

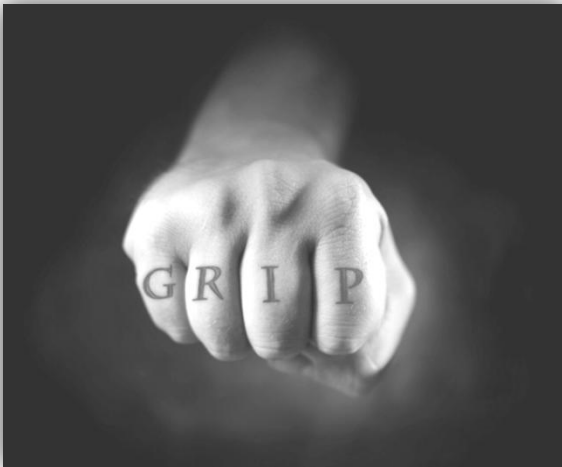
GRIP GUIDE

SPRING 2020



A SEASON OF DISCIPLESHIP

GRIP Discipleship Spring 2020



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)

Spring Dates: 2/3 2/17 3/9 3/30 4/20 5/11

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 GRIP gatherings (once every 3-4 weeks) **2/3**
2/17 3/9 3/30 4/20 5/11
- ☐ 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 large gathering for the purpose of encouragement, challenge, accountability, and prayer (in addition to the monthly GRIP gathering)
- ☐ 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

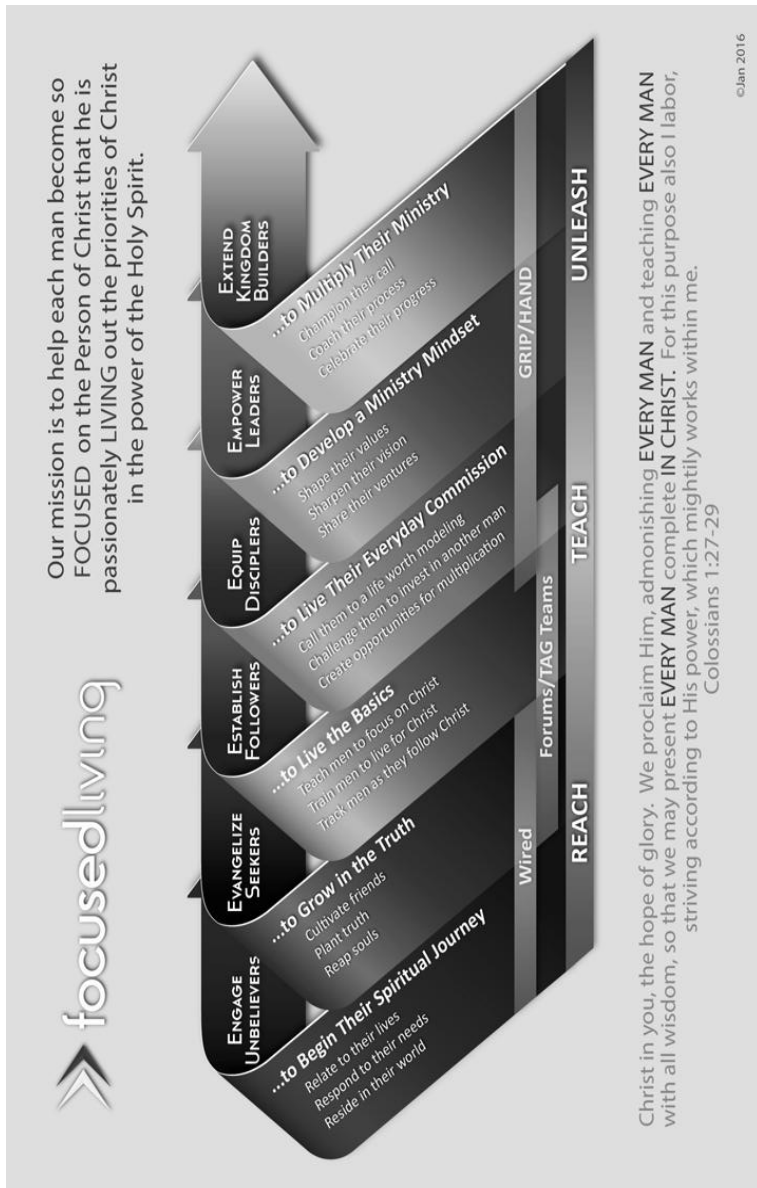


Figure B

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 discippler 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.



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. If you are not regularly processing God’s Word, you are NOT on the path towards growth.

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 what you read by journaling. This looks different for each man. 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. Record insights, phrases, commands & promises that stand out.

SO WHAT is God saying to you?

Stop to reflect and listen. 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 revealed to you? Write out a short, heartfelt prayer to the Lord in response to this time with Him.

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?

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?]

Details of the Bible Reading Plan Spring 2020

SECTION 1

Gospel of John
(2 weeks)

Week 1 02/03

Day 1 Scripture Memory: John 1:12-13

Day 2 John 1:1-18

Day 3 John 1:19-34

Day 4 John 1:35-51

Day 5 John – Digging Deeper: Who is Jesus

Week 2 02/10

Day 1 John 2:1-11

Day 2 John 2:12-25

Day 3 John 3:1-21

Day 4 John – Digging Deeper: The Big Picture

Day 5 John 3:22-26

- Met with GRIP partner since last GRIP gathering
- Ready to attend GRIP Gathering #2 on February 17, 2020



SECTION 2

Key Relationships & Resources (3 weeks)

Week 1 02/17 Listening to God about my Key Relationships

Day 1	God	Exodus 33:7-34:8
Day 2	Wife (Family)	Ephesians 4:1-3; 25-32
Day 3	Children (Family)	Psalms 78:1-8
Day 4	Disciple	1Thessalonians 2:5-12
Day 5	Friend	Colossians 4:2-6

Week 2 02/24 Listening to God about my Key Resources

Day 1	Heart	Psalms 63
Day 2	Time	Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
Day 3	Health	1Corinthians 6:12-20
Day 4	Wealth	Luke 16:1-15
Day 5	Vocation	Ex 31:1-6; Col 3:22-25; 1Pet 4:7-11

***PERSONAL RETREAT (~4 Hours)**

Week 3 03/02 John 4

Day 1	John 4:1-26
Day 2	John 4:27-42
Day 3	John 4:43-54
Day 4	Free Day☺
Day 5	Retreat - Digging Deeper: Key 3 Action Points

- Completed my personal retreat
- Identified my Key 3 Action Points and have shared these with my GRIP partner (grip.focusedliving.com WebApp)
- Met with GRIP partner since last GRIP gathering
- Ready to attend GRIP Gathering #3 on March 9, 2020.

SECTION 3

Gospel of John
(3 weeks)

Week 1 03/09

Day 1 Scripture Memory: John 5:24

Day 2 John 5:1-18

Day 3 John 5:19-47

Day 4 John 6:1-21

Day 5 John 6:22-40

Week 2 03/16

Day 1 John 6:41-71

Day 2 John 7:1-29

Day 3 John 7:30-53

Day 4 John 8:1-11

Day 5 John 8:12-30

Week 3 03/23

Day 1 John 8:31-59

Day 2 John 9:1-12

Day 3 John 9:13-41

Day 4 John 10:1-21

Day 5 John - Digging Deeper: Shepherding

- Met with GRIP partner since last GRIP gathering
- Made progress on Action Points
- Ready to attend GRIP Gathering #4 on March 30, 2020
(This gathering will be an independent team gathering. Each team will decide where to meet and what to eat.)

SECTION 4

Gospel of John
(3 weeks)

Week 1 03/30

Day 1 John 10:22-42

Day 2 John 11:1-16

Day 3 John 11:17-44

Day 4 John 11:45-57

Day 5 John – Digging Deeper: One Size Fit All?

Week 2 04/06

Day 1 Scripture Memory: John 12:24-25

Day 2 John 12:1-19

Day 3 John 12:20-33

Day 4 John 12:34-50

Day 5 Good Friday

Week 3 04/13

Day 1 John 13:1-20

Day 2 John 13:21-38

Day 3 John 14:1-17

Day 4 John 14:18-31

Day 5 John 15:1-17

- Met with GRIP partner since last GRIP gathering
- Made progress on my Key 3 Action Points
- Ready to attend GRIP Gathering #5 on April 20, 2020

SECTION 5

Choosing My Diet in God's Word (3 weeks)

Week 1 04/20

- Day 1** John – Digging Deeper: I Am's
Day 2 Scripture Memory: John 17:3
Day 3 John 15:18 – 16:6
Day 4 John 16:7-33
Day 5 John 17:1-26

Week 2 04/27

- Day 1** John 18:1-27
Day 2 John 18:28 – 19:16
Day 3 John 19:17-30
Day 4 John 19:31-42
Day 5 John 20:1-18

Week 3 05/04

- Day 1** John 20:19-31
Day 2 John – Digging Deeper: Living as a Sent One
Day 3 John 21:1-25
Day 4 How Have I Grown This Season
Day 5 My Plan for the next months

- Met with GRIP partner since last GRIP gathering
- Made progress on my Key 3 Action Points
- Ready to attend GRIP Gathering #6 on May 11, 2020

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 God’s Word in your heart through scripture memory. Specifically, you’ll commit six(6) verses to memory. All the verses come from your GRIP devotional reading. Each passage is included to bolster your Gospel understanding and your outreach efforts.

We don’t memorize scripture just to do it. We are helping each other “own” some truths so we will have them in our hearts for inspiration and to combat temptation.

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.)



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.



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 large 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 large 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. 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**.

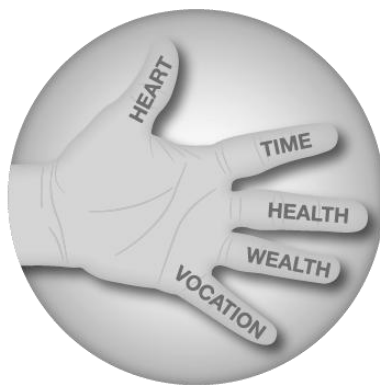
For some, this extended time with God will be new and unfamiliar. No worries! We’ll help. We have a whole section in the GRIP Guide to assist you. One result of this extended time of listening to God will be a short list of “Action Points” that God has put on your heart.

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 points 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.

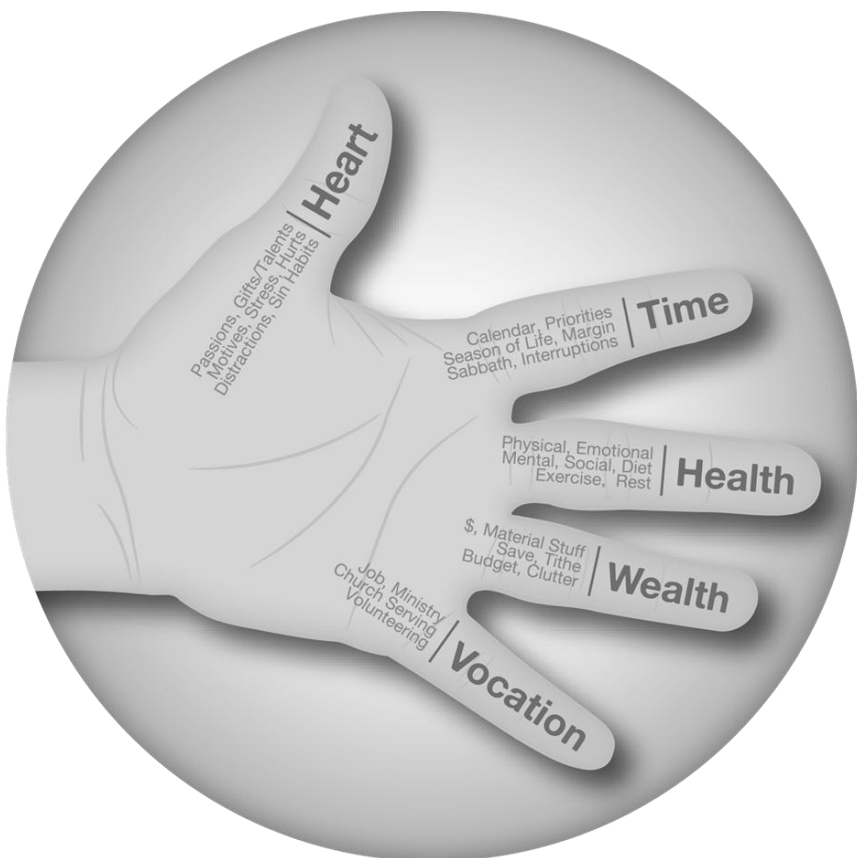


**My HAND Relationships
in this season of my life**

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!**

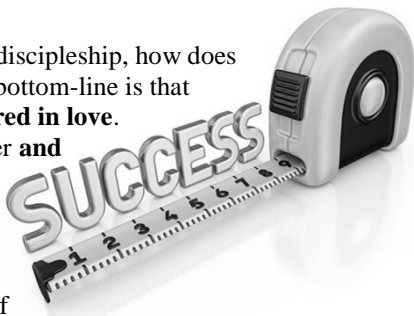
Evaluating the Season

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. 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?



The Presbyterian church called a meeting to decide what to do about their squirrel infestation. After much prayer and consideration, they concluded that the squirrels were predestined to be there, and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will. At the Baptist church the squirrels had taken an interest in the baptistery. The deacons met and decided to put a water-slide on the baptistery and let the squirrels drown themselves. The squirrels liked the slide and, unfortunately, knew instinctively how to swim, so twice as many squirrels showed up the following week. The Lutheran church decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God's creatures. So, they humanely trapped their squirrels and set them free near the Baptist church. Two weeks later the squirrels were back when the Baptists took down the water-slide. But the Catholic church came up with a very creative strategy! They baptized all the squirrels and made them members of the church. Now they only see them at Christmas and Easter. Not much was heard from the Jewish synagogue. They took the first squirrel and circumcised him. They haven't seen a squirrel since...

Gospel of John

Our primary Bible reading during this GRIP discipleship season will be the Gospel of John. One famous Bible scholar wrote: “*The Gospel according to John is the most amazing book that was ever written.*” May you see His glory through this book!

Author: John, the son of Zebedee, who was one of Jesus’ twelve Apostles and one of the “inner” three, wrote this book. John is a contemporary eyewitness. (1John 1:1-4) No one knew Jesus better than he did: he walked with Him daily; reclined next to Him at final supper; stood at His cross; entered His tomb. He referred to himself as the disciple Jesus loved (13:23).

Date: Like many Bible books, it is difficult to precisely date. Most scholars point to this last Gospel being written near A.D. 90.

Purpose: The author clearly states the purpose:

Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. John 20:30-31

This book was written to prove that Jesus is the Son of God and encourage all to believe in Him for eternal life.

Audience: Jews and Gentiles; Believers and Unbelievers. John emphasizes many Old Testament “Types” which Jews would be very familiar with like “Lamb of God”, “Serpent lifted up”, “bread that came down from heaven”, etc.. Yet, the fact that John often interprets Jewish words and customs indicates that a good portion of his audience were also Gentiles, who would not be familiar with Jewish customs.

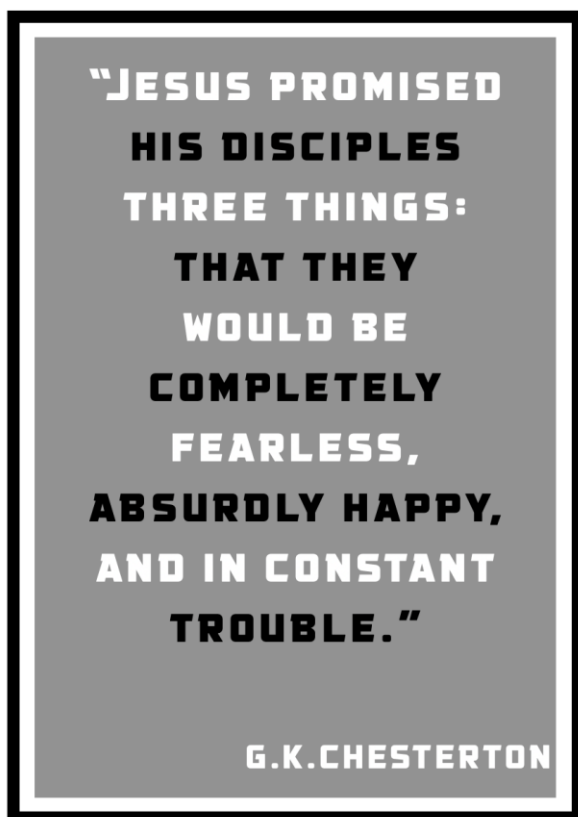
Characteristics of the book: Unlike the other three gospels, the Gospel of John is not meant as a synopsis of Jesus’ life. John arranges the material in a way that the reader will be overwhelmed with Jesus’ divinity. 90% of the material in John’s Gospel is not found in the other three Gospels. Here are some elements you’ll find as you read:

- Long discourses by Jesus instead of parables.
- Jesus’ deity revealed in every chapter

- miracles (signs) that point people to see Jesus as God and believe in Him
- “I am” statements which underscore his preexistence and eternal deity.
- Great themes: Light, Life, Love, Truth
- Detailed teaching about the Holy Spirit

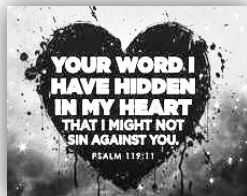
Jesus said:” *I and the Father are One*” (John 10:30). As you spend these months slowly reading this remarkable book, may the eyes of your heart see your Savior with clarity. Let this One who is the great I AM grip your heart!

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. (The video for the Gospel of John is in two parts.) Go to Focused Living’s YouTube channel under ‘GRIP 2020’ to view these videos.



“Father, grip my heart today.”

Scripture Memory: Look up the following verse(s) 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.



John 1:12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

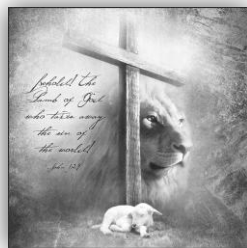
What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

* We recommend reading the intro to John on page 27 and viewing part 1 of the Bible Project book summary of John on the FLM YouTube channel under GRIP 2020.

John 1:1-18

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.



Jesus came to his own people and they didn't know him or receive him (:10-11). How are believing and receiving related(:12)? What grace upon grace, or blessings upon blessings, have I received from Jesus' presence in my life? (:16)

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 1:19-34

John bore witness of Jesus and proclaimed him as the “Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world” (:29)! How am I bearing witness of Jesus? Am I proclaiming Jesus with my voice? Or do I proclaim more of myself? The Son of God (1:34, 49) became the Son of Man (1:51) that He might transform the sons of men into the sons of God...Hallelujah!



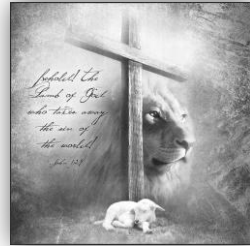
Bonus: View the video “Too Busy Not to Pray - John Piper” on our FLM YouTube channel under GRIP 2020.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 1:35-51

The first disciples spent the day with Jesus (:39) and then went and told their brothers and their friends they had found the Messiah. As I spend time with Jesus, who is he putting on my heart to “find first” and bring to Christ that they might have eternal life? Be prepared this entire Grip season to reach out to and care for them as my ‘pinky’ person.



What will I pass on? To whom?

Digging Deeper – Who is Jesus?

Jesus' identity is the main question in the Gospel of John – Who is He?

John makes it clear in John 20:31

that his purpose in writing this

Gospel was for each reader

a) to conclude that Jesus is in fact the Messiah, the Son of God and

b) to believe in Him for eternal life.



Who is Jesus? The Gospel writer John wastes no time in helping us see who Jesus is. Chapter 1, like a multifaceted diamond, is packed with answers,. **For today's journaling, scan chapter 1 again and write down all the ways Jesus is described.** Here's a list to get you started.

Jesus is...

- :1,14,18 **The Word** (Logos) God communicated / revealed to us
- :4 **The Life** (1:4) the source of abundant life / eternal life
- :4-9 **The light** (1:4-9) the One who enlightens us
- :14-17 **The One full of grace and truth**
- :29,36
- :34
- :41
- :45
- :49
- :51
-
-

Which of these most resonates with you as you begin this Grip season?
Why?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 2:1-11

“There was a wedding...and Jesus was invited”(:1-2). Have I invited Jesus to be central in my marriage? What power of Christ does the miracle at Cana reveal? (See 1:3) Am I trusting in Christ’s power for me today? This first sign by Jesus’ displayed his glory and resulted in the disciples believing in him (:11).



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 2:12-25

What in my life do I need to ask Jesus to drive out during this season of Grip so that “zeal for His house” might consume me (:14-17)? Jesus understands human nature and knows what is in each person’s heart(:25). How does this truth affect the openness and honesty of my prayers?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 3:1-21

Honestly, like ol’ Nic, what basic principle or truth of the Bible or my faith do I struggle to understand or apply to my heart? In Jesus there is no condemnation(:18). Are there areas of darkness in my life that I love more than the light [Jesus](:19)? Do I need to confess any area of darkness to my Grip partner?



What will I pass on? To whom?

Digging Deeper –The Big Picture

Yesterday we had a front row seat to Nicodemus' conversation with Jesus (John 3:1-21). That private conversation has become famous! Jesus introduces the concept of being "born again" in order to see the kingdom of God. And He speaks of the necessity of believing in God's Son, Jesus, to obtain eternal

life: *"For God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).



Jesus was always ready to engage individuals about the big picture of life. He has called us to this same "readiness". Every Christ follower needs a way to summarize the Gospel truths for his unbelieving friend. The Apostle Paul said the Gospel *"is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes"* (Rom 1:16). God is the One who effectually calls and regenerates a person to repent, believe, and follow after Him. Amazingly, He has sovereignly chosen to use us in this glorious and mysterious process.

If you already have a clear way to summarize the Gospel to your unbelieving friend, take 10 minutes now to rehearse your way. Then, sometime TODAY, practice your Gospel summary with 2 different people (spouse, child, GRIP partner, colleague, etc).

If you don't already have a way to summarize the Gospel, please watch our 6 minute video called "the Big Picture" which highlights John 3:16. (See our Focused Living YouTube channel.) Then, using the "Gospel Bills" on the net page, practice sharing this with 2 different people.

PRACTICE #1

Jesus said, 'For GOD so LOVED the WORLD, that He gave His only begotten SON, that whoever BELIEVES in Him shall not PERISH, but have eternal LIFE.' (John 3:16)

So where are you?

"But to as many as RECEIVED Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who BELIEVE in His name."
(John 1:12)

BELIEVE <i>by faith</i>	RECEIVE <i>by faith</i>
Jesus is God in the flesh.	Jesus as your Savior.
Jesus died on the Cross for your sin in your place.	Jesus as Lord of your life.
Jesus rose from the dead and is alive today to prove all this is true.	

www.FocusedLivingMinistries.com

PRACTICE #2

Jesus said, 'For GOD so LOVED the WORLD, that He gave His only begotten SON, that whoever BELIEVES in Him shall not PERISH, but have eternal LIFE.' (John 3:16)

So where are you?

"But to as many as RECEIVED Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who BELIEVE in His name."
(John 1:12)

BELIEVE <i>by faith</i>	RECEIVE <i>by faith</i>
Jesus is God in the flesh.	Jesus as your Savior.
Jesus died on the Cross for your sin in your place.	Jesus as Lord of your life.
Jesus rose from the dead and is alive today to prove all this is true.	

www.FocusedLivingMinistries.com

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 3:22-36

In verses 31-35, what distinguishes the Son of God from others? John rightly understood his relationship to Jesus and found joy in submitting to Jesus (:28-29). Am I ready to pray verse 30 every day and praise God for whatever the results might be?



What will I pass on? To whom?

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:

Personal Retreat

Overview

Your life assignment over these next 3 weeks is to have an extended time alone with God. The purpose is to slow down and listen to God. We call it a personal retreat. Find a quiet place in which you can be uninterrupted for at least 4 hours.

Adore God - 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.

Ponder your life - In the midst of this prayerful and “open-hearted” posture, bring your life before God. *“Here’s my life, Lord. Speak into it.”* The prophet Haggai told his people to *“consider their ways.”* That’s a good word for this contemporary culture made up of folks living their lives on auto pilot! We assist you in “considering your ways” by giving you a grid we call “the HAND”. As you ponder each finger of the **Key Relationship HAND**, ask The Lord, *“As I abide in You, what action can I pursue to better align myself with Your desire for this Key Relationship?”* Reflect also on your stewardship of each finger of the **Key Resources HAND**. *What action can I pursue to better align myself with Your desire for good stewardship?*

Identify Action Points - Take a first pass at identifying a few action points which you sense **God is impressing on your heart**. (Action Points are further described below.) These are actions that will help you move forward. Have this thought in your mind: *“My abiding in Jesus over the next 4 months will fuel my obedience toward these 3 Action Points...”*



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** 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. **DO** read the REFLECTION questions in advance (pages 50-68), highlighting only 2-3 questions under each finger that you sense you need to really grapple with during your retreat.
- **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

There is not one "right way" to have a personal retreat. Remember, your goal is to hear from God. A suggested agenda follows. You may end up changing the order, changing time allotments, or adding other elements. Look at it as an extended time with your best friend! The rest of the pages in this section are resources to assist you in thinking about each finger of your Key Relationships HAND and your Key Resource HAND.

Present Yourself 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



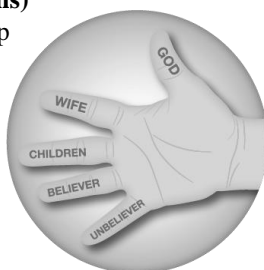
“Father, increase the sensitivity of my heart to hear Your Word and to obey Your will. May my life reflect what is important to Your heart and may I pursue the things that You value. Help me meditate on Your Word and pour out the desires of my heart in prayer. Grant me insight into what Action Points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

Evaluate Key Relationships (90 -120 mins)

For each of the 5 fingers on the Key Relationship Hand, you will see on the following pages:

- A series of Reflection questions. (Note: These reflection questions are also included in the grip.focusedliving.com WebApp under the “Hands” button.)
- Example Action Points that you might adopt or adapt



Prayer walk (45 mins)

Why not go for a walk and continue the conversation with Jesus? Try to be aware of any anxiety or worry or stress. Cast these cares on Him. Lift up each relationship and entrust that person into God’s hands.

Evaluate Key Resources (60 – 90 mins)

Remember, sometimes our intentions to prioritize our key relationships are short circuited because we are not managing our resources well. Where are you out of balance? How can you improve your stewardship of these God-given resources?



For each of the 5 fingers on the Key Resource Hand, you will see the following:

- A series of Reflection questions. (Note: These reflection questions are also included in the grip.focusedliving.com WebApp under the “Hands” button.)
- Example Action Points – There might be one of these that you would adopt or adapt.

Record Action Points (30 mins)

You will have had many ideas during the retreat. Which one or two ideas do you sense are **priorities given to you by God**? These are the action points you will be pursuing during this discipleship season. Record your action points in one place that is easily shareable with your GRIP partner. **The grip.focusedliving.com web app is designed for this purpose and can be helpful here.** It is SO MUCH EASIER to practice accountability with another brother when you have each other's action points in a concise form☺ Note that when using the **grip.focusedliving.com web app**, your HAND action points are automatically shared with your GRIP partner.

Note: At least 1 of your Key 3 action points should directly relate to reaching out to an unbelieving friend.

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 and 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. 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. He’s 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*

Specific – not fuzzy

Measurable – you know when you are done

Attainable – possible to do

Relevant - meaningful

Time Limited – can show progress between meetings

*Adapted from *The Coach Model*, by Keith Webb, 2012, p. 110.

RECORDING Action Points using the GRIP App

Our grip.focusedliving.com WebApp is specifically designed for you to record and share you 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.

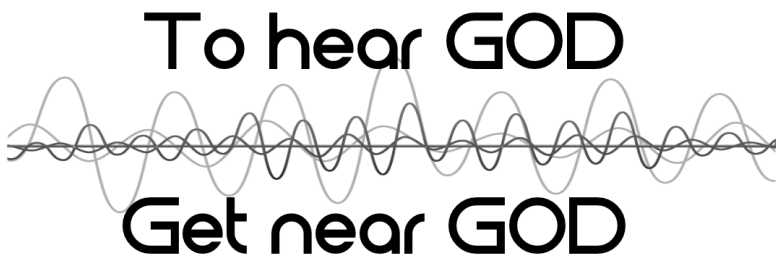
The App allows you to view your GRIP partner’s “Key 3” action points. So, when you pray for him or when you meet with him for accountability, open the app 😊

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.

Ready to Retreat?

Now that you have a sense of what a personal retreat might look like, it’s time for you to go for it! Again, you have freedom to customize your retreat so that it is most meaningful to you. The twenty pages that follow give you a way to think about your Key Relationships and your Key Resources, discussing them with the Lord and journaling some notes. Remember to read through the reflection questions for each “finger” **in advance** of your actual retreat and choose **just 1-2 questions** you sense you really need to reflect on during your retreat.



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*~

Key Relationship: God

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on your love relationship with your Father God. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord.



God's perspective -- Jesus and the Holy Spirit are interceding for me (Rom 8:26, 34) with the Father. As I picture myself eavesdropping on that intercession, what specifics do I hear (John 17:9-26)?



Gospel - Have I experienced the Gospel, or have I just been exposed to the Gospel? Have I dug deep into the treasure chest of the Gospel (Col 2:3,8,9; Eph 3:8)? Do I live life affected and motivated by His grace? (Eph 1:7,8a; 1Pet 3:18; 1John 4:10; 2Cor 5:21; Acts 13:38-39; Col 1:9-23; Rom 3:21-26)



Identity – Do I think of myself the way God thinks of me? (Col 2:10; 3:1-4; Eph 1:3-14; 3:8-10); Am I a Master's man surrendered to Christ, or a Moral man focused on my works and good deeds?



Repentance – Is my heart overwhelmed with His holiness (Luk 5:8; 18:9-14; Is 6:1-8) ? Do I go beyond just confessing sin and truly repent (Luk 19:5-9)? Is my heart soft toward God?




Character Transformation - When squeezed by adversity, does the fruit of the Spirit come out in my attitudes, words and actions (Gal 5:16-26; 1Cor 13:4-7)? What fruit is missing? Where is there a big gap between my outside persona and my inside reality and motivations (Mt 23; 2Tim 3:5)?




Disciplines - Is my attitude toward spiritual discipline one of duty or delight (Ps 63:1-8; 1Tim 4:7b-8)? Is my diet of God's Word the right one for me right now? Do I have a prayer life? Am I looking for answers to the prayers I pray? How do I spiritually prepare for each day (Mk 1:35; Ex 33:2)? When I finish my times alone with God, does God have a good grip on my heart (2Tim 1:12)?



Led by Spirit - Do I daily experience "keeping in step with the Spirit" (Gal 5:16-26)? How often do I think about God during the day?


 **Obedience** – Do I respond to God’s Word with a love-motivated obedience (Jn 14:15,21-24)? Am I committed to God’s will, God’s way (Dan 3:14-18)? What are some goals I have in my walk with God over the next six months?


 **Faith** – Do I trust God to come through for me? Am I experiencing His delivering grace? His sustaining grace (2Cor 12:7-10)? His empowering grace (Phil 4:13; Phil 2:13; Col 1:29)?


Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)

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

 Present myself to God in prayer for 3 minutes at the beginning of each day.

 Identify and memorize 6 Bible verses related to _____ that will provide God’s truth to combat the lies I find myself believing. Rehearse daily and when I am under attack.





Key Relationship: Family-Like / Wife

Reflection Reflection – Take some time to reflect on your close family relationship. (If married, reflect on your **relationship with your wife**.) Read through the following questions (with your wife, if possible☺). Together, highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, on your retreat, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord.



Self-Awareness - What's it like for this person to live on the other side of me? Does the current health of this relationship accurately reflect what I say that I truly value?



Character - Do I manifest the New Man qualities of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and love in this relationship? (Col 3:12-14; Eph 4:2-3,25-32; 1Pet 4:8; 1Cor 13:4-8)



Love - How am I regularly taking the initiative, acting sacrificially, and meeting the real needs in this person's life? (Eph 5:25; 1John 4:10; 1Pet 4:8). Am I a servant leader (Mk 10:42-45)? What sacrificial "deposits" do I need to make into my wife's emotional "bucket"? Am I loving my wife like Christ loved the Church? Do I tell her verbally and show her through actions (Eph 5:25)? Am I quick to honor my wife in public (1Pet 3:7)?



Spiritual leadership – How am I doing at leading my wife spiritually (Eph 5:23-30)? Do I pray with and for her consistently (Jam 5:16)? Am I passing on what God is showing me during my time alone with Him (Col 3:16)? How am I helping her come to, and grow in, Christ? (Eph 5:23-27; 1Pet 3:8)



Intimacy - 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 would I rate the physical, emotional, recreational intimacy in my marriage?



Communication - Am I creating the environment where safe, clear and meaningful communication can happen (Col 3:12-14,19)? Am I aware of and communicating in her love language (acts of service, gift giving, physical touch, quality time, words of affirmation)? When we have conflict, is my gut response to think, *"I've been sinned against(Mt 18:21ff)"* or is it *"I'm the foremost of sinners(1Tim 1:15)"*?



Core Issues - What problems are we currently experiencing?

What's the core of each of those problems? What would Jesus do?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



Daily pray for and/or with my wife.



Serve my wife daily by _____



Set aside and guard time each week for us to share and listen to each other's hearts.



Evaluate our relationship (i.e. go to counselor, marriage seminar, read book together) and implement two things I learn



Key Relationship: Family-Like / Kids

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on your close family relationship. (If a parent, reflect on your **relationship with your kids**.) Read through the following questions. Highlight 2-3 questions which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord.



Self-awareness - What's it like for this person to live on the other side of me?



Heart Connection – Do I have a mutual heart connection with this person? Am I a good listener? How often do I verbally express my love for, delight with, and pride in? How should I be praying for this relationship? (Mark 1:11; Ps 127; 2Cor 7:4,16)



Lead/Raise up – Do I have a 3-generation, 100-year vision for raising my kids (Ps 78:4-8; Acts 3:13)? Am I living my life in such a way as to recognize that my priorities, decisions, actions, words, attitudes and relationships are making an impact for generations to come? Where have I delegated to my wife, youth pastor, teacher or coach something about my children's growth for which I am primarily responsible? (Eph 6:4; Deut 6:1-9; Job 1:1-5; Mal 4:6; Prov 22:16)



Discipline – Do I communicate truth and grace as I discipline (John 1:14; Heb 12:6-11; Prov 13:24)? Do I recognize that *“rules without relationship lead to rebellion and resentment?”* Josh McDowell (Luke 15:25-32)



Spiritual training – Would my kids honestly say that I am the most godly man they know? Do I desire for my kids to have the life I have in Christ (Phil4:9; 1Cor 11:1; Heb 13:7)? Do I regularly pass on what God is showing me in a way that's meaningful to them (Col 3:16)? Is conversation about God a normal occurrence in my home (Deut 6:5-9)? What practical things must I do to help my kids make their faith their own? (Josh 24:15; Jud 2:10-14)



Character formation – 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) Do I really understand where my children are socially, emotionally and spiritually (Est 2:11)? Is there anything I have learned from my past or present life which I need to teach them (Ps 78:1-8)?

- ✎ **Skills** – Are there skills I need to pass on to my kids? (Manners, work ethic, staying sexually pure, finances, decision making, etc)

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)

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

- ✎ Find a way to enter my kids world in order to understand their thinking and their heart

- ✎ Write or update a personalized “legacy letter” to each of my children to be opened upon my death.



Key Relationship: Believing Man

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on your relationship with another Christian brother (i.e. your GRIP partner). Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord.

👉 **Benefits/Outcomes** – What positive outcomes have I experienced from past man-to-man relationships? What things would I like to repeat? What would I change? How might God change me as I invest in another man (Pr 27:17)? What would success look like after this season of investment? How am I doing at modeling “loving like Jesus loved”?

👉 **Qualities/Skills** – What qualities have I most appreciated about the people who have discipled/invested in me? In what areas do I need further equipping to be a successful disciple/mentor? Do I qualify as a FATR man (Faithful, Available, Teachable, Reproducible)? Where’s the evidence? (Phil 2:19-30; Col 4:12; 2Tim 1:16-18)

👉 **Priority** – In what tangible ways can I demonstrate my commitment to the spiritual success of my Christian brother? What will it cost me to make room in my life for this discipleship relationship (2Tim 3:10)? When I envision meeting with my brother on a regular basis, what impressions come to my mind? How does it make me feel to know I am a priority to someone else?

👉 **Possible Barriers** – What has kept me in the past from going ALL IN with a discipleship relationship? What fears or attitudes would keep me from being transparent with this man?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



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



Daily pray for my Christian brother's action points, that he would gain traction and momentum.










Take a prayer walk once a month for the next 5 months with my GRIP partner.



Key Relationship: Unbelieving Friend

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on **your relationship with the unbelieving friend** you'd most like to see come to Christ. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord.

-  **Testimony** – Does my life convey Jesus Christ as my supreme treasure (Col 1:17-18)? Is the Gospel fresh to my soul today, compelling me to share it with others?
-  **Person** – Who has God sovereignly 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)
-  **Priority** – How will I make room in my life to journey with this person? What will I say “no” to in order to say “yes” to this person?
-  **Life of Overflow** - Does my walk with God cause others to thirst after Him? Do I start each day aware that I am God's ambassador representing Him and asking, *“Who do You want to bless through me today”*?
-  **Verbal Witness** - Am I quick to give God credit for the things he has done in my life (Ps 66:16;)? What God stories have been written in my life recently? Am I articulate in sharing my testimony? With whom have I shared it recently?
-  **Barriers** - What has prevented me in the past from making evangelism a priority? What wrong thinking do I currently have about evangelism?
-  **Equipping** – As I consider the process of leading another person to Christ, where do I need help? (Prayer, Care, Share)?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



Identify my next step in walking my friend through the process of accepting or rejecting Christ. Then take THAT step! (i.e.

share testimony, explain Gospel, pray for, listen to, meet a need, have a shared experience, invite to a wired event, etc).



Regularly pray for my unbelieving friend's salvation.



Write out my testimony and practice sharing it with my GRIP partner. Then, share it with my friend who is not yet in Christ.



Key Resources: My Heart

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on the **stewardship of your heart**. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord. Does my careless stewardship in this area negatively impact one or more of the key relationships God has sovereignly given me?



Disposition - What words would I use to describe my heart?

Amazed, Angry, Annoyed, Anxious, Ashamed, Bitter, Bored, Comfortable, Confused, Content, Depressed, Determined, Disdained, Disgusted, Eager, Embarrassed, Energetic, Envious,	Excited, Foolish, Frustrated, Furious, Grieving, happy, Hopeful, Hurt, Inadequate, Insecure, Inspired, Irritated, Jealous, Joyful, Lonely, Lost, Loving, Miserable, Motivated, Overwhelmed	Peaceful, Proud, Relieved, Resentful, Sad Satisfied, Scared, Self- conscious, Shocked, Silly, Stupid, Suspicious, Tense, Terrified, Trapped, Uncomfortable, Unstable, Worried, Worthless
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Motives - Am I going through the motions when it comes to my spiritual life (Rev 3:1)? Am I offering my whole self fully to God (Ps 63:1-8)? Do I care more about what others think than living with God as my Audience of One (Gal 1:10)? Am I tempted to make myself look better than I really am (2Tim 3:5)? Do I overwork because I feel disqualified due to past sin (Col 1:12-14)?



Blind Spots – All of us have blind spots. Am I willing to let the Spirit of God and others close to me help me see what I am not currently seeing? (Ps 139:23-24; Prov 27:6)



Sin/Temptation – Am I tending my heart like a garden? What weeds are there that don't belong? Have I actively avoided opportunities that tempt me (Matt 5:29-30; 2Tim 2:22; Gen 39:7-12)? Have I exposed myself to illicit material, people, thoughts? Have I succumbed in any way to pornography or any other sexual immorality (1Cor 6:15-20; Heb 13:4)? Do I experience the desire to be holy and pure? Have I allowed any good thing to become an idol in my life? Where am I giving satan a foothold (Eph 4:27).

- ✎ **Stress** – What, if anything is stressing me out right now? What saps my energy? Do I find myself sighing a lot? Am I trusting God’s sovereign provision and protection for my life (Mat 6:25-34; Hab 3:17-19; Ps 145)? Do I cast my cares on God and experience His peace? (Phil 4:6-7; 1Pet 5:8)
- ✎ **Disappointment** – Am I discouraged because I have not yet accomplished a certain goal or achieved a long held dream. Have I entrusted my ambitions to God?
- ✎ **Hurts** – Am I aware of a root of bitterness from past hurts growing in my heart (Heb 12:15)? Do I have self-protective tendencies that prevent me from truly giving myself to others?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)

- ✎ **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.**
- ✎ Seek the help of a Christian counselor to process past wounds or current besetting sin habits.
- ✎ Once a day, get in touch with my heart by taking a short walk and name my worries, concerns, frustrations, roots of bitterness, etc in God’s presence.



Key Resources: My Time

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on the **stewardship of your time**. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord. Does my careless stewardship in this area negatively impact one or more of the key relationships God has sovereignly given me?

✎ **Calendar** – Does my calendar reflect what I say I value? Where do I see relationships on my calendar? Do I expect too much from my weekends? 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)

✎ **Priorities** – When filling our life, we must put the important “big rocks” in the bucket before adding the less important “little rocks, gravel, and sand.” What “big rocks” are being neglected because my life is filled with the lesser priorities of gravel and sand? Where do I need to say “no” in order to say “yes” to the best?

✎ **Season of Life** – 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?

✎ **Margin** – Marginless living is satan’s victory. Does God get a busy signal when He calls me? Do I feel guilty when I relax? Do I enjoy unscheduled “moments” in my day?

✎ **Sabbath** – 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)

✎ **Interruptions** – When interruptions occur, do I view them as blocked goals or providential tests (Gen 22:11-12; Mark 10:13-16; 46-52)? Can I smile at them, or am I irritated and resentful?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



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)



Fill out a “Week at a Glance” form and see if what I say I value really shows up on my schedule each week. Make adjustments.





For every new opportunity that comes my way in the next 6 months, say “NO” to something before saying “YES” to the new opportunity.





Key Resources: My Health


Reflection – Take some time to reflect on the **stewardship of your health**. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord. Does my careless stewardship in this area negatively impact one or more of the key relationships God has sovereignly given me?


 **Physical** – In what ways does my physical health limit my energetic investment in relationships? Do my overall habits point to a healthy future?


 **Emotional** – Do I frequently describe myself with words like “exhausted” “overwhelmed” or “depleted”? Am I a delight to be around? What activities sooth my soul? What activities energize me? When asked “How’s it going?” do I respond with a negative tone or positively?

 **Mental** – What “noise” keeps me from hearing the Lord and others? Do I set aside time to think clearly? Do I set my mind on the things of the Lord or am I distracted by the world? (Ps 73:16,17; Phil 4:10; Col 3:1-4)

 **Social** – What current relationships are bucket-filling for me? Which ones drain me? (families, couples, individuals)

 **Diet** – On a scale of 1 to 10, how is my nutrition? (Krispy Kream vs. organic garden). What one change to my diet must I make?

 **Exercise** - Am I exercising at least 3X per week for 30 minutes? Has working out and building my body become an idol?

 **Rest** – What would need to change for me to sleep 8 hours each night? Do I feel guilty when I relax?

Journal your insights and convictions below:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



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; schedule a physical; etc)



Identify a “bucket-filling” activity for my mental and emotional health and establish this in my calendar.



Key Resources: My Wealth

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on the **stewardship of your wealth**. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord. Does my careless stewardship in this area negatively impact one or more of the key relationships God has sovereignly given me?

👉 **Money** – Do I joyfully live within my means? In what ways do I find my security in money? Am I content with God's provision? (Phil 4:10-19; 1Tim 6:6-19)

👉 **Material Stuff** – What evidence is there that my stuff owns me? How much energy do I expend taking care of or organizing my stuff? Do I hold onto the things of this world lightly or tightly (1Cor 7:29-31,35)?

👉 **Save** – What is my plan for saving for the future and for unexpected expenses? Is it working?

👉 **Tithe** – Do I live generously toward God and others (Prov 3:9; 21:26; Lk 12:21)? Am I tithing faithfully to God? How can I improve my discipline of giving?

👉 **Budget** – Do I have, (and live by), a budget? What is my plan for getting out from under the weight of debt? Are my spouse and I on the same page when it comes to the family budget, saving, and giving?

👉 **Clutter** – Where is physical clutter currently complicating my family's life? What can I give away?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



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; be deliberate about getting out of debt; unclutter my house and give things away; etc)



Sign up and faithfully attend a Financial course (i.e. Dave Ramsey)



Significantly increase my monthly financial support to a missionary I already support or support a new missionary.



Key Resources: My Vocation

Reflection – Take some time to reflect on the **stewardship of your vocation**. Read through the following questions. Highlight **2-3 questions** which your heart is longing to answer. Now, reread only those 2-3 questions and quietly let the Spirit search your heart (Ps 139:23-24). Consider what the Spirit exposes and be honest before your Lord. Does my careless stewardship in this area negatively impact one or more of the key relationships God has sovereignly given me?



Job/Vocation - Do I have a job? Is it a good fit? Am I using my gifts and talents? If I have low job satisfaction, what do I attribute this to? How is God sanctifying me through my job? Do I understand that being satisfied with God will help me to be satisfied with my job?



Gifting – What things come easily and naturally for me? What am I really good at? 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) ? Am I operating within my God-given SHAPE?

S = Spiritual gifts

H = Heart / passions

A = Abilities

P = Personality

E = Experience



Ministry – Do I see my job as a way to glorify God with my excellence (Col 3:17,23-24)? Do the people at my work gravitate toward me or away from me (2Cor 2:14-16)?



Serving – Am I using my spiritual gifts and calling during this season? Am I doing a few things well, or am I overcommitted and operating in the flesh? How is my servant attitude? Would others classify me as “part of the problem” or “part of the solution”? Is God my audience of One? (Ps 100:2; Mk 10:45)



Volunteering - Am I involved in my community so I can spread the aroma of Christ (2Cor 2:14-16)? Wherever I volunteer, am I dependable and reliable?



Retirement – What’s my plan for transitioning from my main career? Have I sought God’s input? Have I written down my definition of what it looks like for me to finish this life well?

Journal your insights and convictions:

Father, in light of this time together, I sense Your hands are gripping my heart to live out the following action point(s) in the power of the Holy Spirit.

(Create your own or adapt one of these)



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: _____



As I seek to glorify God with excellence in my work, I will improve my current skills by _____ (i.e. seeking a mentor in my company or industry; taking a course; reading a book; etc)



I know that I am blessed to be a blessing. Over the next four months, I want to bless my work colleagues by _____



Retreat Notes

Retreat Notes

Retreat Notes

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Key Relationship: God

Ex 33:7-34:8

What can I learn about a relationship with God by observing how Moses and God interact? What would God have me change in my approach to Him?



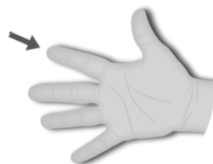
In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 50**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Key Relationship: Family / Family-Like

Eph 4:1-3; 25-32

This passage describes some awesome qualities that come out when Jesus lives unhindered in me. Which qualities in me are my close family relationships benefitting from? Where specifically is my family being short-changed because of a deficit of these qualities?



In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 52**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

Week 1 Date: _____

Section 2

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Key Relationship: Family / Family-Like

Psalm 78:1-8

What is my life message that I would pass on to my kids and grandkids? When the next generation asks, “Why should we put our confidence in God?” what will I say?



In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 54**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Key Relationship: Believing Man

1Thes 2:5-12

What actions and attitudes characterized Paul’s investment in the Thessalonians?

Four months from now, my GRIP partner may describe my investment in his life. What do I hope he says?



In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 56**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Key Relationship: Unbelieving Friend

Col 4:2-6

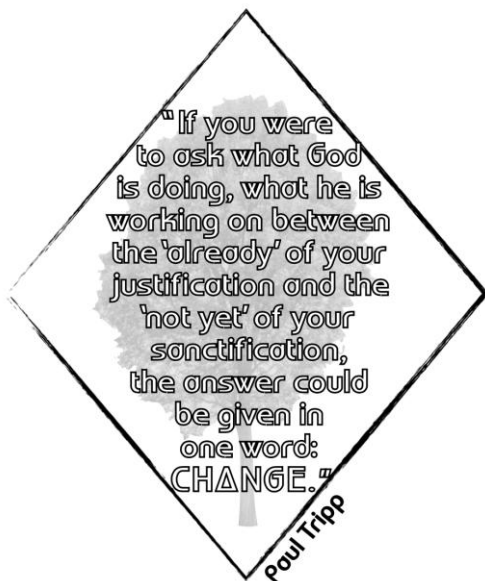
Where do I see the pattern of prayer, care, share in this passage? Describe Paul's tone as he writes to the Colossians. Who opens the doors for outreach opportunities?



In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 58**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

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 63

Jesus said, “for where you treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt 6:21). What is my treasure in this season of my life? Where does My heart/soul find its deepest satisfaction?

In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 60**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“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?



Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

Have I ever considered that God has given me my time to manage well for His glory? As His manager, what update report would I give Him?

In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 62**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Key Resources: My Health

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. 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?



1Cor 6:12-20

Have I ever considered that God has given me my body to manage well for His glory? As His manager, what update report would I give Him?

In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 64**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“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?



Luke 16:1-15

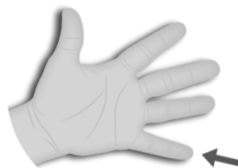
Does the current management of my wealth and my material possessions promote or hinder my key relationships? How?

In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 66**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

“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?

Ex 31:1-6; Col 3:22-25; 1Pet 4:7-11

Am I prepared this week to give an accounting for the quality and effectiveness of my work? What’s the biggest headache related to my work? What’s the biggest blessing?

In preparation for your personal retreat, spend three minutes scanning the questions on **page 68**. Then, circle **2 questions** which really capture your attention that you will reflect on during your retreat.

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?



Back in the 1920s automaker Henry Ford asked electrical genius Charlie Steinmetz to build the generators for his factory. One day the generators ground to a halt, and the repairmen couldn't find the problem. So Ford called Steinmetz, who tinkered with the machines for a few minutes and then threw the switch causing the huge generators to whir back to life. The next day Ford got a bill for \$10,000 from Steinmetz, which was a large sum of

money in those days for a few minutes of work. Flabbergasted, the tightfisted car maker inquired why the bill was so high. Steinmetz's sent him a detailed invoice... *"\$10 for tinkering with the generators and \$9,990 for knowing where to tinker."* Henry Ford paid the bill.

On what Key Resources is God leading me to "tinker" this Spring?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 4:1-26

What can I learn about the grace of God knowing that Nicodemus (chap 3) couldn't be good enough to get into heaven and the woman at the well (chap 4) couldn't be bad enough to be kept out of heaven? Can I identify “wells” in my life that I keep going to but always leave me thirsty, empty, and unsatisfied (:13-14)?

Who do I know that is enslaved by or weighed down by social stigma (half breed Samaritan :4-5), broken relationships (:17-18), isolation (drew water at noon as ostracized by other women :6), and no real future, who desperately needs Christ?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 4:27-42

Jesus found his life and sustenance in doing the will of the Father (:34). Do I view God’s call and mission for my life with the same priority? “The fields are white for harvest” (:35). Note the progression of this woman’s relationship with Jesus from Jew (9), “sir” (11), prophet (19), Messiah (29) to Savior (42). Where in this process is my unbelieving friend?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 4:43-54

The Galileans welcomed Jesus because of all the signs he had done (:45). And Jesus accused them of only believing in him because of the signs and wonders he did (:48). What motivates me to welcome and follow Jesus? Do I just want his presents, (signs and wonders) or do I simply want his presence? “The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way” (:50). Where am I having a hard time believing the ‘word’ that God is speaking to me? How might God be testing my faith in this season of life?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Today you get to choose how to spend your time alone with God. Here are some ideas:

- **Go for a prayer walk**
- **Go back and finish a past journaling day**
- **Reflect on John 1-4**
- **Meditate on one verse**
- **Prepare for your retreat (if it is still upcoming)**



Whatever you choose, allow God to grip your heart for the day☺

Digging Deeper: 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 you prioritize over the next 4 months to help you move forward in your life? What’s at stake (i.e. in your relationship it God, your family, your heart, etc) if you don’t follow-through on this?

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 your 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:

JESUS IS THE...

Bread of life so that **bakers** can understand. (John 6:35)

Water of life so that **plumbers** can understand. (John 7:37-38)

Light of the world so that **electricians** can understand. (John 8:12)

Cornerstone so that **architects** can understand. (Psalm 118:22)

Morning Star so that **astronomers** can understand. (Rev 22:16)

Mediator so that **referees** can understand. (1 Tim 2:5)

Rock so that the **insecure** can understand. (1 Cor 10:4)

Creator so that **inventors** can understand. (John 1:3)

Deliverer so that **obstetricians** can understand. (Rom 11:26)

Hidden treasure so that **bankers** can understand. (Mt 13:44)

Life so that **biologists** can understand. (John 14:6)

Advocate so that **lawyers** can understand. (1 John 2:1)

Almighty so that **the prideful** can understand. (Rev 1:8)

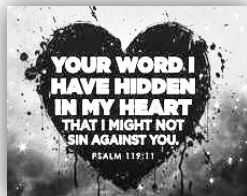
Arm of the Lord so that **athletes** can understand. (Is 53:1)

Only potentate so that **dictators** can understand. (1 Tim 6:15)

By J.John

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Scripture Memory: Look up the following verse(s) 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.



John 5:24

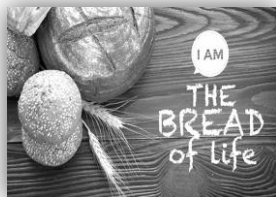
Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 5:1-18

“Do you want to be healed”(:6)? What in my life is keeping me spiritually ‘paralyzed?’ What do I need to do to be healed (:14)? Who do I know who is ‘paralyzed’ spiritually and not moving towards Christ? How might I help them break through their paralysis? Stop and pray for this now.

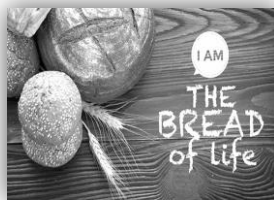


What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 5:19-47

Jesus says he can do nothing of his own accord apart from the Father (:19-20). Where am I trying to hold on to control and do things my way, rather than surrender to the Father and his will for me? Jesus accuses the Jews of not having God’s word abiding in them (:38), refusing to come to him for life (:40), not having the love of God within them (:42), and seeking personal glory rather than God’s glory (:44). Can I identify any hindrances like these in my own life that are keeping me from following Jesus more closely?



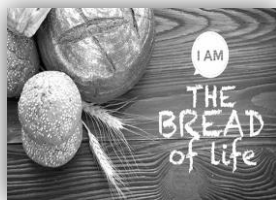
Bonus: View “Law Evangelism – Ray Comfort” on the FLM YouTube channel under GRIP 2020. (Using the 10 commandments, evangelist Ray Comfort helps people on the street see that they are sinners deserving eternal separation from God and that they are in need of a Savior).

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 6:1-21

If you do the math, each of the disciples came back to Jesus about 100 times with an empty basket in order to feed the people. Where do I feel like I'm 'empty' and need to come to Christ over and over again? What is Jesus revealing about his power in these passages? How does that affect my faith? Where do I need to trust more fully in God's power and ability in my life?

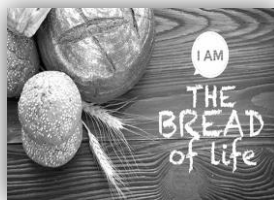


What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 6:22-40

Do I spend more time/energy/resources working for things that will perish? Or for things of eternal value (:27)? Am I working hard to do things for God, or am I resting in my relationship with Jesus in love and trust (:28-29)? The people thought their greatest need was bread (:34) but Jesus wanted them to fix their eyes on spiritual realities and their greatest need, which was Him (:35).



What will I pass on? To whom?

Week 1 GRIP Growth summary

Section 3



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 6:41-71

How do these verses motivate me to step forth in faith and compassion to share the Gospel leaving the results to God (:37,44,65)? How is my spiritual diet? Starving? Well fed (:51-61)?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 7:1-29

Jesus was being judged because...

- *He lacked a seminary degree (:15)*
- *He was considered crazy (:20)*
- *He was a local boy (:27)*

*How often do I judge others
inappropriately? (:24)*



Bonus: View “Wonderfully Made – Lizzy Velasquez” on the FLM YouTube channel under GRIP 2020.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 7:30-53

Jesus invites His listeners who are tired of religion yet thirsty for spiritual realities to come and drink deeply of fellowship with Him so that they can overflow. What overflow is Jesus expecting of me? How would I honestly describe the overflow of my life?

- *Raging River refreshing others?*
- *Stagnant pond with little overflow?*
- *Dusty dry puddle with not much coming in or going out?*



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 8:1-11

Religion says, “Go try not to sin and I won’t condemn you.” Christ says, “I don’t condemn you, now go and sin no more.” Order is everything when it comes to a grace-motivated obedience. Have I recently being tripped up in my sin? If so, have I reversed God’s order and lost focus on the Cross?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 8:12-30

Am I walking in any darkness that I need to confess and ask Jesus to shine the light of life onto? Is the light of Jesus' life in me shining as a witness to those around me? What testimony of Jesus working in my life can I share with someone today?



What will I pass on? To whom?

Week 2 GRIP Growth summary

Section 3



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 8:31-59

What action identifies a disciple (:31-32)? Am I truly abiding in God’s word and living in freedom? Can I identify two examples of sin “enslaving” me in the past month? What truth from my reading in John has “freed” me?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 9:1-12

The blind man's suffering had purpose - To bring glory to God (:3). What is my perspective of the hard things I am going through right now? Do I seek to bring glory to God through the good AND the bad?



Bonus: View “Jimmy Hill Testimony” on the FLM YouTube channel under GRIP 2020 to hear the story of a man whose spiritual eyes were opened late in life.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 9:13-41

The blind man elicited a variety of responses from those who engaged him. Notice the different concerns of the disciples, neighbors, Pharisees, his parents, and Jesus. What was Jesus’ greatest concern for the blind man (:35-41)? What is my main concern for my ‘pinky finger guy’ ?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 10:1-21

The sheep hear the shepherd's voice and follow him (:3-4) . Am I hearing the voice of God during this season of Grip? Where is God calling me to follow? (i.e., action points) Am I listening? Am I following?



What will I pass on? To whom?

- What reward motivated the dogs? What reward motivates you?
- How did two dogs shepherd differently? Did the Master expect them to shepherd the same?
- They are ‘bred’ (think DNA) to herd. What has the Lord bred into you as a leader who follows Him?

Spend some moments praying for your GRIP partner(s) and your GRIP Team.

GRIP Gathering Preparation Section 3



Word Highlights - From 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

JESUS IS THE...

Wonderful counselor so the troubled can understand. (Is 9:6)

Author of our faith so librarians can understand. (Heb 5:9; 12:2)

Beloved Son so that parents can understand. (Matt 12:18; John 1:18)

Lion of Judah so that zoo keepers can understand. (Rev 5:5)

Good Shepherd so that ranchers can understand. (John 10:11)

High Priest so that pastors can understand. (Heb 4:14)

Holy One of Israel so that Jews can understand. (Lk 2:25; Is 41:14)

Great physician so that doctors can understand. (Mk 2:9-11,17)

Good teacher so that educators can understand. (John 3:2; Lk 18:18)

Lilly of valley and Rose of Sharon so that florists can understand. (SoS 2:1)

Rock of ages so that geologists can understand. (Is 26:4)

True vine so that wine connoisseurs can understand. (John 15:1,5)

Word so that actors can understand. (John 1:1)

Door so that those on the outside can understand. (John 10:7)

Way so that those who are lost can understand (John 14:6)

Resurrection so funeral directors can understand. (John 11:25)

by J. John

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 10:22-42

Jesus had clearly told the Jews who he was, but they still didn't believe (:25-26). When did I first really believe? Am I convinced that my standing with God can never be lost or taken away (:28-28)?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 11:1-16

Jesus points out that Lazarus' illness is for the glory of God so the Son of God may be glorified through it (:4). Can I identify any illness, or sufferings, or struggles that God is wanting to use in my life to bring Him glory? Am I receiving them as such, or am I resisting the work that God is wanting to do?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 11:17-44

Jesus waited to visit Lazarus and it seemed like he was too late (:17, 32). But Jesus had a plan and his timing was for a purpose. Where am I questioning God’s timing in my life? What does this last sign of Jesus reveal about Him?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 11:45-57

Some Jews responded to Jesus’ miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead by believing in him. Others responded out of fear for their own livelihood and wanted him dead. What is my response to this miraculous sign? How does it impact me personally? My faith? My trust? My hope?



What will I pass on? To whom?

Digging Deeper – One Size Fit All?

Would you buy shoes from a store whose sales philosophy was “one size fits all”? Absolutely not! You would buy from someone who measured your foot size and listened carefully to understand how you plan on using these shoes in order to provide comfortable, custom-fitted shoes.



In the same way, your unbelieving friend needs someone like yourself who will care enough to thoughtfully consider the “size” of their spiritual understanding, their most pressing needs, and their current life situation. Then a custom-fitted explanation of the Gospel can be presented in a manner to which they can relate.

Over and over in these past 11 chapters of John’s Gospel, we have witnessed one-on-one conversations that Jesus had.

Andrew (1:39-41), Simon (1:42), Philip (1:43), Nathaniel (1:47-51), Nicodemus (3:1-17), Samaritan woman (4:1-42), paralyzed man (5:1-14), adulterous woman (8:1-11), blind man (9:1-41), Martha (11:18-28)

Care
enough to
customize.

Examine how Jesus modeled personal evangelism. You will notice that, without watering down the Gospel, He customized His words to fit the person to whom He was speaking. He did not squeeze all the people He was trying to reach into a single type of presentation, approach or method. Instead, He

took into consideration their religious background, gender, past life-style baggage, current life situation, cultural perspectives, spiritual maturity, attitudes, misconceptions and personal needs.

For example, to a spiritually confused religious leader named Nic who didn’t understand the big picture, Jesus brought him back to the basics and stressed his need to “*be born again*” (John 3:1-17).

To a lonely, immoral, guilt-ridden, socially ostracized woman seeking to quench the thirst in her soul, He offered living water and the hope that “*whoever drinks of this water will never thirst again*” (John 4:1-26).

To a blind man whose heart had been softened by God’s gracious healing, Jesus simply asked, “*Do you believe in the Son of man?*” (John 9:1-41).

To a grieving woman at the funeral, of her brother, Jesus gave eternal hope by assuring her that He was indeed *“the resurrection and the life”* (John 11:1-45)!

Expanding our observations beyond John’s Gospel we see that ...

To a hard-hearted Pharisee named Paul, He personally announces this fact: *“I am Jesus whom you are persecuting”* (Acts 9:5).

To a successful businessman who was seeking for significance beyond his “stuff,” Jesus invested an entire afternoon chatting about the hole in his soul. Afterward, He announced that *“salvation has come to the house of Zaccheus”* (Luke 19:1-10).

To a self-righteous lawyer who was more interested in justifying his lifestyle than loving God, Jesus exposed the true motives of his hard heart by confronting him with the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

To a rich young ruler who knew just enough of the Bible to be inoculated to its truth, Jesus issued a sharp challenge that cut through all the religiosity and exposed a money-worshipping heart (Luke 18:18-25).

In these last examples from Luke 10 and Luke 18, both the lawyer and the ruler approached Jesus with the exact same question: *“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”* If ever there was a situation for Jesus to pull out a one-answer-fits-all Gospel summary, this was it! After all, the same question demands the same stock answer, right? Wrong! Jesus responded to each man differently as He took into account his spiritual understanding and the condition of his heart. He used whatever combination of direct challenge, everyday illustration or probing question He perceived they needed to understand at the time. He took into consideration each person’s life situation, cultural background, gender, pressing needs, present mindset, personality and depth of spiritual understanding. In all these encounters, did you notice how Jesus customized the conversation? Did you note that in each case there was a dialogue rather than a monologue?

Evangelism is a dialogue, not a monologue.

Picture my unbelieving friend. Where do I sense my friend stands spiritually?

How can I customize my outreach efforts towards my friend? What do I need to do more of? Less of?

In the next 2 weeks here is what I purpose to say and do as I walk my friend through the process of receiving or rejecting Christ.



Week 1 GRIP Growth summary

Section 4



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



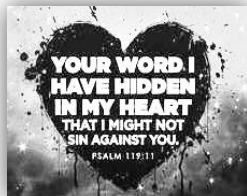
Action Point Progress – Over these past weeks I followed through on the following actions which God put on my heart to prioritize.



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Scripture Memory: Look up the following verse(s) 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.



John 12:24-25

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 12:1-19

Judas’ reaction to Mary revealed a lot about his character (:5-6). What have my attitudes and actions these past few weeks revealed about my character? What I value? How does it bolster your faith to know that Jesus fulfilled hundreds of messianic prophecies (12:15).



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 12:20-33

Jesus teaches that in order to produce fruit a seed must die (:24-26). In order for a disciple to produce spiritual fruit (Gal 5:22-23) he must die. To die is to become unresponsive to what I want in order to become very responsive to what God says and what others need. How would I describe my current responsiveness to what God has been telling me? How about my responsiveness to what others around me truly need?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 12:34-50

Are there any areas in my life where I have hardened my heart and need to turn to Jesus for healing (:40)? Where in my life do I love the praise of men rather than the praise of God (:43)?



What will I pass on? To whom?

Good Friday

“It was the third hour (9:00am) when they crucified Him...darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour (3:00pm) ...

Jesus, crying out with a loud

voice, said, ‘Father, into Your hands I commit

My spirit.’ Having said this, He breathed His

last.” (Mark 15:25; Luke 23:44-46). On this

Good Friday take some unhurried time to reflect on Jesus’ last seven cries before laying down His life for

your sin. It may be especially meaningful to find a

block of time between 9AM and 3PM coinciding with the time Jesus hung on the Cross for your sin.



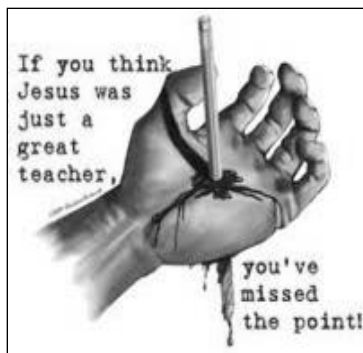
1. “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:33-38) Do you understand the degree of total and complete forgiveness your Creator God is extending to you through His Son? And do you understand the depth of your depravity and sin in that you have committed high treason against His holy character? (Romans 7:15-8:2; Psalm 103:8-13; Ephesians 1:3-14; I John 1:8-9)

2. “Today you shall be with Me in paradise.” (Luke 23:39-43) Is your hope for eternal life based fully on the completed work of what Christ did at the Cross? Where are you trying to add to His sacrifice through your good works, achievements or merits? In what way can you identify with these criminals? If you were to die tonight are you absolutely certain you would be with Christ for eternity? Why? Are you (Romans 5:1-11; Galatians 2:16-21)

3. “Woman, behold, your son!” (John 19:25-27) Even while writhing in pain on the cross as the Father turned His back on His Son, Jesus did not think about Himself but makes sure that John will take care of His mother! Where in particular is there selfishness in your life which needs to be placed before our selfless Christ at the foot of the Cross? In the name of Christ who in particular do you need to care for during this Easter season? When? Where? How? How much? (Philippians 2:3-10)

4. “My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:33-37; Matthew 27:45-50) Even as Jesus quoted these words from Psalm 22:1, the Father turned His back on His Son, causing Him to die in your place for your sin. As our sinless, holy Christ literally became sin, the Father forsook Him so that He would never forsake you! (II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20; Joshua 1:3-9)

5. “I am thirsty.” (John 19:28-29) Jesus was fully God, but He was also fully man so that He could fully identify with pain and temptation but without committing sin (Heb 4:15). How thirsty are you to become more like Christ? For what other things, relationships or experiences do you hunger/thirst for more than God Himself? (Matt 5:6; Gal 2:20)



6. “It is finished!” (John 19:28-30) This word “tetelestai” literally means ‘paid in full’ and was the word written at the bottom of a deed or sales receipt at the local Wal-Mart during Jesus’ day. From the Cross, Jesus was proclaiming “the debt of your sin has now been paid in full with My life! I will die so you can live before God without a debt of sin hanging over your head!” How will you respond with your life to this reality? (Romans 8:1-2, 31-39; Galatians 2:20)

7. “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” (Luke 23:46) How specifically will you respond to His commitment to you as Savior by obeying Him as your Lord? (John 20:26-29)

Week 2 GRIP Growth summary

Section 4



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

* We recommend re-reading the intro to John on page 27 and viewing part 2 of the Bible Project book summary of John on the FLM YouTube channel under GRIP 2020.

John 13:1-20

Jesus sets for us an incredible example of humility and servanthood. Who is God calling me to serve with humility and selflessness during this season of my life? Is there anyone in my life that I feel and act superior towards? How can I serve that person? Have I experienced the principle of :17?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 13:21-38

Is my love for others reflecting the love that Jesus has shown me (:34)? What can I do today to show love to one of my key relationships? (Wife, kids, brother in Christ, unbeliever)



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 14:1-17

“Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father” (:9). Based on all I’ve read so far in John, what has Jesus revealed to me about the Father? According to verse 12-13 what expectation does Jesus have for my life as I abide Him(John 15:5 . How have I seen God’s power at work in my life during this season of Grip?



Bonus: View worship music video by Pat Barret “I am the Way, Truth Life” on the Focused Living YouTube channel under the GRIP 2020 playlist.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 14:18-31

*Six times Jesus described the very best way to show true love for Him and the Father! (:15, 21, 23, 24, 31, & 15:10) **OBEDIENCE**. How am I honestly doing when it comes to obeying God, especially as it applies to my Action Points?*



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 15:1-17

Where do I sense God is pruning me so that I can bear more fruit (:2)? Where have I been trying to accomplish things in my own strength and failed (:5)?

What is Jesus’ true and primary desire for me obeying His commands (:11)?

Am I experiencing joy in this season of Grip? Why/why not?

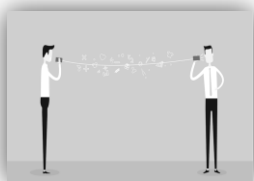


What will I pass on? To whom?

GRIP Gathering Preparation **Section 4**



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

JESUS IS THE...

Alpha and omega so that scientists can understand. (Rev 1:8, 17)

King of kings so that royalty can understand. (1 Tim 6:15)

Branch so that horticulturalists can understand. (Is 4:2)

Bread of Life so that the hungry can understand. (John 6:32)

Second Adam so that living souls can understand. (1 Cor 15:45)

Truth so that politicians can understand. (John 14:6)

Pearl of great price so that jewelers can understand. (Mt 13:46)

Righteous One so that judges can understand. (Acts 3:14; 7:52)

Wisdom so that philosophers can understand. (1 Cor 1:30)

Lamb of God so that sinners can understand. (John 1:29; Rev 13:8)

Head of the Church so denominations can understand. (Col 1:18)

Man of Sorrows so that the afflicted can understand. (Is 53:3)

Great I AM so that YOU can understand! (John 8:24,58)

By J.John

Digging Deeper – I Am’s

As we have already seen, the key question for any reader of John’s gospel is, *Who is this Jesus and how will I respond to Him?* Though veiled to those who are unbelieving, Jesus’ identity was very clear. Two times (John 8:58; 18:5-8) Jesus declared Himself to be “I am”,



hearkening back to God’s revelation of Himself as “I Am” to Moses (Ex 3:14). In other words, He was clearly claiming to be God! And His original audience understood this claim as is evident by their drastic responses. In 8:59 the religious leaders rushed to stone Him for blasphemy and in 18:6 Jesus’ captors all fell to the ground in fear!

John records 7 other “I am” statements that Jesus made about Himself, which we have listed below. Take some moments to review all of these statements and then journal your response.

I Am...

the **bread of life**.” (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51) [Sustainer] As bread sustains physical life, so Christ sustains our spiritual life.

the **light of the world**.” (John 8:12) [Illuminator] To a world lost in darkness, Christ offers Himself as a guide.

the **door of the sheep**.” (John 10:7,9) [Mediator & Protector] Jesus gives access to salvation. *“Those who come in through me will be saved.”*

the **good shepherd**.” (John 10:11, 14) [Caretaker] Jesus is committed to caring and watching over those who are His.

the **resurrection and the life**.” (John 11:25) [Life-giver] Death is not the final word for those in Christ!

I am...

the **way, the truth, and the life.**” (John 14:6) [Final Reality], Because Jesus is the final reality, relationship with the Creator God and Father only comes via Jesus.

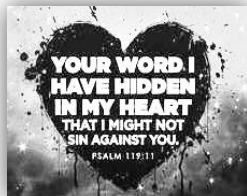
the **true vine.**” (John 15:1, 5) [Source of Fruit] By attaching ourselves to Christ, we enable His life to flow in and through us. Then we cannot help but bear fruit that will honor the Father.

Which “I Am” most draws your heart to Christ today?

Which do you think your unbelieving friend/family member most needs to hear? Why?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

Scripture Memory: Look up the following verse(s) 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.



John 17:3

This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 15:18-16:6

Jesus has chosen me out of the world (:19). What then can I expect from the world (:19-20)? Though many Christians in America have never felt the massive persecution experienced by millions of God’s people around the globe, how does Jesus explain the intense hatred of the world towards His men (:21)? How does the presence of the Holy Spirit stabilize my life against the world’s hatred?



Bonus: View “Helen Berhane - Persecuted Church” video on the FLM YouTube channel under the GRIP 2020 playlist.

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 16:7-33

Of what specifically has the Spirit of God most convicted me of this Grip season (:8)? How have I responded by bringing my life into conformity with His desires? Or have I not responded? Where can I find real peace in this crazy world (:33)?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 17:1-26

For what does Jesus pray four times? (:11, 21, 22, 23) What specifically am I doing in my church among God’s people to promote this? In what ways do I work against this? What is the main motivator for unity among believers? (:22-23)



Bonus: View “Francis Chan – Unity” on the FLM YouTube channel under the GRIP 2020 playlist.

What will I pass on? To whom?

Week 1 GRIP Growth summary

Section 5



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?



The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. He prayed feverishly for God to rescue him, and every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming. Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect himself from the elements, and to store his few possessions. But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened – everything was lost. He was stunned with grief and anger. “God, how could You do this to me?” he cried. Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had come to rescue him. How did you know I was here?” asked the weary man of his rescuers. “We saw your smoke signal,” they replied.

It’s easy to get discouraged sometimes when things appear to be going badly. But we shouldn’t lose heart, because God is at work in our lives, even in the midst of pain and suffering. Remember, next time your little hut is burning to the ground, it just may be a smoke signal that summons the grace of God. *“When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him.” ~God, Psalm 91:15 (ESV).* When your hut is on fire and you are facing disappointment and discouragement – look around you because God’s grace and love are on the way to rescue you.

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 18:1-27

Describe Jesus’ attitude as Judas and the soldiers come. What indicates a voluntary surrender by Jesus? When Jesus identifies himself, how does it affect the men? Why does Jesus command Peter to put away his sword? Where in my life am I still struggling to completely surrender to God? Where am I continuing to try and fight in my own strength and do things my own way?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 18:28-19:16

Jesus had a very intense conversation with Pilate from 18:33 to 19:22 during which the following words of authority were mentioned 22 times: king, kingdom, crown, purple robe, authority. Am I living under the authority of Christ, committing every area of my life to him? Jesus had a clear understanding of the purpose for his life (:37). Do I?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 19:17-30

“It is finished.” Reflect on ALL that Jesus’ sacrifice has made possible...for me, my family, my Grip partner, my unbelieving friend, etc.

- *Promises, and prophecies were finished.*
- *Jesus’ perfect obedience was finished.*
- *The satisfaction of God’s wrath was finished.*
- *The power of Satan, sin, and death was finished.*



“He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 19:31-42

Evangelism is a process...sometimes a long one. It had been two long years since Jesus had shared the Gospel with Nicodemus (his pinky guy, John 3:1-7). God transformed Nicodemus from a fearful spectator to a fearless follower. How might the example of Nic's spiritual journey help me persevere with my unbelieving friend?



What will I pass on? To whom?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 20:1-18

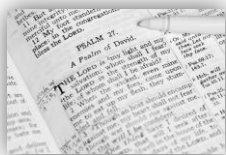
Imagine how John and Peter are feeling. They clearly weren't expecting the resurrection. What causes John to believe (:8)? What difference does Jesus' resurrection make in my daily living? Jesus revealed himself to Mary by saying her name. How has Jesus revealed himself to me during this season of Grip? How have I responded to his call?



What will I pass on? To whom?

Week 2 GRIP Growth summary

Section 5



Word Highlights - From this past week 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:



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



Walking my friend toward Christ – How can I take a next step with my friend who is not yet a follower of Christ?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 20:19-31

Jesus considered Himself as One who was sent by the Father and His disciples as sent by Him. When is a follower of Christ “sent”? What power and authority accompanies this command to be sent (:21-22)? A missionary is not someone who crosses the seas; A missionary is someone who helps others see the cross.



What will I pass on? To whom?

Digging Deeper – Living as a Sent One

41 Times in John’s Gospel, Jesus references the fact that He was sent. Here are a handful of these instances. Open your Bible and read each verse noting the word “sent”. They are listed in order for easy lookup.



4:34	7:16
5:24	7:18
5:30	7:28
6:29	7:29
6:38	8:29
6:39	11:42
6:44	17:25

Jesus clearly lived with the mindset of being SENT on a mission. This was at the core of who He was and what He did. He was the “Sent One” who was able to say to His Father Who sent Him:

“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.” John 17:4

In John 20:21, Jesus explicitly makes this parallel to his disciples:

“As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

As a follower of Jesus, I too am a sent one. In what ways would living with this awareness of being sent on mission change my approach to walking through each day?

Two “sent” prayers that God would be delighted to regularly hear from me:

“Lord, who do You want to bless through me today?”

“Lord, You’ve made me Your manager. How do You want me to use my resources today for Your mission?”

Why not pray these prayers today?

“Father, grip my heart today.”

John 21:1-25

It appears that the disciples were going back to what was comfortable and convenient - fishing (:3). Where am I still holding on to what is comfortable and convenient? Jesus specifically asks Peter to feed his sheep (:15-17). What specific step of obedience is Jesus asking me to take as this season of Grip comes to an end?



What will I pass on? To whom?

Evaluating this Season

We began our season of discipleship with this statement:

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.

Now, as we have said, 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, like Paul says in 1Corinthians 13:1-3 *If I _____, but do not have love, I am nothing...it profits me nothing.*” And 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)

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

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.)

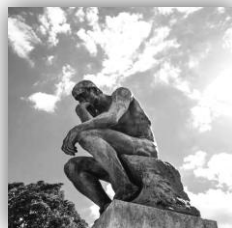
Ask one or two of the people closest to you if they have noticed you serving better. What did they say?

Week 3 Date: _____

Section 5

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...

What Key Relationship do I especially need to emphasize over the next 4 months? How will I do this?

What Key Resource do I need to proactively manage over the next 4 months? How will I do this?

With whom will I initiate a discipleship relationship for the fall? (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 you share from your personal evaluation during these last two days of journaling?



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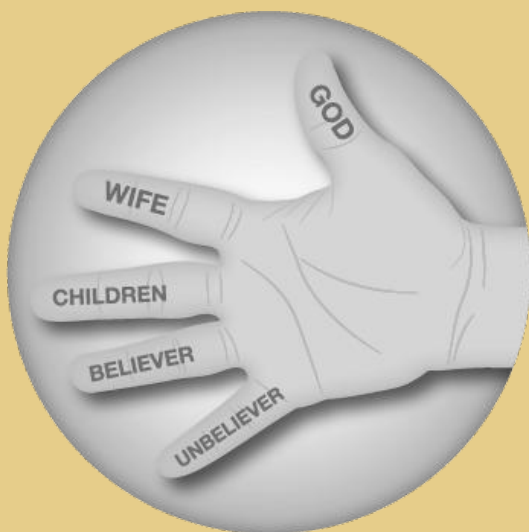
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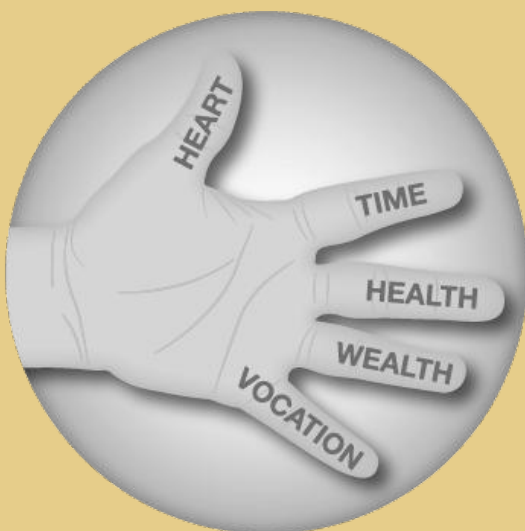
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Key Relationships



Key Resources