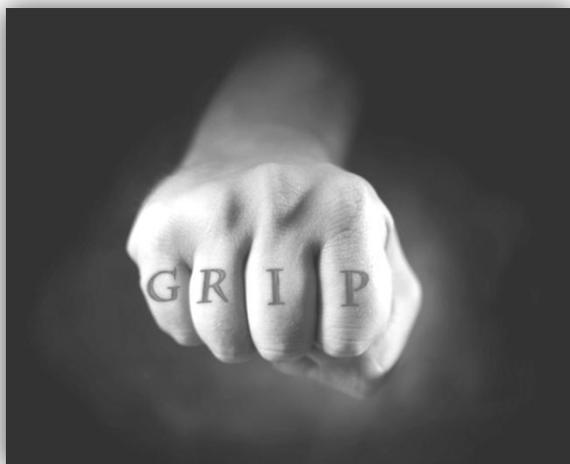


# INTRODUCTION

## GRIP Discipleship

### Spring 2019

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



**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: 12/4 2/18 3/11 4/1 4/22 5/13**  
**All gatherings are on Monday nights (6:30 – 9:00pm)**

# 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?

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.

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

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

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

# The 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 practices, or 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.

# Practice #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. For this season, we’ll be reading in **Matthew**, and some other topic specific passages. You’ll also have some weeks to customize your diet in God’s Word.

**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. We’ll 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.

## Practice #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. In addition, a weekly phone call goes a long way to staying up to date.

**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. Our WebApp makes this easy: [Grip.focusedliving.com](http://Grip.focusedliving.com). Once shared, now 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.

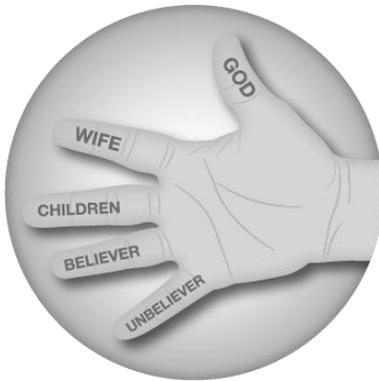
## Practice #3 → Action Points

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 this 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 action 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.

## 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 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?