

Initiating a GRIP Partnership

The backbone of GRIP Discipleship is walking the spiritual journey alongside another man. Yes, we have large gatherings every few weeks. Yes, each GRIP man will be cultivating his own relationship with God. But, when you think of GRIP, first and foremost we want the face of your GRIP partner to come into your mind.

How many partners? Typically, most GRIP participants have one partner. The commitment is serious and most working men with families won't have the margin to meet with more than one man. So, two men is the classic GRIP PAIRING. Having said that, if a discipler does have more margin, he may recruit two men as partners and form a GRIP TRIAD (1 "Paul" and 2 "Timothys"). Sometime a GRIP pairing will partner for a season and then, the two men will together recruit a third man (2 "Paul's" and 1 "Timothy"). Whether a pairing or triad, we refer to the man initiating in the discipleship relationship as the "Paul" and the man invited in as the "Timothy" following the Biblical example of the Apostle Paul. In our model, the "Paul" isn't always the most spiritually mature in the GRIP pairing...but he is the one taking the initiative.

Below is a guide to finding a GRIP partner. Remember, you can't sign up for GRIP as an individual; each man HAS TO HAVE A PARTNER.

1. **Pray** – Pray a couple minutes every day for a week asking God to lead you to a man who is FATR (Faithful, Available, Teachable and has a desire to Reproduce Christ's qualities in others). These qualities will not be completely transparent to our eyes. Ask God to lead you to a man who is hungry for Jesus. Remember, Jesus prayed all night before He called the twelve!
2. **Think strategically** – Look first in your church and your current spheres of involvement or influence. God may have already put a man right under your nose. Is there a FATR man in your small group? Bible study? Elder/Deacon board? Ministry team? Athletic team? F3 group? In discipleship, accessibility is a big factor. If you can find someone who you can conveniently connect with in the current rhythm of your life, that's a big plus.
3. **Seek Counsel** – Once you have the names of 1-2 men, ask a spiritual mentor, small group leader, pastor, or elder who also know these men if they see these guys as FATR. They can help you to think wisely with your head as well as your heart. For instance, maybe the man that you sense God leading you towards is experiencing some crisis unbeknownst to you. It doesn't mean you wouldn't disciple him – but it would be good to know so you can adjust expectations. Biblically speaking, everyone needs discipleship. However, that does not mean that you would be the best fit to be that disciple.
4. **Ask him** – Humbly ask the man if he would consider entering into a discipleship relationship for a season in order to build each other up in Christ. Remember, you are NOT inviting him to join a program, nor are you just asking him to do lunch once in a while. This is an intentional relationship to spur one another on to become more like Christ. It might go something like this:
"Would you consider walking this spiritual journey together for 6 months in order to help each other grow to become more like Christ? One useful set of tracks I'd like us to consider is Focused Living's GRIP Discipleship. Why don't you take a look at the "Introduction to GRIP" pdf at <https://focusedliving.com/what-we-do/discipleship/> If it sounds like it would be meaningful, would you pray about it and talk to your wife? Let's chat next week and see what you are thinking. The only pressure you should feel is that of the Holy Spirit moving you forward."
5. **If he says "No"** – There are a variety of reasons that a man may not be ready to commit to a discipleship relationship with you. Don't be discouraged. In fact, you may have to ask several guys before God leads you to a man who is FATR and a good fit for you. Just consider this a part of discipleship! So, if you get a "No", go back to step 1 and work through the process again.



6. **If he says “Yes”** – Schedule a time to talk more in depth about what this season of discipleship might look like. Discuss any questions raised by the “introduction to GRIP” you assigned him to read. As you meet, ask him to summarize his understanding of what he is committing to. Correct or clarify where needed. The goal is to go into this season of discipleship with your eyes wide open.

7. **Enroll for GRIP Season** - if you are both on the same page about GRIP, it’s time to enroll. Enrollment is electronic at www.grip.focusedliving.com. During this enrollment process which takes less 10 minutes, you will:
 - a. Explain why you want to be involved in GRIP
 - b. Provide the email address of your GRIP partner, your spouse, and a church leader. (Automatic emails will be sent to these three indicating your desire to participate).
 - c. Electronically pay for the GRIP season

