God’s Word, we want each man to regularly “pass on” one aspect of his time in God’s Word with his family, GRIP partner, or someone else in his life. **EXPRESS** what God has **IMPRESSED** on your heart and mind.

# Ways to Process the Word

Below are a few approaches to help guide your times alone with God. Experiment with these and find a way that is most meaningful to you. Remember, the goal is to commune with Him. Ask, *“Lord, I’m listening. How do You want to grip my heart today?”*

## Approach 1

### WHO, WHAT, SO WHAT, NOW WHAT

#### **WHO** are you addressing?

Always start your time in prayer with a reverent recognition that you are coming into the presence of your Eternal Father and Gracious Lord!

#### **WHAT** is God saying?

Slowly read the passage 2X as if you were there. Feel the emotions; sense the relationships; smell the surroundings; hear the crowds. What did this mean to the original audience? Record insights, phrases, commands & promises that stand out.

#### **SO WHAT** is God saying to you?

Stop to reflect and listen. What does it mean to you? What most grabbed your attention, stirred your mind or gripped your heart? Why?

#### **NOW WHAT** is God asking you to do?

What will you do with the truth God has illumined to you? Write out a short, heartfelt prayer to the Lord in response to this time with Him.

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## Approach 2

### God and Me

**God** - As I read your Word today, what is it that You want me to learn and appreciate about You? (i.e., your character, your works, your ways)

**Me** - And what is it that You want me to learn today about myself and living as Your disciple?

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## Sacred Reading

This method of processing God's Word is especially useful when reading a very short passage of scripture.

**READ** Gently read, listening with the ears of your heart.

**MEDITATE** Slowly reread the passage. Note any word or phrase that draws your attention...or that "sparkles". Repeat the word or phrase that has chosen you, asking God, "*What do you want me to learn from this today?*" Ask your heart, "*Why this word, why here, why now?*"

**PRAY** Read the passage a third time and savor it. Let it move you to place yourself before the One who has invited you to intimate dialogue. "*Lord, how are you inviting me to respond?*" Speak from your heart.

**CONTEMPLATE/REST** Review the text one more time. Sit quietly. Let the Holy Spirit speak to your heart. Let go of the text (mentally) and simply rest in God. As the fragrance of God's Word fills you, enjoy the sweetness of communion with the God of the scriptures.

## 2 Timothy 3:16 Pattern

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*"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."*

**God teaches me?** [Are there any truths You want me to know, promises to believe, or commands to obey?]

**God reproves me?** [What sinful words, motives, actions or attitudes do You want me to confess to experience Your grace yet again?]

**God corrects me?** [Where are You asking me to change my heart, break a habit or develop a discipline?]

**God trains me in righteousness?** [Where are You asking me to exercise my faith or to extend forgiveness and grace?]

**God equips me for His work?** [What skills do You want me to learn, spiritual gifts You want me to develop or ways You want me to serve?]

# GRIP Scripture Memory

*“You shall impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul... You shall teach them to your sons...”*

Deuteronomy 11:18,19

Throughout this season of GRIP discipleship, you will be hiding some of God’s Word in your heart through scripture memory. We do this so we will have God’s Word when we need it the most. The specific verses will be printed on the various section dividers. Some GRIP men will choose scripture memory as one of their action points for the season and choose additional passages that are especially meaningful to them.

For many of us, it has been a long time since we committed anything to memory! We get it. GRIP is fueled by grace. Give yourself fully to the task, and God will be glorified and you will see growth. Use the Bible version with which you feel most comfortable. (In this guide, we will present the verses in the New American Standard version - NASB.)



## Rhythm #2 → Brother to Brother

So, our first GRIP rhythm is “meeting with God”. The second GRIP rhythm is “brother to brother”. In many facets of men’s lives, community is a given. Men hunt together, play & watch sports together, work out together, do home improvement projects together, serve together, etc. However, when it comes to the Christian journey, many men have never learned how to do this **together**. It’s clear from the Bible that the life God calls us to is a life in community. There’s the assumption that we will be walking this journey together. Christianity is a team sport. No contact, no impact. We must give at least a few men access to our everyday lives.

*And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him (Mk 3:14)...that I may be encouraged together with you...each of us by the other’s faith (Rom 1:12)...my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier (Phil 2:25)...Bear one another’s burdens (Gal 6:2)...Encourage one another day after day (Heb 3:13)...Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ (1Cor 11:1)...walk according to the pattern you have in us (Phil 3:17) ...pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart (2Tim 2:22).*

**Meet between GRIP gatherings** The backbone of GRIP is the face to face meeting of GRIP partners where they **encourage**, **challenge**, and **pray for** each other. Since the rhythm of GRIP gatherings is every three weeks, we expect that each GRIP partnership (pairing/triad) will meet face to face at least once between large gatherings. **The most successful GRIP partnerships find a way to connect every week.** Weekly phone calls also go along way.

**Share Action Points** During the first month or so of GRIP you will have chosen “3 Key” action points. Here’s the sense behind action points: “God’s calling me to get traction in these areas and with His help I expect to make progress over the course of this season of discipleship.” It’s vital that you **share your action points** with your GRIP partner. In fact, discussing them may help you further refine them. Our WebApp makes sharing these easy: [Grip.focusedliving.com](http://Grip.focusedliving.com). Once shared, you and your partner can strengthen each other’s hands to follow through. Each action point can become an accountability question that your GRIP partner can ask you😊.

**Pray** With your GRIP partner’s action points in hand, now you have specific ways to lift each other up in prayer. Make it a habit of praying for each other every time you meet.

# What To Do When We Meet as GRIP Partners?

No contact, no impact! There is no substitute for meeting nose to nose at least every other week to assess God's current grip on our heart. Weekly is best. This face to face time could be while working side by side on a project, driving to a ministry appointment, enjoying some recreation, taking a prayer walk, sharing a meal together, etc. How you get together is totally up to you. It will probably be dictated by convenience and the rhythm of your lives. Just think of how many different situations, places, and times Jesus met His disciples! For those first disciples, class was always in session!



A conversation is an organic process. Most of the time it's natural to start a conversation with some small talk. Frequently there is a "hot off the press" situation or event that begs some attention. Any meaningful conversation between friends includes these facets. As GRIP partners, we want you to deliberately **add a few more elements to the typical conversation.**

- ✎ **Pass On Word** – Make it a habit to pass on one truth or insight that God has recently impressed on your heart. *What's God been impressing on you from His Word?* Having your GRIP Guide journal handy when you meet will be helpful.
- ✎ **Accountability** – Since the main purpose of GRIP is to help each other make progress in our spiritual journey **so we can love others better**, it's wise to give each other permission to poke to see how we are really doing. With your partner's Action Point list ("Key 3") at hand, ask questions like, *What progress did you make on your action steps? What did you do well? What can you improve?* Listen, encourage, challenge, celebrate.
- ✎ **Pray** – No prayer...no power! Always set aside some minutes to pray for each other in both successes and failures. If you meet for lunch, why not take a short prayer walk and pray in what you have just discussed.

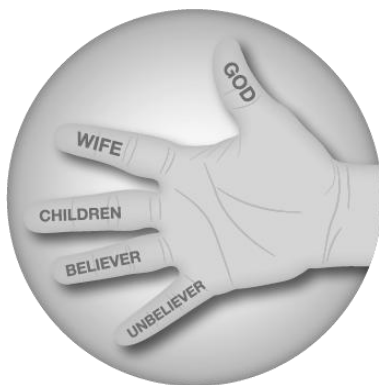
## Rhythm #3 → Action Points

The third GRIP rhythm is identifying and pursuing a few “Action Points” that God will use to get an even better grip on our hearts. Early on in this GRIP discipleship season, we are asking you to set aside a four(4) hour block of time for a **personal retreat to hear from God**.

For some, this extended time with God will be new and unfamiliar. No worries! We’ll help. We have a whole section in the GRIP Guide to assist you. One result of this extended time of listening to God will be a short list of “Action Points” that God has put on your heart.

**Listen and Reflect** As you slow down in God’s presence to consider your life, we will provide a grid to help you think through the **KEY RELATIONSHIPS** and the **KEY RESOURCES** God has given you.

### Key Relationships



### Key Resources



We use the 5 fingers of a hand to represent these Key Relationships and Key Resources. An action point is the answer to this question: *As I abide in Christ, what action can I pursue to better align myself with God’s desire for this Key Relationship or this Key Resource?*

It won’t take much pondering before you are aware of areas that need growth: attitudes, character areas, disciplines, sin habits, intentions never acted upon, etc.

**Write Down Your “Key 3” Action Points** As a result of this reflective time, you will write down a few action points. These actions represent specific ways to obey God in this season of your life. Each action point pursued will, directly or indirectly, lead you to better love God and better love others in your life. We suggest that you choose no more than 3 action points to focus on during the season.

## My HAND: Key Relationships

We have chosen the 'Hand' graphic because it is a useful way to visualize God's grip on our heart in order to live out His priorities as God's hands. In Matthew 22:34-40 Jesus teaches that the two greatest commands are to **love God** and **love others**. The thumb pointing upward represents our vertical love relationship with the Father. Likewise, the other four fingers pointing horizontally represent the priority relationships in which the Lord has called us to invest His love. The fingers on the HAND become a simple way to bring focus to our living and to bring our hearts more in line with what God values. Discipleship, then, is helping each other grow to become disciplined in living the relationships God values in the power of the Holy Spirit.

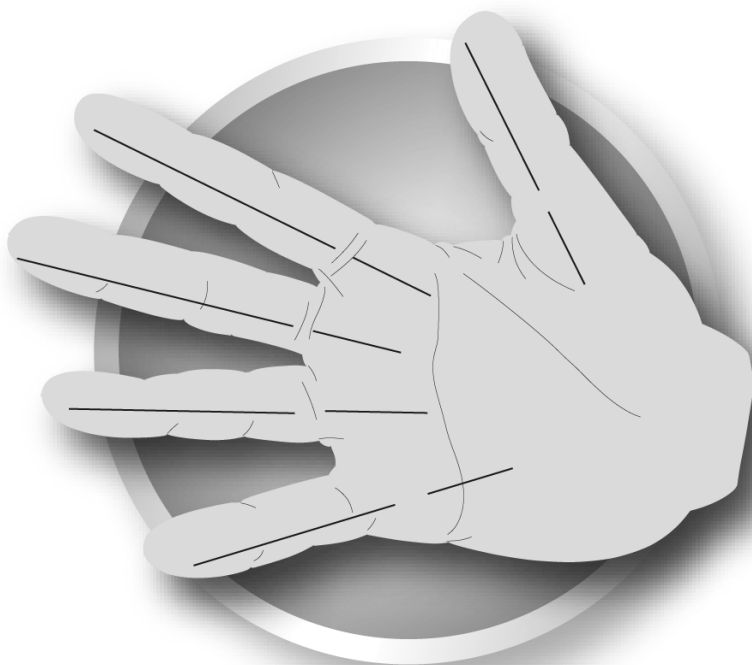




Depending on your season of life, God will call you to prioritize slightly different relationships. The Thumb (**God**), Ring (**Believer**) and Pinky (**Unbeliever**) fingers are non-negotiable relationships central to your life as a Christ-follower. The Pointer and Middle fingers represent family or family-like relationships. These vary from person to person and even vary in different seasons of life. If you are married, the Pointer finger (**Wife**) is non-negotiable, as is the Middle finger (**Children**) if you have children still living under your roof. Again, these are starting points for focusing your relational investments in this season of your life. Other examples of Key Relationships might be girl friend, fiancé, siblings, aging parents, nieces, nephews, grandkids, roommate, etc.

One way to get a jump on GRIP is to answer this question: *In this season of my life, who are my Key HAND Relationships?*

Write their names on the graphic below.

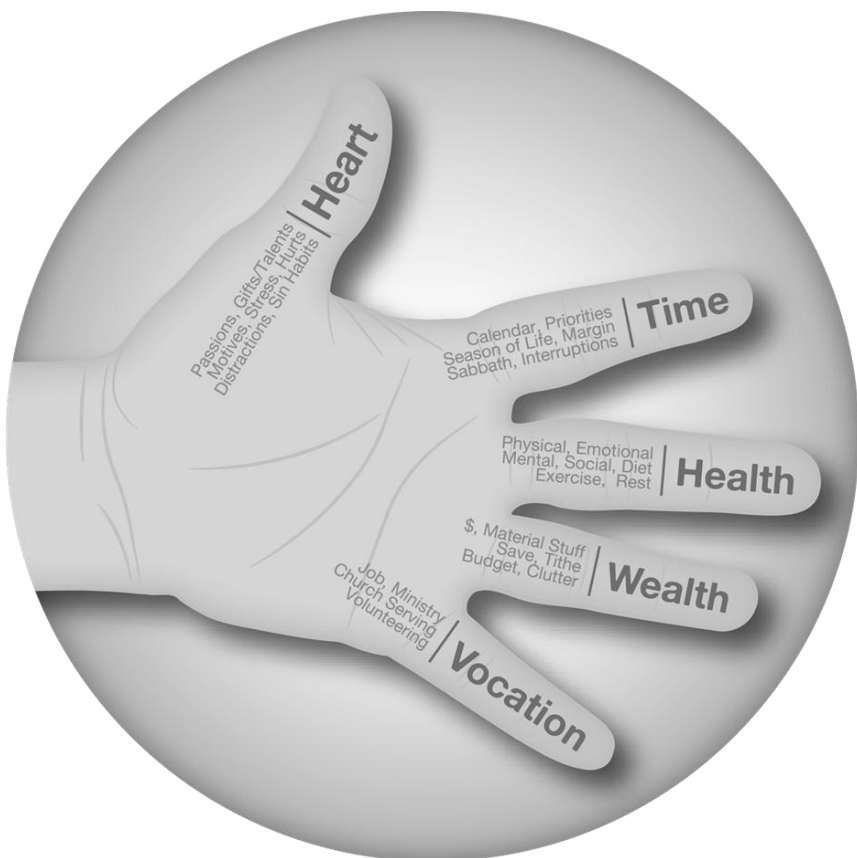


**My HAND Relationships  
in this season of my life**

## My HAND: Key Resources

Most of us don't need convincing that these Hand relationships are Biblical, non-negotiable priorities of the Father. Though relationships are primary on God's heart, He has also given us stewardship over some key resources as well. Specifically, he wants us to manage our **heart**, our **time**, our **health**, our **wealth**, and our **vocation**. God's design is that our good stewardship of these resources will help us keep a good grip on our key relationships.

However, we have an enemy who longs to see us fail. When one or more of these resource areas is out of alignment or neglected as to become unhealthy, then we start losing our grip on one or more of our key relationships. Wise GRIP partners will periodically help each other to examine these stewardship areas, especially if any key relationships seem to be stalled.



Here are a few examples of how poor stewardship of our Key Resources can have an adverse affect on our Key Relationships

- If I am giving in to the temptation of porn (HEART) then the authenticity of my relationship with GOD and with my WIFE will suffer.
- If I am serving my church in 4 different ministries (TIME /VOCATION) then my relationship with my CHILDREN may suffer.
- If maintaining my material stuff (WEALTH) takes up my weekends, then I will probably miss opportunities to relate with my FRIENDS who are far from God.
- If my diet and exercise habits are sloppy (HEALTH), then I will lack energy to apply to all of the relationship areas.
- If my family is in debt and not living on a budget (WEALTH), then the stress level will go through the roof and hamper all my FAMILY relationships.
- If I hate my job (VOCATION), then I have little emotional margin to DISCIPLE another man until I figure out my job satisfaction issue.

Our stewardship of our Key Resources impacts, positively or negatively, the health of our Key Relationships. Each of our growth Action Points will somehow relate to the Key Relationship Hand or the Key Resource Hand.

telling  
is  
not **TEACHING**

listening  
is  
not **LEARNING**

information is  
not **TRANSFORMATION**

we learn  
**BY DOING!**

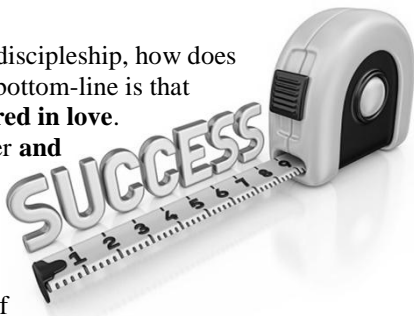
## Evaluating the Season

When a man finishes a season of discipleship, how does he know if it was a success? The bottom-line is that **success in discipleship is measured in love.**

The man who loves his Lord better **and** loves the people in his circle better had a successful season!

Yes, we hope that you...

- feel closer to God
- establish your rhythm of meeting with God in His Word
- make progress in your action steps
- experience your faith in Christ truly strengthened
- catch the vision for investing in one man per year



But here is a scary fact. It is possible to experience all of these without growing in your love for God and others! Jesus was very clear that love is our measuring stick for growth and maturity.

*“‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart**, and with all your **soul**, [and with all your **might**] and with all your **mind**. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your **neighbor** as yourself.’” (Mt 22:37-40; Dt 6:5-6)*




In Jesus’ economy, loving and serving others - out of a heart which is overwhelmed with God’s love - is the goal of discipleship. How do I know if I’m loving God better and loving others better than when I started? Well, here are two questions to ponder throughout this season:

- Am I quicker to obey God and do life His way? (John 14:21-24)
- Am I more active in taking the initiative, acting sacrificially, and meeting the real needs of people in my life? (1John 4:10)

*Heavenly Father, would You grant me, according to the riches of Your glory, to come to a fuller realization of who I am in Christ – chosen, redeemed, forgiven, adopted, holy, and beloved! May You occupy the first place in my life. And overwhelmed with Your grace and love lavished on me in Christ, may I increasingly put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness and love. May those closest to me see the difference! May I truly live a life worth imitating.*

## Ready?

So, there you have it. GRIP is a vehicle to guide your spiritual journey with another man for a season. The concepts you've just read are also summarized in a short Introduction to GRIP video found on our Focused Living YouTube channel. After reading this GRIP Introduction, we encourage you to discuss questions, concerns, fears, details with your potential GRIP partner.

-  What will each of you say “NO” to in order to say “YES” to walking the spiritual journey together?
-  How do each of you envision your Key Relationships improving if you allowed God to really GRIP your heart?
-  How will GRIP add value to your current involvement in your local church? In your Focused Living forum?

# Galatians

The first two weeks of your Bible reading during this GRIP discipleship season will be in Galatians. We want you to get traction with this first rhythm of meeting with God over His Word.

*For more detailed background information on this, or any, Bible book, consult a study Bible. You can also view the video from The Bible Project introducing this Bible book. Go to Focused Living's YouTube channel under 'GRIP FALL 2021' playlist to view these videos.*

**Author, Date, and Audience:** The apostle Paul wrote this letter about A.D. 48. The Lord moved in Paul's heart to write this powerful letter to the churches he helped to start during his 1st missionary journey in the region of modern day Turkey called Galatia. He is writing to folks who had started off so well in following Christ but were no longer walking closely with Him. Paul is more critical of his audience here than in any of his other letters.

**Theme:** The message of Galatians is the message of the Christian's spiritual freedom. Galatians has been given such titles as the Magna Carta of spiritual liberty, the battle cry of the Reformation, and the Christian's declaration of independence. Christ's death has brought in the age of the new covenant (Gal. 3:23–26; 4:4–5, 24), in which believers do not have to become Jews or follow the outward ceremonies of the Mosaic law (Gal. 2:3, 11–12, 14; 4:10). To require these things is to deny the heart of the gospel, which is justification by faith alone, not by obedience to the law (Gal. 2:16; cf. Gal. 1:6–7). In this new age, Christians are to live in the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit (chs. 5–6).

**Purpose:** The Judaizers (false teachers) were causing confusion in the churches and were seriously distorting “the gospel of Christ.” They had convinced the Galatians that they were required to be circumcised and that they were righteous before God only if they remained bound under the Mosaic laws, regulations, and ceremonies. Galatians is a deeply personal letter written from the grieving heart of a godly man for his spiritual children, who's faith and living were being undermined by false teachers.

Paul begins his letter with an in-your-face challenge saying, *“I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel”* (1:6). He then follows with a series of heart penetrating questions designed to ignite their souls and soften their hard hearts in order to draw them back to Christ. Once Paul draws their attention back to God's unfathomable grace he challenges them to live every moment of life in responsive overflow to His love with passion filled verses like the following:

***“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (2:20)***

***YOU CAN'T  
IMPART  
WHAT YOU DON'T  
POSSESS***

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

\* We recommend reading the intro to Galatians on the prior page and viewing the Bible Project book summary of Galatians on the FLM YouTube channel under the ‘GRIP FALL 2021’ playlist.

### Galatians 1:1-24

Review the questions below, then open the Word and read the passage. Journal your insights. (Pages 9-10 offer some ways to process a scripture passage. Find a way that is meaningful to you.) Respond to the truth that most fuels your soul by writing a prayer to the Lord.



*Why is Paul completely confident in the gospel that he preaches? How did he receive this gospel message? (:6-9, 12) Am I confident in my understanding of the gospel of God's grace and peace towards me? How can I deepen my understanding of the gospel? Right out of the gate, Paul is concerned about Where the Galatians stand spiritually (:6ff). As I begin this season of GRIP, What 1 or 2 words accurately describe Where I am spiritually? (i.e. on fire, dry, tired, bored, hopeful, joyful, experiencing intimacy, growing, etc)*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 2:1-14

*Paul understood that the message of the gospel that he preached was a message of freedom in Christ. (:4) Am I experiencing a life of freedom in Christ? Have I allowed myself to become enslaved to the elementary principles of the world? Enslaved by seeking the approval of man? Enslaved by my pursuit of satisfying my flesh? Does the gospel that I give to others lead them into freedom or bondage? (:12-13)*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 2:15 – 21

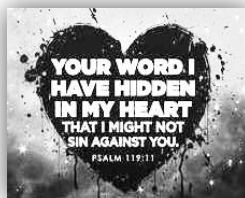
*According to Paul, what role do my works and actions play in my salvation and justification? (:16) On whose action does justification depend? Am I still living in the flesh, as though my salvation depends on me? What fleshly part of me is Christ calling me to crucify again today?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

**Scripture Memory:** You’ve recently read and journaled from Galatians 2:15-21. Today we want you to meditate only on verse 20. Look up Galatians 2:20 in your own Bible. Slowly read the words a few times. Scan the surrounding verses to understand the context.

***How does this truth apply to me?*** Try writing it out from memory. Finally, personalize this verse by praying it back to God.



### Galatians 2:20

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 3:1-14

*Am I trying to deepen my life in Christ by works done in my own strength? How is this effort foolish? (:2-3) Who has brought me out from the curse (punishment) of the law? How? Why? (:13-14) What specific promise or commandment is God asking me to believe and act on today?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 3:15-29

*What function does God’s law have in my life? (19-22) How do I receive the promised inheritance of salvation? (:21-22) Do I still live as one held captive by my works? Imprisoned by my inability to please God through my deeds? How do I find freedom from this imprisonment? (:24-26, 29) Christ has unified all people! Socially, politically, racially. (:27-28) How can I display this oneness with other believers in Christ today?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 4:1-20

*What blessings and privileges are now mine because of God sending his Son into this world? (:4-7) How do these realities encourage me today? Do I find myself behaving like the Galatians and turning back to the worthless ways of the world that actually enslave me? (:8-9) In what ways? Describe Paul's tone in verses 15-20. What is motivating Paul's concern for the Galatians? (:19) Who in my life do I have a similar concern for? How can I express this concern for them today?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 4:21-31

*According to Paul, all who are in Christ are no longer slaves but free! No longer slaves to the flesh, but children of promise! (:26-28) Take some time right now to list the promises of God toward me, through Christ. What promise is God wanting me to believe today? What enslaving piece of my flesh is God asking me to surrender and sacrifice today?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 5:1-15

*Can I relate to the Galatians who were running well but became hindered from obeying the truth? (:7) How so? Have I allowed any “leaven” to infiltrate and pollute my relationship with God? (:9) What does Paul say I should use my freedom in Christ for? (:13-14) “For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (:14) Who is the “neighbor” that God has placed on my heart in this season of my life? What can I do to show them the love of God today?*





## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 5:16-6:5

*In what specific areas of my life am I keenly aware of the desires of my flesh? What is Paul’s solution for combating the desires of the flesh? (5:16, 18, 25) What does it look like for me to practically walk by the Spirit, be led by the Spirit, live by the Spirit, and keep in step with the Spirit? What am I going to do today to engage the Spirit’s presence and power in my life rather than my flesh? What can I do today to help my Grip partner in the same way? (6:1-2)*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Galatians 6:6-18

*In this season of my life, have I been sowing more to my flesh or more to The Spirit? How can I tell? (:7-8) What is encouraging about what Paul says in verse 9? How will I do good to another person today? (:10) What does it look like for me to boast in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ? (:14) How have I become a new creation in Christ? (:15, cf 2:20)*



# GRIP Gathering Preparation    Section 1



**Word Highlights** – Over these past weeks in **God's Word** I especially want to remember and apply:



**Pass On** – I expressed the following truth(s) that God impressed on my heart to my family and/or GRIP partner:

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Relationship: God**

#### **Psalm 73 (esp: 23-28)**

*What can I learn about relating to God from Asaph’s experience? Is God’s presence and nearness a treasure to me?*



#### **Further Reflection on this Key Relationship**

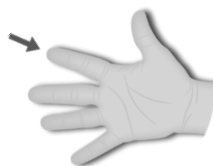
- Have I dug deep into the treasure chest of the Gospel? (Col 2:3,8,9; Eph 3:8)
- When I finish my times alone with God, does God have a good grip on my heart (2Tim 1:12)?
- Is my heart overwhelmed with His holiness (Lk 5:8; 18:9-14; Is 6:1-8)?
- Do I see myself the way God sees me (Col 2:10; 3:1-4; Eph 1:3-14)?

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Key Relationship: Family / Family-Like

1Peter 3:8-9

*What qualities serve as the rail for all Christ-like relationships?*



#### Further Reflection on this Key Relationship

- What's it like for this person to live on the other side of me?
- Do I know what is on this person's heart in this season of life i.e. dreams, desires, hopes, headaches (1Pet 3:7)?
- How am I doing at leading my wife spiritually (Eph 5:23-30)? How am I helping her come to, and grow in, Christ? (Eph 5:23-27; 1Pet 3:8)

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Relationship: Family / Family-Like**

**1Kings 2:1-4**

*What is my message to the next generation  
(i.e. kids, grandkids)?*



#### **Further Reflection on this Key Relationship**

- What's it like for this person to live on the other side of me?
- Do I regularly pass on what God is showing me in a way that's meaningful to them (Col 3:16)?
- If character is more caught than taught, what am I modeling (Eph 4:1-3; 1Tim 3:1-7)?
- How am I limiting the world's influence on my children? (James 1:27b)

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Key Relationship: Believing Man

#### Philippians 2:1-4

*Self-focused discipleship is nonsense.  
What will fuel me to continually look out for  
my GRIP partner??*



#### Further Reflection on this Key Relationship

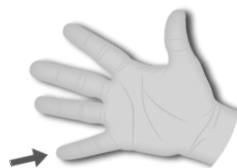
- Do I qualify as a FATR man (Faithful, Available, Teachable, Reproducible)? Where's the evidence? (Phil 2:19-30; Col 4:12; 2Tim1:16-18)
- How might God change me as I invest in another man (Pr 27:17)?
- What would success look like after this season of investment?
- What fears or attitudes would keep me from being transparent with him?

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Relationship: Unbelieving Friend**

**Revelation 20:15; 21:8**

*How does/should the reality of eternal separation from God in a lake of fire move me to be deliberate in reaching my friend for Christ?*



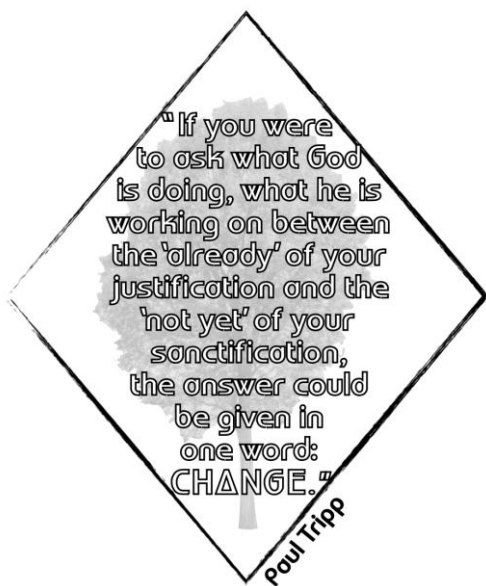
#### **Further Reflection on this Key Relationship**

- Does my life convey Jesus Christ as my supreme treasure (Col 1:17-18)?
- What God stories have been written in my life recently (Mk 5:19-20)?
- Who has God placed in my life who needs to hear, and have an opportunity to respond to, the Good News? If I can't name one, am I committed to asking God in prayer to open my eyes to the people around me?
- What steps can I take to engage an unbelieving person? (Col 4:2-6)



## Week 1 GRIP Growth summary Section 2

After this past week of exploring scripture related to **relationships**, in what ways can I better align myself with God's high value on the key relationships in my life?



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Key Resources: My Heart

The core of discipleship is God’s grip on your heart. The wise man knows his heart. Your heart encompasses more than you might think at first.

When you consider your heart, think of your motives, your purity, your personal holiness.

Your heart is also where your dreams, ambitions, passions are rooted. On the negative side, your heart is where past hurts, sin habits, shame, and guilt reside along with other stresses and distractions of this world.



Represented by the thumb on the Key Resources Hand, your heart is closely related to your relationship with God. In discipleship, the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart. God has called us to “guard our heart” to “examine our heart” and to invite the Holy Spirit to “search” it (Prov 4:23; 1Cor 11:28; Ps 139:23-24; Matt 6:21). We must constantly and honestly discern the state of our heart. **Don’t leave His presence until He grips your heart.** If our heart is holding onto sin, hurts, wrong thinking, disappointment, guilt, etc we will never be ALL IN regarding the Key Relationships to which God has called us. What kind of steward are you of your heart?

### Psalm 101:1-4

*God has a video camera (x-ray capable ☺) on me 24-7.*

*He sees a hi-def live picture of my heart.*

*Is He pleased with my authenticity and integrity? Why?*

### Further Reflection on this Key Resource

- Am I going through the motions spiritually? (Rev 3:1)
- Am I tending my heart like a garden? What weeds are there? I am giving satan a foothold? (Eph 4:27)
- Where am I experiencing stress? What’s causing this? (Phil 4:6-7; 1Pet 5:8)

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Resources: My Time**

God has called us to manage our time within the 168 hours He has given us each week. How we spend or invest that time directly impacts the health of our relationships. It has been said that if satan can't make you bad, he will make you busy. Being over committed is not only a time management issue, it is an indicator that we are doing some things that God has not called nor commanded us to do. The resulting pressure causes us to often treat others like projects, instead of people made in God's image. What kind of steward are you of your time?



### **Colossians 4:5**

*Does my life reflect a fitting intensity based on the God-given mission I am on? What opportunities have I recently missed? Why?*

#### **Further Reflection on this Key Resource**

- How would I spend my time if the Lord were in charge of it? What priority is conspicuously absent from my calendar? (Ps 90:12; 1Pet 4:7-8)
- In what season of life am I (Eccl 3:1-11)? What time commitments should I be giving myself to in this season of life?
- Is God pleased with how I spend the Sabbath? Do words like “refreshment”, “soul rest”, “unhurried” characterize my family on Sundays? (Ex 20:8-11; 31:12-18)

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Resources: My Health**

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1Cor 6:19). What an incredible privilege! God has placed a high priority on the stewardship of our health. Bringing your best to your relationships is often a function of feeling energetic or fresh. A little preventative maintenance on an ongoing basis will allow you to give your best energy, instead of leftovers, to the Lord and others. What kind of steward are you of your health?



### **1Thessalonians 5:23**

*Do I value the things that God values when it comes to my health?*

#### **Further Reflection on this Key Resource**

- In what ways does my health (physical, emotional, mental) limit my energetic investment in relationships? How can I pursue a health step?
- Do I frequently describe myself with words like “exhausted” “overwhelmed” or “depleted”? Am I a delight to be around?
- What “noise” keeps me from hearing the Lord and others? (Ps 73:16,17; Phil 4:10; Col 3:1-4)

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Resources: My Wealth**

Rightly managing God’s money is a high priority in His economy. Bad stewardship opens us up to much grief, many distractions and unnecessary burdens. Our goal should not be the American dream, but God’s desires. How much focus we put on our material stuff says a lot about us. Do we hold onto the things of this world lightly? Does generosity go against the grain of our heart? What kind of steward are you of your wealth?



### **Matthew 19:16-26**

*Have I allowed material things to hold a higher place in my life than Christ? Jesus warns that worldly riches are a spiritual liability (19:23ff). What evidence is there that this is the case in my life?*

#### **Further Reflection on this Key Resource**

- Am I content with God’s provision? (Phil 4:10-19; 1Tim 6:6-19)
- Do I hold onto the things of this world lightly or tightly (1Cor 7:29-31,35)?
- Do I live generously toward God and others (Prov 3:9; 21:26; Lk 12:21)?

## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Key Resources: My Vocation**

For most men of working age, time spent at work is their largest time commitment each week. Work is an ordained blessing from God in a variety of ways: financial provision, relationships, satisfaction of using abilities, being a part of a culture, etc. When this area of your life is out of alignment with God’s desire for your work, the ultimate victims are His key relationships.



Stresses related to a disconnect between your job description and your abilities, overtime work hours, imbalanced priorities, negative work culture, hard driving bosses, etc will wear you out. And living a life of “just enough to get by” or “coasting” or “giving leftovers” does not help you to succeed in your key relationships. And remember, beyond your paid job, your vocation also includes areas where you serve and utilize your abilities like volunteer work and ministry. What kind of steward are you of your vocation?

### **2Timothy 4:5-7**

***Am I fulfilling my ministry that God has called me to in this season of my life?***

### **Further Reflection on this Key Resource**

- What ability has God entrusted to me that could be a blessing to others (Rom 12:4-8; 1Cor 12-14; 1Pet 4:10-11)?
- Do I see my job as a way to glorify God with excellence? (Col 3:17,23-24)
- Do the people at my work gravitate toward me or away from me? (2Cor 2:14-16)

## Week 2 GRIP Growth summary Section 2

After this past week of exploring scripture related to **resources**, in what ways can I better align myself with God's high value on the key resources in my life?



BUT THE FRUIT  
OF THE SPIRIT IS  
LOVE,  
JOY, PEACE  
*patience*  
GOODNESS  
KINDNESS  
FAITHFULNESS  
*gentleness &*  
SELF-CONTROL.  
GALATIANS 5:22-23



**Galatians 5:16-26**

*In every situation, relationship and decision this week I will choose between reacting in my flesh or responding through the Spirit. Is there any evidence in my life of the rotten fruit of the flesh (:19-21) listed below in either my actions or attitudes?*



**Sexual immorality** (impure thoughts, extra-marital sex, porn)

**Impurity** (eager for lustful pleasure in words, thoughts, & desires)

**Sensuality** (sexual excess, lack of self-control, lustful impulses)

**Idolatry** (worship false gods, cheap substitutes):

**Sorcery** (spiritism, luck, gambling, superstitions, magic, witchcraft)

**Enmities** (hatred, hostile feelings)

**Strife** (fighting, discord, disunity, taking sides)

**Jealousy** (fear losing what you have, insecure, possessive, stingy, envy)

**Outbursts of Anger** (impatience, temper tantrums, blocked goals)

**Disputes** (get the best for yourself, selfish ambition, canvassing for position, craving to have the credit, lover of self)

**Dissensions** (complaints, criticism, blaming, whining, complaining)

**Factions** (heresies, believe lies rather than truth)

**Drunkenness** (uncontrolled appetites, harmful habits, alcoholism)

**Carousing** (party spirit, unbecoming behavior, coarse jesting, orgies).

During the first two weeks of this GRIP season, you read through Paul's letter to the Galatians. And you have begun to hide in your heart the memory verse, Galatians 2:20

*"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."*

If you have repented, believed and followed Jesus as Lord and Savior, then, indeed, **Christ lives in you** in the form of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9,10; 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 1:13-14). "Christ and the Spirit cannot be separated. 'In the Spirit' Christ himself inhabits the inner selves of believers (Rom 8:9,10)" (NTC: Galatians, p. 226)

It is the Holy Spirit's role to conform us more and more and more into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29). As you learned in your reading of Galatians 5, there is a lifelong war - with daily battles – between your new, Spirit-indwelt nature and your old, sinful self (flesh).

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want. Galatians 5:16-17*

Your sinful nature is not eradicated when you come to Christ. In fact, your sinful nature is not even reformed. It remains in you as the strongest influence in your life for sin. It's the part of you that still rebels against God. Why didn't God just do away with my sinful nature? Well, in the perfect counsel of His divine Will, God decided that He would be most glorified in us as we moment by moment walk with the Spirit and rely on the Spirit and continue to say "No" to the urges of our flesh. Christ's presence in you - via the Holy Spirit - is the strongest influence in your life toward holiness.

The change in our character that results from the Holy Spirit's work in us is the "fruit of the Spirit." In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul lists them:

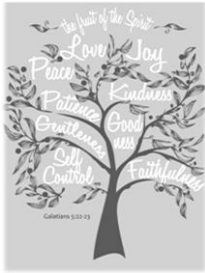
*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."*



The portrait of a man fully manifesting these 9 qualities is Jesus. Because Jesus lives in us, we expect these qualities to show up in us. For the remainder of this GRIP season we will slowly explore each one of these nine virtues one week at a time. Why would we do this? Because our special focus this season is on our family (or family-like) Key Relationships. And the more our life manifests these qualities, the more the people in our life will be blessed and the more God will be glorified.

At the outset of our study, let's make some observations:

- One Fruit – 9 qualities.** The word “Fruit” in Galatians 5:22 is singular in the Greek. This means that the nine qualities of the “fruit of the Spirit” describe one crop - a unified whole. As we abide in Jesus, all the characteristics of Christ will be manifested in our lives. And as we study them individually over the next 9 weeks, we’ll see how interconnected these Spirit-fueled qualities are.


- The list of 9 is not exhaustive.** We know the Spirit also produces qualities like humility, generosity, hope, faith, etc. As Jabez cried out in the Old Testament, *“Oh that You would Bless me indeed”* (1Chron 4:10). May this too be our prayer as we learn more about the Fruit of the Holy Spirit! *“Lord, I want ALL that You have for me!”*
- The Spirit fruit contrasts with the Flesh fruit** - Notice that the fruit of the Spirit is listed right after Paul lists *“the deeds of the flesh”* (Gal 5:19-21). The man who walks *“by the Spirit will not carry out the desire of the flesh”* (Gal 5:16). The fruit that is revealed in our life depends on what nature is dominating in our life: our new Spirit nature OR our old, sin nature.
- The Spirit produces the fruit, not me.** God says it very simply through the prophet Hosea: *“From Me comes your fruit”* (Hos 14:8). As we give the Spirit more control of our lives – by yielding and surrendering to Him - He does in and through us what only He can do - to transform us to look like Jesus (2 Cor 3:17-18). Fruit is not manufactured through work and effort and striving; it is the unfolding of the supernatural life living in us (Gal 2:20).
- The Fruit is not just for you** – The people around us are craving to interact with someone full of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. God bears fruit in us to bless others and to glorify Christ.

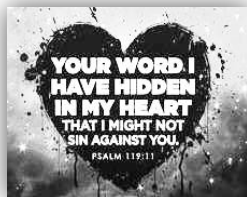


***As I begin this study what questions am I hoping to answer about the fruit of the Spirit? As I envision this fruit being born in my life, what impact would this have on my family? Friends? Work? Neighbors? Church?***

Journal my thoughts below:

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

**Scripture Memory:** Since we will be camped on the Fruit of the Spirit for the next 9 weeks, we might as well hide this list of fruit in our heart! Look up Galatians 5:22-23 in your own Bible version. Slowly read the words a few times. Try saying it from memory. Then, try writing it out from memory. Finally, personalize this verse by asking God to bear this fruit in your life this season.



### Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Matthew 7:15-21

*In His famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught about fruit. How would I summarize his teaching? If there is no evidence of His fruit in my life, what conclusion does Jesus want me to make?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

**John 15:1-17**

*The night before Jesus went to the Cross He spoke about my part in the fruit bearing process. What did He say? How is abiding (remaining, dwelling, staying in close fellowship with) the secret of a fruit bearing life? What’s the #1 job of an apple tree?*



Henry Ford was once asked to name his best friend. The auto magnate replied, “My best friend is the one who brings out the best in me.” The Christ follower feels his best friend is Christ who brings out the fruit of the Spirit in his life.



If the fruit of the Spirit does not seem present in me, it's probably because I am failing to abide and stay closely connected to the Vine, Jesus. What's happening in my heart is that I am saying "Yes" to my sinful nature. The antidote, then, is to say "No" to my sinful nature (Gal 5:16-17).

If I am in Christ I have already died to sin. Notice that Gal 5:24, immediately following the fruit of the Spirit list, says that I "*have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*" This echoes our memory verse in Gal 2:20 "*I have been crucified with Christ...*" Romans 6:6-14 further explains the present importance of having died to sin:

*6knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7for the one who has died is freed from sin.*

*11So you too, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

*12Therefore sin is not to reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13and do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body's parts as instruments of righteousness for God. 14For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace.*

So, when I find myself not bearing fruit, I need to come back to the abiding relationship with Jesus. A prayer like the following may realign my heart:

*"God, I can see that I am wanting MY way in this relationship or situation. I'm allowing my "old self" to be my master. Please forgive me. I want to declare that my old sinful self has been crucified with Christ and I no longer live but Christ lives in me. My sinful nature has no legal right over me. Right now I set apart Jesus once again as Lord in my heart. Holy Spirit, I am saying "Yes" to You right now. I want to walk by the Spirit and not carry out the desire of the flesh."*



## Retreat Summary: Key 3 Action Points

**Suggestion: Do this journal day AFTER you have had your personal retreat.**

*“...to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”*

**James 4:17**

*“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”*

**Luke 6:46**

*“If you know these things you are blessed if you do them.”*

**John 13:17**

You’ve recently had your personal retreat of extended unhurried time to listen to your Lord. This journaling day is designed as a way to get you moving forward on the action points God laid on your heart. As the verses above remind us, the Christian life involves “doing.” The grace that saves us is not opposed to our love-motivated efforts to obey.



What 3 action points will I prioritize over the next 3 months to help me move forward in my life? What’s at stake (i.e. in my relationship to God, my family, my heart, etc) if I don’t follow-through on these?

**Reminder: At least one of my Key3 Action Points should relate to a family relationship.**

### 1) Action Point:

**Why is this important?**

**2) Action Point:**

**Why is this important?**

**3) Action Point:**

**Why is this important?**

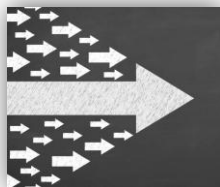
Spend some moments talking to God about these. Ask Him for success, for vigilance and for perseverance during those times when the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

## **GRIP Gathering Preparation    Section 2**

**The last 3 weeks have been devoted to thinking about my life in God's presence and hearing from Him.**



**Here is what I learned from the experience of having a retreat...**



**Here is what I sense God wants to emphasize in my life this season: (see previous page where you have listed your action points)**

# Personal Retreat

*“Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God.”*

**John 8:47a**

Your life assignment over these next 3 weeks is to have an extended time alone with God. We call it a personal retreat. The purpose is to slow down and listen to God. Look at it as an extended time with your best friend! The simple goal of this retreat is to ponder your life before God with a listening heart and a posture to obey. Find a quiet place in which you can be uninterrupted for at least 4 hours.



## Before Your Retreat

- **Carve out 4-6 hours on your calendar** – Perhaps a Saturday morning, a Sunday afternoon, or taking a half day off during the work week. Some men rise early on Sunday AM and spend 2 hours with the Lord. Then they go to Sunday worship with their family, but return home (while their family remains for Sunday school) for another 2 hours of focused time before lunch with the family.
- **Choose a quiet place** – Find a comfortable place where you will be undistracted and uninterrupted out of your normal routine. A park, library, lake, woods, an empty room at church, etc. There’s a reason that the word “SILENT” and the word “LISTEN” have the same letters😊.
- **What to Bring** - Bible, GRIP Guide, device (optional), pen, personal journal if you use one.
- **DO** journal through the 2 weeks of “The Hand” section (page 35-46) before taking your retreat. **DO** consider fasting a meal so you are reminded of your real hunger for God. **DO** get a good night’s sleep the night before. **DO** let your family and GRIP partner know when you are planning to have this retreat so they can be prayerful.
- **DON’T** look at texts, emails, social media during your retreat. **DON’T** pack it too full of activity so you aren’t quiet before the Lord.

## Flow for Actual Retreat

This GRIP season we'd like each man to follow this general outline during his retreat:

- **Present yourself to God (30 mins)**
- **Read through Ephesians in one sitting (20-30 mins)**
- **Reflect on the truths of Ephesians as they intersect with your life (90-120 mins)**
- **Write down 3 action points to pursue this fall (30 mins)**

### **Present myself to God (30 mins)**

This is a time to remember God's weightiness in your life. It's a time to be really honest with him. It's a time to express your heart. It's a time to give Him full permission to grip your heart. It might include Bible reading, praying, singing worship songs, confessing, etc.

Listen to Your Heavenly Father say, *"This is my son in whom I am well pleased"* (Mt 3:17). Remember that God demonstrated His own love toward you, in that while you were a sinner (helpless, ungodly, His enemy)...Christ died for you (Rom 5:8)! Savor the reality that nothing can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord (Rom 8:39). See and believe His promise that He will be with you always (Mt 28:20). Review the Gospel. In short, allow God to grip your heart with the truths He has already communicated to you in His Word.



*"Father, increase the sensitivity of my heart to hear Your Word and to obey Your will. May my life reflect what is important to Your heart and may I pursue the things that You value. Help me meditate on Your Word and pour out the desires of my heart in prayer. Grant me insight into what*

*Action Points You have for my life this GRIP season. And motivate me by the depth of Your love and grace. Use this time to cleanse my heart, clarify my thoughts, and heighten my sense of fellowship with You."*

### **Read through Ephesians in one sitting (20-30 mins)**

Read and/or listen to the book of Ephesians in one sitting. Do your best to clear your mind of "noise" and listen to the Scripture with the ears of your heart. **What does God stir in your heart as you listen?**

Underline, highlight, or make notes when God begins to grip your heart. You can come back to these markings after you've read the entire book and meditate more on what was stirred up.

Your recent journaling days related to the 10 fingers of your HANDs prompted you to consider your Key Relationships and your Key Resources (pages 35-46). As you enter this retreat time, most likely there are 2-3 fingers (Key Relationships or Key Resources) that have your special attention. Keep those in your mind as you read through Ephesians.

### **Reflect on the truths of Ephesians as they intersect with my life (90-120 mins)**

Go back to your underlines, highlights or notes from your reading through Ephesians. Take time to reflect on each area in an unhurried manner. View this time as a conversation with your heavenly Father who wants to speak directly into your life. Be creative in this time. You don't need to sit cross legged and hum while you meditate and reflect. Take a prayer walk, change your posture (stand, kneel, prostrate yourself). You may find it meaningful to creatively express what you are feeling through art (writing poetry, composing music, creating something graphically, etc). Engage and interact with God in the most intimate way that you can.

Re-read the verses that stirred your heart, ask questions and take notes as you continue this conversation with God.

- What do you want me to learn from this today?
- Why this word? Why here? Why now?
- Ask God how He may be inviting you to respond to Him?
- What steps of obedience (Action Points) is he calling you to take?

### **Write down 3 action points to pursue this fall (30 mins)**

You will have had many ideas during the retreat. Take a first pass at identifying a few action points which you sense **God is impressing on your heart**. These are actions that will help you move forward. It would be natural that your action points flowed from God's revelation in Ephesians as it applies to your Key Relationships and Key Resources. **At least 1 of your Key 3 Action Points should related directly to your family relationships**. If you are new to the concept of action points, they are further described below.

The last journaling page in Week 3 of Section 2 is set aside to record your action points in one place that is easily shareable with your GRIP partner. **The [grip.focusedliving.com](http://grip.focusedliving.com) web app is also uniquely designed for recording and sharing action points**. It is SO MUCH EASIER to practice accountability with another brother when you have each other's action points in a concise form ☺

## Action Points

As we've said, a natural outcome of this extended time of retreating and listening to God will be a few action points for this next season in your life. Let's explore a little further, then, the WHAT, WHY, and HOW of action points.

### WHAT is an Action Point?

An Action Point is a specific way to obey God in this season of discipleship. It helps "put feet on" one or more Biblical commands or principles. Action points are activities that put you in a position to let God do His thing in your life. They allow God a better grip on your life. Action Points will almost always be directly related God's grip on one of your key relationships OR God's grip on one of the areas over which He has given you stewardship. So, your action point becomes the answer to this question:

*In this season, as I abide in Christ, what action can I pursue to better align myself with God's desire for this **Key Relationship** or this **Key Resource**?*

If God is truly the heavy-weight (glorious One) in your life, then an action point sourced in Him will carry the weight of *"I would be disobedient to God if I didn't pursue this action."* Action Points are more than "nice ideas" or wishful thinking. If God is putting an action point on your heart, then He will also provide the internal spiritual motivation to do it (Phil 2:13; Col 1:29; 1Cor 15:10).

Action Points usually take one of a few forms:

- **establish a new pattern** (i.e. spiritual discipline, helpful practice, etc)
- **stop an existing pattern** (i.e. sin habit, a hindrance (Heb 12:1)
- **a one-time action** (forgive, apologize, write letter, have a conversation, read a book, attend a seminar, etc)

The next page lists some "baseline" action points for each of the five Key Relationships and Key Resources. If you are new to the idea of action points, this list is a good starting place to consider the rhythms of your spiritual life. Again, our hope is that you will listen to God as you pray about what action points you sense He desires for you. Some men will **ADOPT** these action points as is. Others will **ADAPT** them to make them their own. Others may already have these rhythms in their life. Therefore, they will **REPLACE** these baseline action points with other unique action points they sense God is pressing on their heart.

# Baseline Action Points

## Key Relationships

**God** → Daily invest enough time alone with God, through Bible reading and prayer, until He has a good grip on my heart for the day.

**Wife** → Daily pray for and/or with my wife.

**Children** → Regularly pass on to my family what God is impressing on my heart from His Word.

**Disciple** → Weekly connect (face to face or via phone) with my discipleship partner for a time of Gospel reminding, mutual accountability, encouragement, and prayer.

**Friend** → Identify my next step in walking my friend through the process of accepting or rejecting Christ. Then take **THAT step!** (i.e. Prayer-Care-Share; share testimony, explain Gospel, pray for, listen to, meet a need, have a shared experience, invite to a wired event, etc).

## Key Resources

**Heart** → Acknowledging that God longs to commune with me in my heart, I purpose to daily ponder the Gospel and confess my sin so my heart will stay soft and pure.

**Time** → Acknowledging that God gave the Sabbath for rest, renewal, and realignment, each Sabbath I purpose to \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. unhurriedly think through the priorities of the upcoming week; lead my family in 1 hour of quietness in the house; guard my family from bucket draining activities; etc)

**Health** → Acknowledging that my physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, I purpose to \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. Get a good night's rest every night; Exercise vigorously 3X per week; drink more water; eat with my long-term health in mind; quit smoking; faithfully rehab an injury; etc)

**Wealth** → Acknowledging that I am a manager and not the owner of my wealth, I purpose to \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. establish a budget and joyfully live under it; live generously; give away material things; be deliberate about getting out of debt; etc)

**Vocation** - In light of my God-given abilities and passions, I purpose to help meet the following need in my local church or in my community: \_\_\_\_\_



## WHY Action Points?

Where does our “doing” fit in to our spiritual life? God deeply desires for us to press on to maturity, looking more and more like Jesus (1Tim 4:15; Rom 8:29; Phil 2:12-13; 3:13,14; Heb 6:1; 12:1). We have a part in this transformation towards Christlikeness. We have some work to do. Dallas Willard has written, “*Grace is not opposed to effort, it’s opposed to earning.*” Our “doing”, our effort, is pleasing to God when it is an outflow of our deep desiring of Him. Action Points are an expression of obedience fueled by a new desire in us.

Passivity has been a plague on men since Adam. It’s part of our fleshly DNA. The act of identifying tangible actions and pursuing them with a desire that God gives, is a path to owning our spiritual life. Action points force us to focus and to depend on God for his strength.

Now, let’s be careful. God is NOT out to overwhelm you with a long todo list. That’s what religion is all about – doing a list of things in the flesh and thinking that God is pleased. God is not impressed with your long list. And your heart isn’t joyful when your “doing” is sourced in your flesh. You’ll either quickly become frustrated by your lack of progress or you will see some early success and become prideful. Pursuing action points in the flesh never works. **Ultimately, true fruit in our spiritual life comes only from one source: abiding in Jesus** (John 15:1-17, Luke 10:38-42).



Because so many of us are recovering Pharisees, we highly recommend that you focus on **no more than 3 action points (“Key 3”)** and experience the sensation of depending on God for success.

**Note:** At least 1 of your Key 3 action points should directly relate to a family (or family-like) relationship.

## HOW to Write an Action Point?

When formulating action points, try to make them SMART\*

### SMART Action Points

**S**pecific – not fuzzy

**M**easurable – you know when you are done

**A**ttainable – possible to do

**R**elevant - meaningful

**T**ime Limited – can show progress between meetings

## **RECORDING Action Points using the GRIP App**

Our [grip.focusedliving.com](http://grip.focusedliving.com) WebApp is specifically designed for you to record and share your action points with your GRIP partner. The App allows you to record any number of action points related to your Key Relationships and Key Resources. However, as men, we can only focus on a few action points at a time. So, after recording several action points (perhaps 1 per each of the 10 fingers), tag your “Key 3” action points that you’ll prioritize this season.

The App allows you to view your GRIP partner’s “Key 3” action points. So, when you pray for him or when you meet with him for accountability, open the app 😊

## **TAKE ACTION!**

Writing down some action points and sharing them with a brother is important. But the point is to actually DO them! The law of diminishing intent says the longer you wait to take action, the less likely you will ever take the action. Therefore, once God puts an action point on your heart, start moving.

**REST:** *In six days the Lord made everything...On the seventh day He rested. ~Exodus 20:11*

When I was ten years old, my mother enrolled me in piano lessons. Spending thirty minutes every afternoon

tethered to a piano bench was torture. I hammered the staccatos. I belabored the crescendos...But there was one instruction

in the music I could never obey to my teacher's satisfaction. The *rest*. The zigzagged command to do nothing. What sense does that make? Why sit at the piano and pause when you can pound?

"Because," my teacher patiently explained, "music is always sweeter after a rest and the notes mean nothing without the rest." It didn't make sense to me at age ten. But now the words ring with wisdom – divine wisdom. In stressful times such as these, taking a break often seems counter intuitive. It is important to remember that renewal and restoration quietly before the Lord are not luxuries and should not be last on your list. They are essential. In the busyness of life, rest is vital for staying sharp and effective. Renewal leads to greater creativity and productivity!



*"Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." ~Jesus Christ, Mark 6:31*

~Max Lucado, *The Applause of Heaven*

## Notes

## Notes

## Notes

## Notes

## Prospering My Key Relationships

I've listened to God during my personal retreat. I've received some action points. At least one of my Key3 Action Points focuses on my family or family-like relationships. Now it is time to implement my Key Relationship action point(s) and see that relationship flourish for Christ's sake.

The next 9 weeks of journaling are designed to help me really focus on my Key Relationship(s). Each week, the GRIP Bible reading plan will highlight a different quality of the fruit of the Spirit from Gal 5:22-23. Most journal days will include several short scriptures related to the weekly theme for me to ponder. But God wants me to do more than just think. He desires that my life would be more and more characterized by

Love  
Joy  
Peace  
Patience  
Kindness  
Goodness  
Faithfulness  
Gentleness  
Self-control

My personal growth in these qualities will bless all of my Key Relationships, starting with my family. Though we are teasing out each quality, the Fruit is really one whole. Jesus Himself, who is the epitome of each of these qualities, lives in me!





# LOVE

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_ My heart is tender towards God and others.  
 \_\_\_\_ I am regularly engaged in sacrificial acts of service  
 \_\_\_\_ I am aware of the needs of others and seek to meet them.  
 \_\_\_\_ Through God's grace I forgive people who have hurt me  
 \_\_\_\_ I celebrate when good things happen to others  
 \_\_\_\_ I'm known for giving up what I want for the sake of others

\_\_\_\_ of 30 Total

**For further insight, invite your wife, child, or another key relationship to fill out the evaluation at the end of this guide.**

Today we come to the 1<sup>st</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit list as recorded in Gal 5:22 – **Love**. The Greek Word used here (agape) is translated in English as “love”.

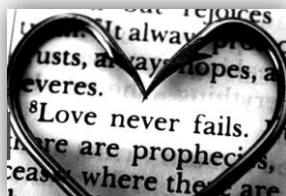
In the NT, “agape” is always the word that describes God's divine posture towards us (John 3:16; Rom 5:8). Just as the concepts of “righteousness” and “grace” find their true reference in God, so it is with agape love. We know what it is because God modeled it for us! God's love expressed to us in Christ is the basis and motivation for us to express this selfless giving toward other people. We are told in Rom 5:5 that this divine attribute, agape love, *“has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us”* (Rom 5:5). God has given us the capacity to love like Him, but it is not fully formed in us because of our active sinful nature. No amount of human toil or gritty determination can produce this kind of divine love, but the Spirit's influence in a yielded heart can work miracles. This agape love toward others is not so much a feeling of affection, but a choice to promote the welfare of another person above our own (Phil 2:3).



## Read Romans 8:35-39

*Paul gives me the bottom line foundation for any possibility of loving others. What is this foundation and how solid is it in my life? Any cracks or erosion?*

*How specifically would my key relationships be blessed if I yield to the Holy Spirit's desire to grow agape love in my life?*

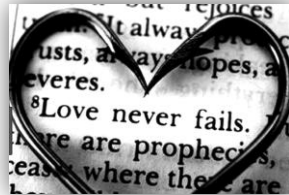


## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### How does Jesus demonstrate Love?

#### John 13: 1-17

*The Apostle John introduced the last section of his Gospel describing the Passion of Christ with the words, “He loved them to the end (to the fullest extent)” (John 13:1).” Witnessing Jesus’ words and actions in this familiar passage, what do I learn here about maxing out my love for my family and Key Relationships? What does Jesus assume about me (:15)? Why is that a rock solid assumption given our memory verse (Gal 2:20)?*

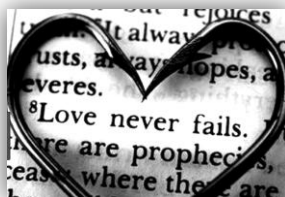


## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Love Defined

#### 1Cor 13:1-13

Tip #1 Open verses 4-8 in a Bible version such as AMP, MSG, NLT, TPT. These paraphrased versions might provide insights in these many facets of love.



Tip #2 Try reading verses 4-8 by replacing the word “love” with my name

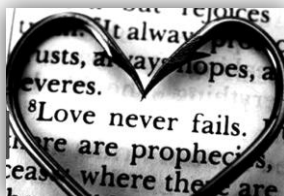
*What facets of love have I excelled in? Which ones are obviously deficient? What facets of love do I most appreciate in others when they are relating to me? Why is love the greatest quality?*

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Love Commanded

#### 1John 4:7-21

*Yes, love is a fruit of the Spirit. And yes, love is an action that I am commanded to do. How do “fruit” and “commanded” go together? What do I learn here about my motivation to love others? In what way is loving others a litmus test of my love for God?*



## **AUTHENTIC LOVE**

*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

**1John 4:10**

This verse gives me a concise Biblical definition of love.

### **1. LOVE ALWAYS TAKES THE INITIATIVE**

*“Not that we loved God but that He loved us...”*

### **2. LOVE ALWAYS ACTS SACRIFICIALY**

*“And sent His Son...”*

### **3. LOVE ALWAYS SEEKS TO MEET REAL NEEDS**

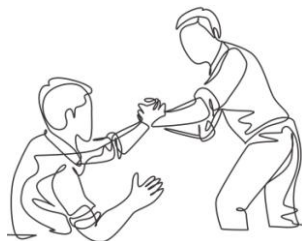
*“To be the payment for our sins.”*

**Based on this definition, write down one tangible way you will love one of your family members in the next 48 hours**

**I will initiate by...**

**I will act sacrificially by saying “no” to \_\_\_\_\_ in order to say “yes” to them.**

**The need I will meet is \_\_\_\_\_**  
\_\_\_\_\_



## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Love Put Into Practice**

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

### **Read Gal 5:6, 13 and John 13:34-35; 1Cor 16:13**

*Why is love a litmus test of our transformed life in Christ?*

*What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of Love?*

*In what key relationship have I failed to demonstrate the Spirit's love?*

*Where have I experienced the loving Lord Jesus living in me? How has God shown me His love through others?*



*Lord, would You bear the fruit of love in me this week?*

*Bless \_\_\_\_\_ through me.*



**“Yes, that was very loud, Jack Hoekstra.  
But I said that I wanted to hear your HEART!”**



# JOY

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand how much God enjoys my fellowship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rarely become irritable with others or circumstances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am inclined to speak gratitude rather than complaint.
- \_\_\_\_\_ There is a contagious sense of thankfulness and delight in my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Circumstances do not dictate my mood
- \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy God every day.

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 2nd quality in the fruit of the Spirit list as recorded in Gal 5:22 – Joy. The Greek Word used here (*chara*) is translated in English as “joy”. The meaning is gladness, delight.

At its core, joy is a feeling. In a number of languages, the concept of joy is expressed with idioms like, “my heart is dancing” or “my heart shouts because I am happy.” Some circumstance is making the heart dance. This is where Christian joy and worldly joy diverge. Worldly joy is very temporary because it is based on fleeting material or relational circumstances. Christian joy, on the other hand, is sourced in eternal invisible realities. Pastor Milton Vincent writes: “The gospel is the one great permanent circumstance in which I live and move.” When we decide and choose to keep the Gospel front and center as THE overriding circumstance in our life, the gladness of a dancing heart is the result. In this way, joy is not just an emotion, but a choice. There is a close connection between word “*chara*” and the Greek word *charis*, which is the word for “grace” in the New Testament. Nothing in all of life produces joy like the grace of God displayed at the Cross! The more I choose to focus on the Gospel of what God has done on my behalf, the more I will experience His joy regardless of the earthly circumstances!



A quick survey of the word “chara” in the New Testament reveals that joy is not sourced in earthly circumstances but in Gospel realities.

## For your Bible reading today,

slowly read these passages. (You may prefer to look them up in your own Bible version.) Let the cumulative impact of these verses overwhelm you. Make a mark next to verses that particularly stand out to you?

Luke 2:10 I [angel] bring you good news of great **joy**...for today...there has been born for you a Savior

Luke 10:17-20 Now the seventy-two returned with **joy**, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name!” And He said to them..., “do not **rejoice** in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but **rejoice** that your names are recorded in heaven.”

Luke 15:7 I tell you ...there will be *more* **joy** in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.

John 15:11 These things (i.e. abiding in Me) I have spoken to you so that My **joy** may be in you, and *that* your **joy** may be made full.

John 16:24 ask and you will receive, so that your **joy** may be made full

Acts 13:52 And the disciples were continually filled with **joy** and with the Holy Spirit.

Rom 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and **joy** in the Holy Spirit.

Rom 15:Now may the God of hope fill you with all **joy** and peace in believing...

Phil 1:25 I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and **joy** in the faith,

1Thes 1:6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word during great affliction with the **joy** of the Holy Spirit,



Heb 12:2 Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the **joy** set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

James 1:2 Consider it all **joy**...when you encounter various trials

1Pet 1:8 though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly **rejoice** with **joy** inexpressible and full of glory

*Lord, in light of our time together today, hear this prayer from my heart....*

“The gospel is the one great permanent circumstance in which I live and move; and every hardship in my life is allowed by God only because it serves His gospel purposes in me.”

Milton Vincent

**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Joy Rooted in Eternal Circumstances**

**Habakkuk 3:17-19; 1John 1:1-4**

*What do I learn from these passages about the source of joy? Would I characterize my heart as chasing after happiness in this life or pursuing God’s joy based on the Cross? Explain. The NLT version of 1John 1:4 reads: “We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.” How does God want to partner with me to increase other’s joy?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

**Joy Experienced**

**Luke 24:13-53**

*What was it that turned the deep sadness and even depression of the disciples (17, 38) to radiant joy (32, 41, 52-53)?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Joy Commanded**

**Philippians 4:4; 1Thesalonians 5:16;  
James 1:2-4; 1Peter 4:13**

*James, Peter, and Paul each command me to choose joy. How am I currently obeying this command? When I fail to obey a command of God, the appropriate response is repentance. When was the last time I repented of my joylessness?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Joy Put Into Practice**

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

### **Psalm 16:8-11**

*What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of Joy? According to Psalm 16, where is fullness of joy found? Have I experienced the Joy described in the Scriptures that is not related to my earthly circumstances? Have others been impacted by the joy of the Lord in me? What tough circumstance in my life am I tempted to allow to become a joy stealer?*



*Lord, As I navigate the particular circumstances of my life right now, would You bear the fruit of joy in me?*

## PEACE

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ My heart, soul and mind are resting in God?
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am rarely troubled or anxious?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Others would describe me as being fully contented.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Peace rules my heart because Christ rules my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am quick to cast my cares on Christ and leave them with Him
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know deeply that God has forgiven me

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit list as recorded in Gal 5:22 – Peace. The Greek Word used here (ireenee) is translated in English as “peace”.

The meaning of this New Testament term follows closely the meaning of the Hebrew word, Shalom, meaning completeness, wholeness, soundness, wellbeing. Just as some languages use the idiom “my heart is dancing” to described the concept of joy, peace is idiomatically described by the phrase ‘to sit down in one’s heart.’ It’s a picture of serenity and settled assurance of heart and mind based on a harmonious relationship with God. It’s an inner confirmation that all is well with my soul because my guilt was transferred to Jesus and my punishment was borne by Him. The word is used to describe both the objective peace of no longer being an enemy of God (Rom 5:1) and the subjective psychological state resulting from the fact of being justified – declared not guilty.





Peace is a gift that comes from God and is of a different quality than the temporal peace the world offers. *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful”* (John 14:27) . This Irenenee

peace is sourced in Jesus. *“...in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world”* (John 16:33). The God of peace (Rom 15:33; Heb 13:20), the Lord of peace (2Thes 3:16), and the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6) will surely deliver peace that surpasses all comprehension (Phil 4:7). Like we learned in our study of “Joy”, peace is possible no matter what our earthly circumstances.



The bottom line is this: Peace rules your day when Christ rules your heart!

## For your Bible reading today,

slowly read these passages. (You may prefer to look them up in your own Bible version.) Then respond to God in prayer.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

Romans 8:6 The mindset on flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

Romans 14:17 the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Rom 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing...

**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Peace Modeled By Jesus**

### **Mark 4:35-41**

*There are 4 questions asked in this passage. Two are asked by Jesus and two by His disciples. What are they and how can my answering each one refocus my mind on the Savior rather than on the storms of this week?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Peace Sourced In Jesus**

**Eph 2:11-18**

*God had set apart the Jews (religion, laws, diet, etc) as distinct from all other peoples. This led to enmity between Jews and Gentiles. More foundationally, sin created enmity between all people (sinners) and God. What does this passage teach about the consequences of Jesus' sacrifice?*

*(Note: our passage follows Eph 2:1-10). How is Jesus tied to the reality of peace in verses 14, 15, 17? In what way does (should) my peace with God spill over to peace in my relationships?*



## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Peace Commanded**

**Colossians 3:15; 2Timothy 2:2; Phil 4:6-9**

*“We can best pursue God’s peace by leaving the pieces of our lives in His hands.” Agree or disagree? How does this work in my life? I am called to pursue peace and at the same time peace is a fruit that grows in my via the Holy Spirit. What is one action I can take to prepare the climate for the fruit of peace to be borne in my life?*



## **“Father, grip my heart today.”**

### **Peace Put Into Practice**

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

#### **Psalm 23:1-6**

*What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of Peace? Does reading Psalm 23 cause my peace quotient to rise?*

*Why or Why not? Have I experienced the Peace described in the Scriptures that is not related to my earthly circumstances? Have others been impacted by the peace of the Lord in me? What tough circumstance in my life am I tempted to allow to become a joy stealer?*

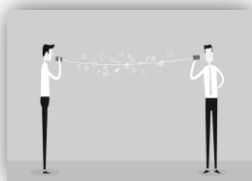


*“Lord, I know that as long as I am in right relationship with You, I can experience peace regardless of what turbulence is taking place in and around me. Would you bear the fruit of peace in me this week?”*

# GRIP Growth Summary



**Word Highlights** – Over these past weeks studying **Love, Joy, and Peace** I especially want to remember and apply:



**Pass On** – I expressed the following truth(s) that God impressed on my heart to my family and/or GRIP partner:



**Action Point Progress** – Over these past weeks I followed through on the following actions which God put on my heart to prioritize.



**Even geese are at peace and smile as they fly  
through the cold, bitter blasts of their winter  
wanderings!**

# Life Assignment Challenge: Interview

Your GRIP enrollment communicates your desire to be intentional about your relationship with God. You want to grow, progress, develop, and mature. You're desiring for God to transform you into the man, husband, father, follower that God has called you to be.

One of the tools that God uses to grow us is other members of the Body of Christ whom the Lord has sovereignly placed in our life. Imagine the centuries of untapped wisdom and life experience around you every day just waiting to be passed on to you? Think of the insight, counsel and encouragement that could be yours through a small investment of an hour or two. Christ followers who are wiser, older, experienced, and seasoned! People who have walked with the Lord for decades, grown strong through weakness, softened their character through brokenness and loss, gained perspective through perseverance and been deepened by temptations. People who have integrated life's invaluable lessons into every facet of their being through failure... failures you just may avoid if you listen intently to their hearts and zealously process their lifetime of understanding.

So, here's our life assignment challenge:

**Interview a Christ-following person / couple in your life who is further along their life journey than you are. You might know the person / couple you choose to interview well or maybe you've admired them from a distance. If you are married, we strongly recommend you do this as a couple and interview another couple. Make it a date night!**

1. Determine what couple / individual you would like to interview
2. Reach out to this couple and explain your desire to interview them. (Feel free to mention that this is a GRIP life assignment.)
3. Arrange the meeting time and place. We recommend a comfortable quiet setting. Perhaps the interview takes place over a meal or dessert.
4. In advance, make a list of about 12 questions to ask (The next pages provide a bunch of sample questions...or create your own. The point is to hear answers to questions you REALLY have.)
5. Have a great time listening (and taking down a few notes.)
6. Send the couple / person a thank you note afterwards.



# **SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

## **General Questions**

- Knowing what you know now about life, what would you tell your younger self when you were about my age?
- Are there any "must read" books in the area of discipleship, marriage, parenting etc. that you would recommend?
- How have you navigated the difficult decisions in your life?
- How do you balance the different demands and pressures of life? how have the pressures and demands changed over the years?
- What would you say has been your greatest success in life? To what do you attribute it?
- What would you say has been your greatest failure in life? What would you do over and why?
- Who is a hero of yours? What makes them a hero?
- What advice would you give to me in my season of life?

## **Questions relating to Spiritual Life**

- How did you first come to Christ?
- Where you are in your spiritual journey now?
- Did your children see you praying on your knees? Individually or as a couple?
- Did you do family devotions? What did that look like? How was that time received by your kids?
- How intentional were you to teach your kids the Bible?
- How much of your conversation (ballpark), in average day, is about eternal things?
- What does your devotional time look like? (i.e. when, where, what)
- What have you found to be the most fruitful way of leading your family spiritually?
- What does a typical Sabbath day look like for you?
- Who are some of the people who have had the most influence on you spiritually?
- What's the most impactful truth the Lord has taught you in the past few months?
- How do you maintain your spiritual vitality?
- Have you ever been discipled? What was it like? Have you ever discipled someone else? How?
- What is your favorite passage of Scripture? Why?
- Who is your favorite Bible character? Why?
- What has been the biggest test of your faith in the past few years?
- What ways have you found to be effective in sharing the Gospel with your friends?

### **Questions relating to Marriage**

- How have you seen your marriage grow?
- Have you had an especially hard season in your marriage? How did you navigate it?
- How do you define 'success' in marriage?
- What would be your one piece of advice on marriage?
- Sex, money, in-laws and religion are 4 typical problem areas of marriages. How have you navigated these land mines?
- How did you come to agree on how you would discipline your children?
- Do you know your spouse's love language? How has this been important in your marriage?
- How do you maintain your romance?
- What do you do as a couple when you are not unified with each other on a particular issue or decision?
- Who handles the finances in your home? Do you live on a budget? How does that practically look for you?
- How do you encourage each other spiritually?
- What have you learned about praying together?

### **Questions relating to Parenting**

- What was the hardest season for raising your children? How do you define success here?
- What one incident with one of your children stands out for being the hardest to deal with? Were you on the same page, parenting wise, on how to deal with it?
- If you have boys and girls, which was the hardest to parent? Why?
- What were your prayers for your children when they were young? What are your prayers for them today?
- If each of you could change one thing you did in parenting, what would it be?
- What is your greatest strength as a parent? What is your greatest weakness?
- What would be your one piece of advice on parenting?
- What areas, looking back, were you too hard on your children or too hard on a particular child? What area were you too easy?
- How did you discipline your kids?
- Did you ever compare yourselves with other parents? What did you learn?
- What was the hardest part about raising teenagers? Why? How did you navigate it?
- Have any of your children had any health or addiction issues? How did you deal with it?

- How did you motivate your children in their youth? As teenagers? (physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, spiritually?)
- How and when did you talk to children about dating? Sex? Marriage?
- What would your advice be on setting boundaries concerning electronic use by your children? (TV; computer, phone, apps, social media, etc)
- What did you learn about teaching your kids about stewardship and money?
- Have any of your children rejected your view of Christianity? How have you handled it?
- When your children lied to you, how did you deal with it?
- What kinds of boundaries did you set when your kids went to their friend's houses?
- Do you have a favorite child? How did you deal with favoritism?
- How and what role are you playing to helping your grandkids come to Christ to 'turn out well'?
- How did/do you balance love and discipline with your kids?
- What are the most important lessons you learned growing up which you are determined to teach your children?
- How do you avoid child-centered parenting?
- What do you do to reduce the negative effect of TV on your family?
- Do you have any hints on how to help a child learn how to share things?
- What resources have you found helpful to improve your parenting? (i.e. websites, books, ministries, conferences, rhythms, etc)

## Notes

## Notes

## Notes

# PATIENCE

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to wait gracefully when inconvenienced.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am rarely in a hurry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I act calmly when my agenda is blocked or when I am interrupted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I slow down for others who do not move as quickly as I do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I view waiting for others as an opportunity to wait on God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do not get angry with God when I have to endure suffering

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 4<sup>th</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit as recorded in Gal 5:22 – **Patience**. The Greek Word used here (Makrothumia) is translated in English as “longsuffering” or “forbearance” or “patience.”

Patience is the way of relating to other people with an emotional calm, even when their disposition may be annoying, provoking, challenging, or even in opposition to you. It’s a prolonged restraint without complaining or expressing irritation or anger. We might say the patient person “keeps his heart from jumping” as opposed to quickly reacting. When defining love in 1Corinthians 13, Paul lists patience first in the list, quickly followed by kindness! *“Love is patient, love is kind...”* Patience and kindness are often mentioned in tandem in the scriptures (2Cor 6:6).

Though relating to people is the usual context for Makrothumia, sometimes the object of patience is not



people, but waiting on a situation or enduring some kind of hard circumstance.

James speaks of waiting patiently for the coming of the Lord like a farmer actively waits for his harvest (James 5:7-11). In the letter to Hebrews, the author reminds the Jewish Christians who were undergoing persecution and tempted to give up, that God's promises are inherited through faith and patience (Heb 6:12). In these instances, patience is associated with waiting in hope.

## **Read Colossians 1:9-14**

***In this prayer for the Colossians, Paul prays in a variety of things. In verse 11, Paul prays that they would be strengthened with all power. According to the rest of the verse, for what did they need power?***

***How specifically would my key relationships be blessed if I yield to the Holy Spirit's desire to grow patience in my life?***



No one will ever know the full depth of his capacity for patience and humility as long as nothing bothers him. It is only when times are troubled and difficult that he can see how much of either is in him."

St. Francis of Assisi, 13<sup>th</sup> century



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Patience Demonstrated By God**

**Rom 2:4; 2Pet 3:8-9; 1Tim 1:12-17; Mark 10:32-45**

*How have I personally benefitted from God's perfect patience (longsuffering)? In what way does my knowledge of God's patience with me impact how I demonstrate patience with others? Where do I see Jesus' patience with his disciples in Mark 10?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Patience Sought From Others

#### Matthew 18:21-35

*Why is great patience (makrothumia) required in order to forgive once or even a thousand times? How does the master demonstrate patience motivated by grace? How have I recently failed to extend the same gracious patience of my Master to someone who owed me just a little in comparison? How does the Lord respond to those who are unwilling to show patience and grace to others (:32-35; Matt 6:14-15)? Why? Why is the phrase “from the heart” the key to living out the kind of patience this passage demands?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Patience Commanded

**Eph 4:1-3; Col 3:12-15; 1Thes 5:14-19**

*These passages represent the “tracks that all relationships run on.” The Apostle Paul exhorted the churches to manifest these. Look for the word “patience” (or synonym) in these lists. What other qualities are complementary to patience? How does it make me feel that God commands me to be patient? Maybe you are like St Augustine, who prayed, “Command what you wish, but give what you command.”*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Patience Put Into Practice

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

#### 2Timothy 3:10-12

*Could I, like Paul, say to my GRIP partner, “Follow my example in this area of patience.” What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of Patience?*

*In what key relationship have I failed to demonstrate the Spirit’s patience?*

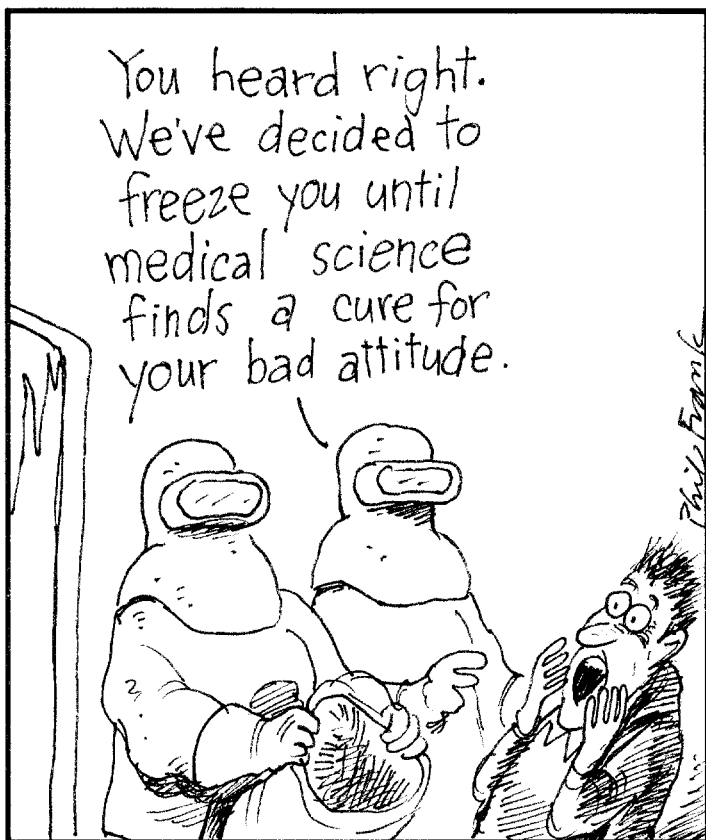
*Where have I experienced the patient*

*Lord Jesus living in me? Is there a specific situation or outcome that I have been trying to control in the flesh instead of waiting patiently? How has God shown me His patience through others?*



*Lord, would You bear the fruit of patience in me this week? Bless \_\_\_\_\_ through me.*

- True patience means waiting without worrying!
- God’s delays are not denials.
- What builds into your life while you are patiently waiting is more important than what you are waiting for!
- To God, screaming ‘NOW’ is just as rebellious as yelling ‘NO’!
- Waiting on God is not a matter of time but a matter of surrender.



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## KINDNESS

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ I stop to lend a hand to help others even when I’m busy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I love to serve anonymously so others get the credit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would be described by others as an encourager and affirmer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I listen to others with sincere interest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In fellowship settings, I intentionally greet the lonely looking folks
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help those who are in trouble or who cannot help themselves.

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 5<sup>th</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit as recorded in Gal 5:22 – Kindness. The Greek Word used here (chrestotes) is translated in English as “goodness” or “kindness” or gentleness” or “compassion.”

**Kindness** is a tangible expression of other-oriented love that is a true help to others. It’s being useful and benevolent toward someone else without expecting anything in return. Being kind does not mean you become sentimental and sappy. Biblical kindness is selflessly putting the needs of others above your own (Phil 2:3-8) and courageously stepping out in faith to meet needs in the provision of the Holy Spirit (1Thes 2:7-9; 2 Tim 1:15-18). Kindness is honoring the value that the Lord has placed on every person. Kindness is an unmistakable and essential characteristic of love (1Cor 13:4).



## **Read 1Thessalonians 2:7-9**

*How is it that a former persecutor and violent aggressor like Paul comes to describe himself as gentle and kind as a nursing mother?*

*What does it feel like being around a truly kind follower of Jesus? Do people feel that when they are around me?*



*How specifically would my key relationships be blessed if I yield to the Holy Spirit's desire to grow kindness in my life?*

**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Kindness Demonstrated By God the Father**

**Psalm 145:8; Psalm 103 (esp :4, 8, 11, 17); Titus 3:4;  
Eph 2:7; Rom 11:22;**

*The Old Testament Hebrew word describing God’s ‘loving kindness’ is Chesed, and points to a loyal love that is ready to help people whether they deserve it or not. This is an essential theme in the Psalms. How have you personally benefitted from God’s kindness toward you? In what way does your knowledge of God’s kindness with you impact how you demonstrate kindness to others?*





**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Kindness Demonstrated By Jesus**

**Mk 10:13-16** to children;

**Luke 7:11-17** to a grieving widow

**John 8:1-11** to an adulterous woman



*Jesus, the GREAT Shepherd, spent a LOT of His ministry just being kind to people. Certainly this is one reason why the sinners and tax collectors were so attracted to Him. In what specific ways do I see Jesus' kindness, gentleness, compassion in these passages. When I look Jesus in the eyes, what do I feel?*

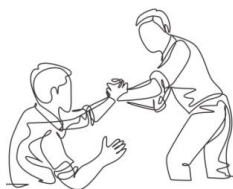
*“Kindness cannot live in the atmosphere of clock watching.”*

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Kindness Can Change A Life

#### 2Samuel 9

Years before, King David developed a deep friendship with Jonathan, the son of David's mortal enemy, Saul. As friends, they swore to each other that no matter what happened, they would show kindness to each other's descendants (I Sam 18:1-5; 20: 14-17, 42; 24:21-22). In this passage, Saul and Jonathan have already died. The only remaining survivor of Jonathan is Mephibosheth (lit. one who gathers shame as a laughingstock), Jonathan's crippled son. What practical ways did David show kindness? What was David's motive? Is there a Mephibosheth in your life who is physically, emotionally, financially, mentally, spiritually or relationally crippled? What kindness do they need that you might be able to give?



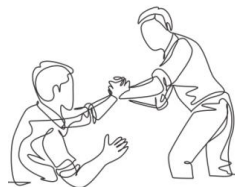
## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Kindness Put Into Practice

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

**Eph 4:32; 2Tim 2:24; Prov 3:3; Micah 6:8**

*How does it make me feel that God commands me to be kind? What am I realizing about Kindness in my life? In what key relationship have I failed to demonstrate the Spirit's kindness? When have I experienced the kind Lord Jesus living in me? How has God shown me His kindness through others?*



*Lord, would You bear the fruit of kindness in me this week? Bless \_\_\_\_\_ through me.*

Come with me to a third grade classroom. There is a 9 year-old kid sitting at his desk. Suddenly, there is a puddle between his feet and the front of his pants are wet. It's never happened before, and he knows that when the boys find out he will never hear the end of it. When the girls find out, they'll never speak to him again. The boy believes his heart is going to stop; he puts his head down and prays this prayer, "Dear God, this is an emergency! I need help now! I'm dead meat." He looks up from his prayer and here comes the teacher with a look in her eyes that says he has been discovered. As the teacher is walking toward him, a classmate named Jimmy is carrying a goldfish bowl that is filled with water. Jimmy trips in front of the teacher and inexplicably dumps the bowl of water in the boy's lap. The boy pretends to be angry, but all the while is saying to himself, "Thank you, Lord!" Now, instead of being the object of ridicule, the boy is the object of sympathy. The teacher rushes to give him gym shorts while his pants dry out. All the other children are cleaning up around his desk. The sympathy was wonderful. But, as life would have it, the ridicule that should have been his, has been transferred to someone else - Jimmy. He tries to help, but they tell him to, "Get out. You've done enough, you klutz!" Finally, at the end of the day, as they are waiting for the bus, the boy walks over to Jimmy and whispers, "You did that on purpose, didn't you?" Jimmy whispers back, "I wet my pants once too." (Source unknown)

## GOODNESS

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ I give a significant portion of my time and material resources to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ When giving, I give the maximum not the minimum.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My heart to give is growing not shrinking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would never keep something that did not belong to me
- \_\_\_\_\_ Those close to me would characterize me as generous.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm quick to confess when I transgress a Biblical moral standard

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 6<sup>th</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit as recorded in Gal 5:22 – Goodness. The Greek Word used here (agathosune) is translated in English as “goodness.” The meaning is really a mixture of moral goodness, uprightness, and generosity. It’s a goodness of character and behavior. Someone growing in the fruit of goodness has a desire to be a blessing to others. He has his radar up for ways to shower the goodness he has received from the Lord onto those around him.



## Read Matt 25:31-41

*According to Jesus' words in Matt 25, who am I blessing when His goodness oozes out through me toward others? What stands in the way of me being generous? When was the last time I set my agenda aside in order to be a blessing, in whatever way, to others?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Goodness Is Sourced In God**

**Gen 1:31; Gen 3:5; Gen 50:20; Ex 33:18-19; Ps 100:5; ;  
Luke 18:18-19; Rom 8:28; James 1:17**

*Am I tempted to believe that God is only good sometimes? Or that there is goodness that resides in me apart from God? Who else can override evil and turn it to good? Why is it critical for my spiritual growth (and sanity for that matter) to be utterly convinced of God's goodness? Why was Jesus so quick to correct the rich young ruler in Luke 18? How is the Gospel dependent on the character of God?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **I Was Made And Remade For Goodness**

**Rom 3: 9-12; Eph 2:10; Eph 5:9; Phil 1:6; Col 1:10;  
1Tim 1:5; Heb 13:20-21**

*In my natural self, do I have a right to claim the attribute of goodness (Rom 3:12)? Through the redemption which has taken place in Christ, what does God expect to overflow from my life (Rom 15:14; Eph 2:10)?*





## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Goodness Commanded

**Gal 6:9-10; Titus 3:1-8 (esp 1, 8); 2Thes 1:11**

*Remember, God did not send Jesus to make bad people good. He sent his Son to make dead people alive. As I learned from my Gal 2:20 memory verse, “Christ lives in me.” How does this reality relate to the command to be good?*



Every Christian man ought to have as one of his highest goals in life to leave behind an accurate picture of his God for the world to frame. Manifesting the fruit of the Spirit is that portrait.

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Goodness Put Into Practice

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

#### Rom 15:14

*Would Paul be able to write this of me: I am convinced that you are full of goodness” (Rom 15:14? What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of Goodness? Where have I failed to demonstrate the Spirit’s goodness? Where have I experienced the good Lord Jesus living in me? How has God shown me His goodness through others?*



*Lord, would You bear the fruit of goodness in me this week? Bless \_\_\_\_\_ through me.*

# GRIP Growth Summary



**Word Highlights** – Over these past weeks studying **Patience, Kindness, Goodness** I especially want to remember and apply:



**Interview** – How did God use the Interview Life Assignment in my life? What were one or two take-aways from that experience?



**Action Point Progress** – Over these past weeks I followed through on the following actions which God put on my heart to prioritize.

## FAITHFULNESS

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ People would say that I am dependable
- \_\_\_\_\_ When I say I am going to do something, it gets done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rarely wrestle with procrastination.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Because God is my audience, I do things excellently  
and never just enough to get by.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I follow God even when it involves hardship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I take unpopular stands when my faith requires it

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 7<sup>th</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit as recorded in Gal 5:22 – **Faithfulness**. The Greek Word used here (pistis) is the common word in the NT which is translated in English as “faith” or “faithfulness” It’s the same word used in our Gal 2:20 memory verse: “...the life which I now live in the flesh I live by **faith** in the Son of God...” Typically the word refers to our trust in , reliance on, and confidence in God, or in Christ who redeemed us. We are declared right with God by faith (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:8). Men of faith are thoroughly convinced of God’s truth and God’s character to the point of action.

With God as our Audience of One, our faith in Him overflows as faithfulness in our human relationships and responsibilities. This seems natural in the context of the Galatians 5:22-23 list, where the word pistis, follows “kindness” and “goodness”. Thus, our continued yielding to the Spirit causes us to grow in our reliability, dependability, and trustworthiness horizontally because we are vitally connected to a reliable, dependable, trustworthy God vertically. The Spirit makes us faithful and it is upon God’s faithfulness that we build our faith (1Thes 5:24; 2Tim 2:13).



## Read Hebrews 10:32-39

*The Christians who received the letter we know as Hebrews were tempted to give up. The cost of following Jesus had become very high for them. At the end of*

*Hebrews 10, the writer reminds them of their faithfulness during the initial persecutions and sufferings and calls them not to shrink back now. Where am I tempted to shrink back from living a life of faith? What memory of past faithfulness (God to me and me to God) can I return to in my heart?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Faithfulness Modeled By God**

**1Thes 5:24; 2Tim 2:13; 1John 1:9; 1Pet 4:19; 1Cor 1:9**

*“It’s not the amount of my faith, but the object of my faith that is critical.” Explain. What do I learn from these scriptures about the object of my faith? Have I entrusted my soul to my faithful creator today (1Pet 4:19)? Where have I recently noticed God’s faithfulness to me?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Faithfulness Is My Calling**

**Luke 16:10-13; 1Cor 4:1-2; Matt 25:14-23**

*If I am a follower of Jesus, I have been adopted as God's son and made an heir. And my inheritance will never spoil or fade away (1Pet 1:4). But I am also commissioned as a steward of all that God has put under my care.*

*Looking over my Key Relationship Hand and my Key Resource Hand,*

*what baby steps is God calling me to take this week to be “faithful in a little” so that later I can be “faithful in much? Can I envision Jesus address me right now as “good and faithful servant” (Mt 25:21)? Why or why not?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Faithfulness Exhibited By Those Who Trust God’s Character and Promises**

### **Hebrews 11**

*How do faith and action relate? Where do I see the long view of faithfulness in the lives of these heroes? What is God’s attitude toward the men and women of faith in Hebrews 11 (Heb 11: 16)? In what way does my faith in God’s character and promises impact my daily choices? In what relationships and situations is God asking for my faith? (i.e. “Trust Me. Be faithful to Me”).*





**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Faithfulness Put Into Practice**

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

### **2Thes 1:3-4; 11-12**

*In what way is God enlarging my faith?*

*What means is He using (2Thes 1:3)?*

*What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of Faithfulness? Where have I failed to demonstrate the Spirit's faithfulness? How has God shown me His faithfulness to me through others?*



*Lord, would You bear the fruit of faithfulness in me this GRIP season?*

## GENTLENESS

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ I consistently speak the truth with grace.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have surrendered my strength to God and don't seek  
to control others
- \_\_\_\_\_ Others would consider me very approachable
- \_\_\_\_\_ When people hurt, I'm not afraid to be a comforting  
presence
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have a reputation for not raising my voice
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am aware of my own faults when I am faced with  
the sin of others

\_\_\_\_\_ of 30 Total

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the 8<sup>th</sup> quality in the fruit of the Spirit as recorded in Gal 5:22 – **Gentleness**. The Greek Word used here (praotetes) is translated in English as “gentleness.” In the Classical Greek, the word “is used of a **wise man** who remains meek in the face of insults, the **judge** who is lenient in judgment, and the **king** who is kind in his rule. The word often appears in pictures of the ideal ruler” (DNTT Vol 2). The sense of the word is “**power under control**” rather than an indicator of weakness. For instance, a powerful horse becomes useful and realizes its full potential only after it is broken. The horse is still powerful, but now it is under control. God is calling us to bring the **power** of our words, emotions, desires, goals, abilities, finances, attitudes, leadership position and physical strength **under the control of His Spirit** so that we might be harnessed for His Kingdom. To be meek is not to be weak!



The quality of gentleness is revealed in the attitude and behavior of humility, courtesy, and considerateness. In a number of languages it is defined as ‘the absence of harshness when dealing with others’ or it can be expressed idiomatically as ‘always speaking softly’.

## **1Peter 2:21-25**

*Where do I find myself pressing for my rights and my agenda instead of entrusting myself and my relationships and my situations into God’s hands? Christ had at His command all the power/authority of creation. How does he model power under control - for the Father’s glory and the people’s good? .*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Gentleness Characterizes Jesus

**Matthew 11:25-30; 2Cor 10:1; Zechariah 9:9**

*The only time Jesus describes His heart, he uses the words ‘gentle and lowly’ (Mt 11:29). What is significant about that? Do I feel the welcome and open arms of the gentle Christ?*



Meek. Humble. Gentle. Jesus is not trigger-happy. Not harsh, reactionary, easily exasperated. He is the most understanding person in the universe. The posture most natural to Him is not a pointed finger but open arms.

Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly*, chap 1

**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

**Gentleness Modeled By Jesus**

**John 8:1-10**

*When I have messed up, whom would I rather process it with: someone who is gentle or someone who is harsh and judgmental? Which person am I?*



**“Father, grip my heart today.”**

## **Gentleness Commanded**

**Eph 4:2; Phil 4:5; Col 3:12; Gal 6:1; 2Tim 2:24-26**

*If gentleness was strictly a personality trait, then the Bible would not command it. Gentleness comes about when Christ lives His life out through us via the Holy Spirit. Am I experiencing this? How am I using my position or authority to build up the others around me rather than to tear them down? Is my leadership style at home a gentle one? Do my language, facial expressions, and tone sound gentle and understanding?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Gentleness Put Into Practice

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

#### Proverbs 15:1, 4, 18

*What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of gentleness? How has God shown me His gentleness to me through others? Where have I failed to demonstrate the Spirit’s gentleness (i.e., with a harsh response, a facial expression, an angry or retributive action, withholding grace, etc)? Now would be a great time to confess and repent to the gentle and lowly Christ AND ask forgiveness of the person to whom you failed to show gentleness.*



*Lord, would You bear the fruit of gentleness in me this GRIP season?  
Bless \_\_\_\_\_ through me.*

## SELF-CONTROL

**“Father, search my heart today.”**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

- \_\_\_\_\_ I control my tongue
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have broken my bad habits and they are under His control.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rarely give in to impulse.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am not easily “set –off”
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am not addicted to food, caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, or any phone app
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do not engage in sexual practices that are contrary to biblical teaching

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

For further insight, refer to the evaluation at the end of this guide that you invited your wife, child, or other Key Relationship to fill out at the outset of this study.

Today we come to the last quality the Apostle Paul mentions in the fruit of the Spirit. Remember, this list in Gal 5:22-23 is not an exhaustive list of Christian character. The Spirit also stirs up virtues like humility, generosity, hope, faith, etc. in our hearts. It’s clear that the individual qualities of the Fruit of the Spirit overlap a lot!

Paul completes his Gal 5 list of fruit with the quality of **self-control**. The Greek Word used here (egkratia) is translated in English as “self-control.” Self-control means to have mastery over oneself at all levels: attitude, thoughts, speech, behavior, decisions, physical body, etc. It involves moderation, self-restraint, abstinence. We might say it is our divine ability to say “No” to our fleshly desires and to say “Yes” to the Holy Spirit living in us. Another way to say it would be a divine power to keep oneself in check (Gal 5:16-17; Tit 2:11-12). Since Paul’s list of the deeds of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21) includes several sexual oriented sins, this seems to be an especially emphasized area for Holy Spirit self-control.





As men we face a constant assault of ungoverned passions, appetites, excesses, and temptations. Self-control is God's gift to transform the desires I have to please myself into desires to please Him(Rom 12:1-2). As the Proverbs 25:28 reminds us, *"Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over this spirit."*

## **Jesus Empowers Self-control**

### **Titus 2:11-14; James 1:13-18**

*Paul personifies the "grace of God" in verse 11. Who appeared to bring salvation to all men? Where is He right now (Gal 2:20; Col 1:27; Eph 3:17)? According to this Titus passage, what benefit do I receive from this divine ability to say "No"? In the downward spiral described in James 1, where would the fruit of self-control thwart the whole downward process?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Self-Control Modeled by David

#### 1Samuel 24

*Remember, King Saul was trying to kill David over a period of 14 years. David had every reason to retaliate, take revenge and get even with his arch enemy. Who is David's audience in this story (his men, Saul, or God)? How does this impact his self-control? Where am I currently saying yes to my flesh? In those times, who is my audience?*



Bonus: Read 2Samuel 11. The nobility of David's self-control is contracted with his total lack of self-control in the episode with Bathsheba.

## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Self-Control Commanded

**2Cor 10:3-5; 1Timothy 4:7-16**

*Wrong thinking can easily sidetrack me. What does Paul command me to do with thoughts that go against God’s ways? How do I practically do this? The Christian life is never passive. Notice all the action words in Paul’s charge to Timothy to discipline himself for the purpose of godliness. Remember, effort is always in response to the grace ALREADY shown to me in Christ. How did I do this GRIP season at putting myself in a position to allow God to do His thing in my life?*



## “Father, grip my heart today.”

### Self-Control Put Into Practice

Start today by slowly reviewing your journal days from this week, including your evaluation at the beginning of the week.

#### Proverbs 25:28

*Are there breaches in my ‘walls’ due to my lack of self-control? What am I realizing as I delve into this quality of self-control? What’s at stake if I don’t grow in the area of self-control? How have I benefitted from the self-control of others?*

*Lord, would You bear the fruit of self-control in me?*



## Looking Back: Evaluate the Season

“You shall love the Lord your God will all your **heart**, and with all your **soul**, [and with all your **might**] and with all your **mind**. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your **neighbor** as yourself.’”  
(Mt 22:37-40; Dt 6:5-6)



“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”  
John 13:35

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love....”  
Galatians 5:22

**Success in discipleship is measured in love.** When God truly grips our heart, we love God better **and** we love the people in our circle better. When we walk by the Spirit, live by the Spirit, surrendered and yielded to Him, then He bears the fruit of Love along with all the other godly qualities we’ve studied this season.

In Jesus’ economy, loving and serving others - out of a heart which is overwhelmed with God’s love - is the goal of discipleship. How do I know if I’m loving God better and loving others better than when I started? Well, here are some questions to ponder as you bring this season of GRIP in for a landing

**Loving God** – Obeying God and loving God always go together (John 14:21-24). How Am I more committed to obeying God and living life His way than I was 4 months ago? Give some examples.

Have I seen my approach to spiritual disciplines move from a “got to” attitude to a “get to” attitude?

**Loving Others** – How am I more active in taking the initiative, acting sacrificially, and meeting the real needs of people in my life (1John 4:10)? Give some examples. (Hint: think about Key Relationship Action Points.)

Ask the person who filled out your Fruit of the Spirit survey at the beginning of this study if they have noticed any changes toward Christ-likeness. What did they say?

## Looking Ahead: My Plan

### Proverbs 16:1-3, 9

*This set of discipleship tracks called GRIP is coming to a conclusion for this season....but my discipleship continues. “Lord, as I sit before You today and think about my plan for the next several months, please speak to me. Rule and overrule in my deliberations. Help me to own my own journey with You.*



## My Plan for the Next Months

**Here's my plan for being in God's Word:**

(Scripture passages? Why? When and where will I have my times alone with God? How will I process what I read?)

**My Key 3 Action Points for the next four months are...**

**With whom will I initiate a discipleship relationship for the spring?**  
(Is my GRIP pairing ready to multiply? Who in my life needs a push?  
Encouragement? A set of tracks to run on spiritually? Who's my man  
and what's my plan? )



Come prepared to testify how God has been working in your life this season!

- What specific ways has God gripped my heart this season?
- What would I share from my personal evaluation during these last days of review?
- What is my plan over the next two months?
- What progress have I seen in my action points?



# **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT SURVEY**

**Friend or Family Member**

Thank you in advance for your honesty and thoughtfulness in answering these questions. My goal is to be more and more characterized by these qualities.

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

## LOVE

- \_\_\_\_\_ My heart is tender towards God and others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am regularly engaged in sacrificial acts of service
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am aware of the needs of others and seek to meet them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Through God's grace I forgive people who have hurt me
- \_\_\_\_\_ I celebrate when good things happen to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm known for giving up what I want for the sake of others

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

## JOY

- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand how much God enjoys my fellowship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rarely become irritable with others or circumstances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am inclined to speak gratitude rather than complaint.
- \_\_\_\_\_ There is a contagious sense of thankfulness and delight in my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Circumstances do not dictate my mood
- \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy God every day.

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

## PEACE

- \_\_\_\_\_ My heart, soul and mind are resting in God?
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am rarely troubled or anxious?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Others would describe me as being fully contented.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Peace rules my heart because Christ rules my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am quick to cast my cares on Christ and leave them with Him
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know deeply that God has forgiven me

\_\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

## PATIENCE

- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to wait gracefully when inconvenienced.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am rarely in a hurry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I act calmly when my agenda is blocked or when I am interrupted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I slow down for others who do not move as quickly as I do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I view waiting for others as an opportunity to wait on God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do not get angry with God when I have to endure suffering

\_\_\_\_\_ of 30 Total

## KINDNESS

- \_\_\_\_\_ I stop to lend a hand to help others even when I'm busy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I love to serve anonymously so others get the credit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would be described by others as an encourager and affirmer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I listen to others with sincere interest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In fellowship settings, I intentionally greet the lonely looking folks
- \_\_\_\_\_ I help those who are in trouble or who cannot help themselves.

\_\_\_\_\_ of 30 Total

## GOODNESS

- \_\_\_\_\_ I give a significant portion of my time and material resources to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ When giving, I give the maximum not the minimum.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My heart to give is growing not shrinking.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would never keep something that did not belong to me
- \_\_\_\_\_ Those close to me would characterize me as generous.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm quick to confess when I transgress a Biblical moral standard

\_\_\_\_\_ of 30 Total

Does not  
apply at all

Applies  
somewhat

Applies  
completely

0 ----- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

## FAITHFULNESS

- \_\_\_\_ People would say that I am dependable
- \_\_\_\_ When I say I am going to do something, it gets done.
- \_\_\_\_ I rarely wrestle with procrastination.
- \_\_\_\_ Because God is my audience, I do things excellently and never just enough to get by.
- \_\_\_\_ I follow God even when it involves hardship.
- \_\_\_\_ I take unpopular stands when my faith requires it

\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

## GENTLENESS

- \_\_\_\_ I consistently speak the truth with grace.
- \_\_\_\_ I have surrendered my strength to God and don't seek to control others
- \_\_\_\_ Others would consider me very approachable
- \_\_\_\_ When people hurt, I'm not afraid to be a comforting presence
- \_\_\_\_ I have a reputation for not raising my voice
- \_\_\_\_ I am aware of my own faults when I am faced with the sin of others

\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

## SELF-CONTROL

- \_\_\_\_ I control my tongue
- \_\_\_\_ I have broken my bad habits and they are under His control.
- \_\_\_\_ I rarely give in to impulse.
- \_\_\_\_ I am not easily "set -off"
- \_\_\_\_ I am not addicted to food, caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, or any phone app
- \_\_\_\_ I do not engage in sexual practices that are contrary to biblical teaching

\_\_\_\_ **of 30 Total**

## Notes

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Key Relationships



Key Resources