

go therefore

SMALL GROUP LEADER HANDBOOK



Discover Jesus | Disciple Others | Deploy to the World

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:16-20



**THEN GOD SAID, "LET *US* MAKE
MANKIND IN *OUR* IMAGE, IN *OUR*
LIKENESS..."**

GENESIS 1:26



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WE FULLY BEAR THE IMAGE OF GOD WHEN WE ARE IN COMMUNITY, AND SMALL GROUPS ARE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO CONVEY THE IMAGE OF GOD.

This **LEADER GUIDE** is designed to unpack all the why's and how's of small groups to help prepare you to lead your own group.

Our strategy at Grace can be summed up in three simple words - Discover, Disciple, and Deploy.

- **Discover** who Jesus is by growing and participating in the life of the church.
- **Discipling** others by creating intentional relationships built around maturing, equipping, and multiplying.
- Then **Deploy** them, by identifying calling, resourcing, commissioning, and sending them.

We believe that **Small Groups** are one of the best environments for discovering Jesus, growing in him, and growing in community. Our goal is not that we just have a meeting with each other, but create a place where we do life together, and experience the presence of God and the fullness that He brings through community.



Our small groups exist not only to be a place where people can grow closer to each other and Christ but also be a place open for people to have a seat at the table.



Our small groups exist not only to be a place where people can grow closer to each other and Christ but also to be a place open for people to have a seat at the table. Knowing that all of us have been offered a seat at the table we seek to give that same opportunity to others. Small groups should be a place where all are welcome and we are outwardly focused as well as inward.

Living in community with others is something that we see throughout all scripture. From the formative moments of creation when God said "Let us make man in our image," to Jesus living in community with His disciples, and ultimately the promise that He will one day come back for us and we will be with Him for eternity, God's focus has always been unity. Small groups are a profound opportunity to walk in His image, likeness, and mission of bringing all of us back to Him.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE SMALL GROUP

Small Groups exist to help us experience genuine community and grow closer to Christ. As leaders, we set the tone. We move away from viewing Small Groups as closed circles and instead understand them by the qualities that make them healthy and life-giving.

Below are the core characteristics of a true Small Group. As your group matures, growth will become evident in each one. These characteristics also help define what success looks like, giving you clear ways to recognize and celebrate what God is doing in your group.

HOSPITABLE - a Small Group should be open and welcoming to each person in the group and new arrivals.

KNOWN - a Small Group should exist to make Jesus known and get to know each other.

CARE - a Small Group should be there to care for anyone in the group that is in need.

APPLICATION - a Small Group should be applying the things that they are learning about Christ to their lives.

ACCOUNTABILITY - a Small Group should be a safe place to share and hold one another accountable while encouraging growth.

OUTWARD-MINDED - a Small Group should always be thinking about how they can serve and who can be invited to the table.

MULTIPLICATION-MINDED - a Small Group should understand that the purpose of the group is not only community but also for Kingdom growth so that multiplication can happen.

WHY MULTIPLY

The Gospel is for the world - not just for us. We have to see ourselves on mission with God to expand his kingdom, and small groups represent that calling.

All throughout the Bible, we see our identity as "sent people." We were saved to be sent. God never intended for the Gospel to stop with us, but to flow through us and go beyond us. **The Gospel is about movement, not maintenance.** As believers, we launch out of the comforts of our current community to create a place where new people can experience the same life-giving community we have. Jesus left his heavenly community to come to earth to save us. The disciples left their community in Jerusalem to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. And most likely, someone in your life left the comfort of their community to invest in you. We now have the privilege to join this movement as we provide the same **life-changing community** to others that we have received from this group. Building community and getting close to people is a priority in Small Groups but, it will never trump the spread and expansion of The Gospel. We understand that just as we were given a seat at the table that we should offer that to others.

WHEN SHOULD MY GROUP MULTIPLY?

Multiplication is something that we celebrate. It should be the goal of each group to multiply because that means you are reaching new people. Identifying a co-leader or apprentice early on is important. As you begin leading your group, helping them to see the vision of multiplication and how we are called to it from the beginning is important so you can celebrate together when you do.

Group size will be a factor in multiplication, as well as having a ready leader.

- **12-15 adults** - this is a sweet spot for group size
- **15-20 adults** - at this size it starts to become difficult to hear from everyone, your group should start planning to multiply.
- **20+ adults** - you will need to multiply during the next term so that your group can celebrate and reach new people.

As you pray through multiplication, try and identify if you are telling God "Not Now," or if God is telling you, "Not Now."

CARE AT GRACE CHRISTIAN

OUR SPAN OF CARE MODEL HELPS US TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE IS CARED FOR.

We have a Lead Pastor, a Pastor over small groups, a system of Coaches, our Small Group Leaders, and our Small Group members. **Each person in our leadership structure will minister two levels down.** We ask that significant events are communicated to the Coach and Pastor so that we can celebrate, support, and pray with you. Each of our leaders looks out for one another, so letting the other Small Group Leaders know how they can serve in practical ways is important.



THREE LEVELS OF CARE AVAILABLE TO THE FAMILIES OF GRACE

General Care is provided to the families of Grace at the Small Group level. It's in Small Groups where we exercise the 59 "one another's" we see in the New Testament. **It's where you get to "one another," one another.**

At times there may be needs that require more time and more experience than our group leaders have - those should be escalated to the **pastoral level of care**. The partnership between the group leader and the Pastoral staff is important here.



If there are needs that require **specialized care**, we have partnerships with Biblical Counselors to help care for individuals or families. We will also seek to help offset the cost of this care for those who are **members of the church**.

LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

We understand that God has placed this desire to lead on your heart and we take this calling seriously. As a staff, we want to equip you in the best way to follow this calling and lead effectively. Our hope is that you are comfortable, confident, and equipped for what God is calling you into. We're committed to empowering and developing you as a leader through ongoing training, support, and encouragement to help you grow spiritually and in your spiritual leadership.

ONBOARDING LEADERSHIP INVESTMENT

As a group leader, you can expect training and encouragement during your onboarding process. Over the course of one year, you will engage in...

- **S.G. LEADER TRAINING GUIDE** - this guide is designed to help you understand Grace's vision for Small Groups, give a deeper understanding of some key principles of group leadership, and to be used at New Leader Orientation.
- **NEW LEADER ORIENTATION** - new leaders will gather with our staff to put it all together and dive deeper into Small Group practices and expectations. This is a great time to seek clarification and to get your questions answered.
- **LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES** - an experienced coach will meet with you and go over five key aspects of spiritual leadership within Small Groups.

GROUP MEMBER

for a term to get a feel for group life at Grace. Then partner with your small group leader for next steps.

1

CO-LEADER

for a term while you work through video based training and attend New Leader Orientation.

2

MULTIPLICATION

Continue to co-lead as you work with a Coach on next steps and as your group works to multiply.

3



WHAT ARE TWO AREAS YOU
FEEL TRAINING WILL BE MOST
VALUABLE FOR YOU?

ONGOING LEADERSHIP INVESTMENT

As a group leader, you can expect continued investment, encouragement, and support. Over the course of a year, you will be supported with...

- **COACH PARTNERSHIP** - an experienced coach will be there, not to be directive, but to support you. They will pray with you, talk with you about your family, your group, just be there for you. They will touch base through email and text but will want to meet in person once per term.
- **LEADER HUDDLES** - each term there will be an opportunity for you to attend our leader huddles where small group leaders get to encourage each other, learn from each other, and pray for the church.
- **GROUP CHAT** - every month you will have access to a video or podcast that will touch on different topics to help you continue to grow as a leader.
- **LEADER APPRECIATION** - every year we will come together just so the staff at Grace can say **THANK YOU**. You are such an important part of our faith family and we want to appreciate you for all that you do in serving the families of Grace Christian Church.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU

To ensure the health of our groups, there are certain expectations of a Small Group leader at Grace.

- Have a personal and growing relationship with Christ
- Be a member of Grace Christian by completing the membership process
- Faithfully attend Grace worship gatherings
- Be willing to follow the vision and leadership team of Grace
- If married, have your spouse's support for your role as a Small Group leader
- Guard personal integrity
- Empower those around you, never lead alone (give away ministry)
- Uphold the characteristics of a true Small Group



WHAT WOULD YOU WANT THE
RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR
COACH TO LOOK LIKE?

SMALL GROUP RHYTHMS

WE WANT OUR GROUPS TO EXPERIENCE A LIFE-CHANGING COMMUNITY TOGETHER

This simple framework helps our groups provide a life-changing community where you can **connect relationally** and take **next steps spiritually**.

- **GROW TOGETHER** - Small Groups meet regularly because consistency builds community. We want our groups to become part of the rhythms of our people's lives. Whenever you meet with less frequency, it can be difficult to gain traction and dig deeper into real relationship. By meeting regularly, you make the group a priority on your calendar and community forms quickly.
- **PARTY TOGETHER** - each term our groups take at least one week to host a Hangout Night, which is when the group intentionally creates a warm and welcoming place to invite new people to experience their life-changing community. These nights provide strategic invite opportunities for each person's ONE that they are praying for and investing in.
- **SERVE TOGETHER** - each term, we want our groups to take at least one week and choose one way your group can be deployed into the greater Scott County community. You can do this by partnering with a number of local ministries in the Central Kentucky area, by adopting a local school to partner with through service projects, or any other number of ways to create memories as a group and allow God to stir in the hearts of your group members.

“WE WANT OUR GROUPS TO BECOME PART OF THE RHYTHM OF OUR LIVES.”

OUR GROUPS MEET DURING THREE TERMS EACH YEAR.

Our group schedules work off a trimester system. **TERM 1** is from January through April. Then there is a break before **TERM 2** starts in May to go through August. Then we take another break before we start up again for **TERM 3** in September and go through December.

We take breaks between terms for two reasons. First, we want to make sure you get a break from group leadership. Second, the breaks serve as an onramp for new people. 95% of new people will jump into a group during the break because everyone is starting over, everyone is starting at the same place.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

At Grace, we believe that Small Groups are a natural way for people to discover Jesus and be discipled. We understand that just as we were once offered a seat at the table, we are called to invite others to the table as well. Every believer should identify that ONE person in their life who is far from God and intentionally pursue that person with the hope of the gospel by praying, investing, and inviting. This person should be someone you see on a regular basis; think of friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, classmates, the person you get your Starbucks from every day. Once you identify this person, talk with your Small Group about them and pray that God moves in their life.



WE WANT TO COMMIT TO DOING FOUR THINGS FOR "OUR ONE" AS SMALL GROUPS...

- **IDENTIFY** - I will find my ONE that needs a seat at the table. Understanding that just like I've been offered a seat at the table, I should be looking to identify the person that God is calling me to invite to the table.
- **PRAY** - I will pray daily for my ONE. I will ask God to make my ONE aware of Christ's love and their need for Him (2 Cor. 4:4; Matt. 13:15) and to give them the faith to repent and believe (Acts 20:21; Romans 10:9-10). I will also ask that God allows me to share the Gospel with them.
- **INVEST** - I will create ways to invest weekly in my ONE. My hope is to build a relationship where I can share Christ's love with my ONE (1 Cor. 9:19-23). Simple investments like text messages, phone calls, and acts of kindness are easy. Think of impactful ways to invest in the relationship, like inviting them over for a meal or bringing them a meal when they are sick.
- **INVITE** - As I pray and invest, I will invite my ONE to the next right thing. The ideal would be to share your faith and invite your ONE to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When he or she isn't there yet, I will invite them to an intentional environment where they can belong before they believe. I will do this by inviting them to events like Small Group, a Hangout Night, or a Sunday morning service, either online or in person.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY

AS A LEADER, YOU WANT TO FIND WAYS TO GIVE AWAY MINISTRY AND EMPOWER OTHERS.

Hosting and leading Small Groups should be a team approach. This is a necessary foundation for being able to multiply. For the sake of the leader's health, we don't want any individual to have all the responsibility, but instead share it with other capable members. A good leader creates opportunities for people to use their gifts to contribute to the group. **Small Group is not a group of people with a gifted leader, but a leader with a group of gifted people.**

Here are **four different roles** recommended for every group...

LEAD

The Facilitator leads the group discussion weekly. This role may be done by one person or by a couple. The important part of this role is that the leader facilitates a discussion rather than teaching a lesson. We want as many people to participate in the discussion as possible. As people contribute to the discussion, it creates a sense of belonging and it helps them better process what they are hearing.

FEED

The Coordinator focuses on organizing and communicating with the group. If your group has a snack list, the coordinator organizes whose week it is and sends reminders. They also communicate with the group about what is coming up this week. If the group meets online, the coordinator can set up and send out the link each week.

HOST

The Host opens up their home for the group to meet. They also think through their living spaces and design them in a way that accommodates the group and fosters connection. An example would be reorganizing the living room to create one big circle to facilitate discussion better.

HANGOUT NIGHT LEADER

The Hangout Night Leader helps the group get involved in your Hangout Night(s). This includes planning activities that are welcoming to new people and encouraging current group members to invite their ONE. The Hangout Night Leader should be familiar with the Hangout Night purpose and ideas covered in this guide.



IT'S NOT JUST YOUR GROUP, IT'S THEIR GROUP TOO."



SMALL GROUP HANGOUTS

HOSTING AN AWESOME HANGOUT NIGHT

What is a hangout night? _____

A hangout is a gathering hosted by your Small Group that intentionally creates a warm and welcoming place to invite new people to experience their life-changing community.

How do we do hangout night? _____

These serve as a strategic invite opportunity for the ONE you are praying for and investing in. By creating a place that displays authentic community, you can offer hope to your friends and neighbors as they experience the love of Christ in a fun, but profound way.

Who is it primarily for? _____

These nights are intentionally designed for those who are not yet in your group. A great question to ask is, "Who in my life could benefit from a group like this?" As you think through this list, consider your ONE. These nights provide a great opportunity to invite them and invest in that relationship. Also, consider your neighbors and other people who are not involved in a Small Group.

When will we do it? _____

Small Groups meet weekly for 12 weeks each term. Your group is encouraged to choose at least one of those weeks and set that as your designated "Hangout Night". It helps to have someone in the group "own" this for the group to plan the events.

How do we host a hangout night? _____

Every member of the group should be involved in this.

- **Each One Bring One:** Ask each member to invite their ONE.
- **Each One Connects With One:** Ask each member to connect with one new person each Hangout Night.
- **Each One Follows Up With One:** Ask each member to invite their friend back the next week.

"The most persuasive argument for the Christian faith is the **Christian community**. The majority of conversions throughout church history have come not through argumentation, but through belonging to a meaningful community before belief is ever required."

- Todd Engstrom

"What type of event would my ONE like to attend?"

That's the question we should be asking. Ideas for hangout nights are endless. Below are a few ideas that are welcoming and engaging for both believers and non-believers.

HANGOUT NIGHTS (PHYSICAL GATHERINGS)

Grill Out: Have your group over and invite the neighborhood! This is fun, especially on a warm day when everyone can be outside talking, and don't be afraid to break out cornhole.

Bowling: This is the staple of a classic group night out where everyone can get together and have a good time all the while hurling balls at an assortment of pins!

Board Game Night: Have your group over and invite the lost people in your lives to come because everyone loves board games. What's good about this activity is that once you finish you can just start another one.

Yard Game Night: Feel free to play whatever game you want. The whole point of this activity is to get everyone outside and show your community what it looks like to live in a community with others.

Potluck: Food is always a win! The host will let the group members know in advance and everyone can choose what they want to bring, then inviting people is the easy part!

Go To A Restaurant: Get out of the house! Go to a restaurant with the members of your group and get to know each other better over a meal.

Go To A Local Event: Go out and get to know the people in your community and have a good time. This is a great time to see the needs of other people and see potential serving opportunities.

HANGOUT NIGHTS (ONLINE GATHERINGS)

Scavenger Hunt: The host calls out a household item and the first person to fetch the item and bring it back wins.

Trivia Night: Invite your neighborhood to join your trivia night. Each household can be a team!

Take Your Pets To The Zoom: Everyone in your group gets the chance to bring their furry friend on screen with them and show them off.

Pictionary: Thanks to Zoom, you can share a whiteboard with every one and start drawing. The first person to guess the drawing in the chat gets a point. At the end of the night, the person with the most points wins.

Theme Night: The host contacts all the people in the group and tells them a certain theme. When you log on for your hangout night everyone can vote on who dressed up/decorated the best.

Play together to pray together.

SERVING GUIDE

HERE ARE THREE STEPS TO HELP YOUR GROUP "DEPLOY"

STEP 1: IDENTIFY

The key to engaging others in conversation around serving is being able to ask good questions. Sometimes this can be difficult or intimidating in a group setting. Don't worry...**The Serving Guide** is your key to finding out your group's passions. You can use this and the conversation guide together to identify:

- Where God is already at work within your group.
- What is your group passionate about?
- What breaks their heart/moves them to action?
- Where are they already serving as individuals?

STEP 2: CONNECT

Once you have had the ability to work through the **Conversation Guide**, the next step is to connect what God is doing in your group with where God is moving in your community.

- What are the needs?
- Where is the opportunity?
- How can we serve?
- What can be done?

STEP 3: COMMIT

If you are going to receive pushback from members of your group...this is where it will likely happen. Some of it comes from not having served before and they are intimidated. Others will push because it means extra time. Don't get frustrated as these are natural reactions people exhibit when they are asked to leave their "comfort zone".

At Grace, we believe that part of our responsibility is to advance God's Kingdom in the world whether that be Georgetown, Central Kentucky, or the world (Acts 1:8). We are called to care for our neighbors and the best way we can do this is in community. We ask our groups to commit to serving each term and those groups who develop long-term relationships with partner ministries have the best participation rate and are more consistent in investing in their community.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHERE TO SERVE

What breaks your heart/moves you to action? (Circle top 3)

- Homelessness
- Hunger
- Lack of Access to Education
- Children in Crisis (Adoption/Foster)
- Families in Crisis (Illness, Relationship, etc.)
- Human Trafficking
- Crisis Pregnancy
- Spiritual Lostness
- Nations/Immigrant Unreached Peoples
- Neighbors
- Next Generations/College Campuses
- Refugee Crisis
- Crisis Caused by Natural Disaster/Terrorism

What things do you perceive as wrong, unjust or unfair in this world that you would like to see made right?

What life experiences have you walked through (positive/negative) that God could use/is using to help comfort others?

Are there ministries/organizations that you'd like to be a part of, or issues you'd like to work to end, but don't know how or where to start?

Share what you think may be your top (3) burdens with the group.

KEY COMPONENTS OF GROUP TIME

SMALL GROUPS ENGAGE WITH THE BIBLE, PRAYER, AND ONE ANOTHER FOR LIFE-CHANGE.

In Acts 2:42, Luke describes how the Early Church was engaged in the **apostle's teaching, fellowship, and prayer**. These are the key components for creating an environment where people can **connect relationally** and **take next steps spiritually**. Here is what a typical rhythm looks like for group time...

- **Fellowship Time (20-30 minutes):** Spend time laughing and welcoming new people.
- **Group Discussion (45-60 minutes):** Discuss whatever the text or study is for the week and how you can apply it to your life.
- **Prayer (10-20 minutes):** Finish up by praying for one another.

FELLOWSHIP IS THE GLUE THAT HOLDS YOUR GROUP TOGETHER DURING THE TOUGH TIMES AND IS THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING ELSE.

You and your group will only be able to go as deep as your relationships are, it's the foundation for everything else that happens in group life, so beginning with fellowship and spending time here is important. This time will look different depending on your group's culture, but here are some practical ways to start...

- **Icebreaker** - Consider having an icebreaker handy to get started. It's a great way for new people and regulars to get to know one another and begin talking.
- **Food** - It's always good to have snacks and drinks. Better yet, plan your group meeting around a meal. It helps people to open up and let their guard down.
- **Chairs** - Arrange the chairs in a circle so that everyone can face each other. Being able to look at someone and make eye contact encourages conversation.
- **Celebrate Milestones** - Celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and when someone has a baby or gets a job promotion. Celebrating life events together makes people feel loved and celebrated.
- **Rotate where you meet** - You get to know people on another level when you go to their homes.
- **Share what's going on in life** - Take time to talk about what happened in life this week or something you're looking forward to that is upcoming. Just give space and time for people to talk about what's going on in life.
- **Share contact info** - This encourages the group to reach out to each other.

FACILITATING A GROUP DISCUSSION THAT'S CONVERSATIONAL WILL LEAD TO TRANSFORMATION, NOT JUST INFORMATION.

When you meet weekly, you will **facilitate a group discussion** where people can encounter Jesus and experience life change. Here are **five key elements** of a life-changing discussion:

WORD-CENTERED

Life-changing discussion starts and ends with God's living and active Word. We believe that the Bible is sufficient and relevant for all issues of our life (Heb. 4:12). The group may use a book study but it will always be word-centered.

CONVERSATIONAL

Life-changing discussion focuses on facilitating a conversation, not teaching a Bible lesson. Better learning and connection are accomplished when people are able to ask questions and share their personal insights and experiences.

AUTHENTIC

Life-changing discussion happens when people are real with themselves, with God, and with others. We foster this authenticity by providing a safe environment where people can be honest and transparent.

APPLICATION-FOCUSED

Life-changing discussion focuses on application because the measure of maturity is not information, but obedience. Healthy Bible discussion doesn't just answer the question "What does the Bible say?" but it also helps people answer, "How does this personally impact my life today?" That is why we end each discussion by helping people identify a personal, relevant, and practical step they can take to grow their faith.

NEWCOMER-FRIENDLY

Life-changing discussions should always consider the person who is joining for the first time. "Insider language" should be avoided. We want to eliminate any barriers that would prevent new people from participating.

By focusing on application, it allows non, new, and mature believers to engage in conversation together. When you combine this with an Acts 2 type of fellowship, you can provide a life-changing community where non-believers, new believers, and mature believers can belong. Small Groups create a place where people come just as they are and meet Jesus just as He is. Our groups are open to anyone at any time, and we create an environment where everyone is welcomed and accepted.

THE GROUP SHOULD SEE PRAYER AS A MINISTRY, NOT JUST THE BOOKENDS TO A MEETING.

Each time you meet, your group should spend time praying to God about God and about each other. You can finish your time by allowing everyone to share something **specific** and **personal** that the group can pray for. Here are a **few things to consider** around your prayer time...

YOUR ONE

As a Small Group, we want every member to identify one person in their life who would benefit from a group like this. Someone who doesn't know Jesus, isn't involved in church, and lives near you. As a group, you can encourage each other to pray daily for that person, invest weekly in that person, and invite them to your group's Hangout Night. Praying for your ONE during group time is a great way to keep this in focus.

GROUP PRAYER

Some in your group may have never prayed out loud in a group setting before, so start slow and don't force it. As a leader, you can model simple prayers for the group and then encourage others to pray. You can ask one to pray for another or break into small groups to pray, doing this allows the Holy Spirit to work in them.

PRAY GOD'S WORD BACK TO HIM

If you study the prayers of the Bible, you begin to notice that the prayers God honors and answers are those that repeat his promises back to Him. We don't just want to read through the Bible, but pray through the Bible. Help your group make it a discipline that every time you read the Bible, to go back and pray through what you've just read. God's revealed Word provides the content and trajectory for our prayers. Pray the commands from the passage you just studied, asking God to help you obey. Praise God for truths revealed in the passage, thanking him for who He is and how His power, love, and grace are revealed. Let the Scriptures guide how you pray.

Tim Keller, in his book "Prayer: Experiencing Intimacy and Awe with God", describes this method of meditating on a passage by understanding the instruction of the text (what does the text demand of me?) and then turning it into thanksgiving (how does this truth lead me to praise or thank God?), confession (how does this truth lead me to confess and repent?) and petition (how does this truth prompt me to appeal to God?). Providing your group a simple grid to **move from the study of God's Word to praying God's Word** will broaden your group's prayer life.

We glorify God through our prayers. We get through difficult times through prayer. We change as our prayer life grows stronger. **Everything that we know and feel about God comes to expression in our prayers.**

FELLOWSHIP ICEBREAKERS

ICEBREAKERS ARE A GREAT WAY TO OPEN UP FELLOWSHIP TIME

- If you were to take a 10-day trip in a car with your family or friends, what would they most likely hear you complain about?
- If God put you completely in charge of creating heaven, what would it look like?
- If you didn't have to worry about making a living, what would you most like to do for the rest of your life?
- Describe your dream vacation. Who would it be with, where would you go, and what would you do?
- If you could live in any other time period, past or future, what period would you choose? Why?
- What tv programs do you dvr?
- What motivates you most to go to work each day: money or personal satisfaction? If money were not an issue, would you still keep your job?
- If someone gave you enough money to start a business of your own, what kind of business would you start?
- What is the best imaginable thing that could happen to you during the next five years? How do you think you would handle it?
- If you knew that tomorrow would be the last full day of your life, how would you spend the day?
- How would you describe yourself (without mentioning anything about what you do for a living)?
- What is the most important goal in your life right now? Will your life change in some way if that goal is reached? If so, how?
- What social situations tend to make you flustered and nervous? Why?
- If money were no object, what fun thing would you like to do?
- What were your very first impressions of your spouse or best friend?
- What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
- What is the best vacation you've ever had?
- If you could ask God one question, what would it be?
- If your house was on fire and you could grab only three things before leaving, what would they be?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

"OUR GOAL IN SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS NOT THE TRANSFER OF INFORMATION, BUT TRANSFORMATION."

What stood out to you most from the text?

What does this text teach me about God and his character?

What does this text teach me about fallen humanity that requires the grace of God?

What do I see about the church, or life in the people of God?

How does this text point to Christ?

What do I need to know?

Is there a promise to claim?

Is there a truth for me to believe?

Is there an action or attitude to avoid or embrace?

Is there a principle to apply?

Is there something I need to confess and repent for?



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

THESE WILL BE DISCUSSED DURING ORIENTATION

What excites you most about creating a life-changing community at Grace?

How has Biblical community helped you through the peaks and valleys of life? What was the greatest impact for you?

How comfortable do you feel facilitating a group discussion as described on pg. 14? What are your strengths and growth areas?

Thinking of yourself, are you more of an extrovert or an introvert? What makes you comfortable getting to know others in a group setting?

How can spending at least one week "serving" together and one week "partying" together affect the relationships within your group?

As you think about your own life, what are the next steps in your spiritual journey?

Who are you currently praying for God to open a door to share the Gospel with? Who could you point to in your life that has made the greatest impact in your faith?

WE BELIEVE LIFE-CHANGE HAPPENS IN SMALL GROUP WHEN EVERYONE TAKES STEPS TOGETHER.

Everyone has steps to take and taking them together is what group life is about. When Jesus gave the great commission to his followers, he said, **"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."** In this commission, there's an understanding of what God is teaching us through his scripture and then an obedience from us to follow it.

You cannot follow Jesus by standing still. What God wants for all of us is to take "next steps" in our faith. Even though we are all different and those next steps may look different for all of us, there are some spiritual "must have's" for every believer. At Grace, we see six spiritual principles raise to the surface in scripture over and over again, that these principles are foundational, not just to us as a follower of Jesus but to the church as a whole. These are core truths about the Gospel that we can all apply to our lives and we talk about those as the "MARKS" of spiritual maturity.

“**YOU CANNOT FOLLOW JESUS STANDING STILL.**”

As you work through the series of videos teaching these spiritual principles, you will see in each video how important these foundational truth's are but also ways to incorporate these into your group time.

Also, as you work through these videos, we encourage you to ask God to reveal steps that you can take in your own life.

MARKS OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

BEING
like Jesus

GROWING
through spiritual habits

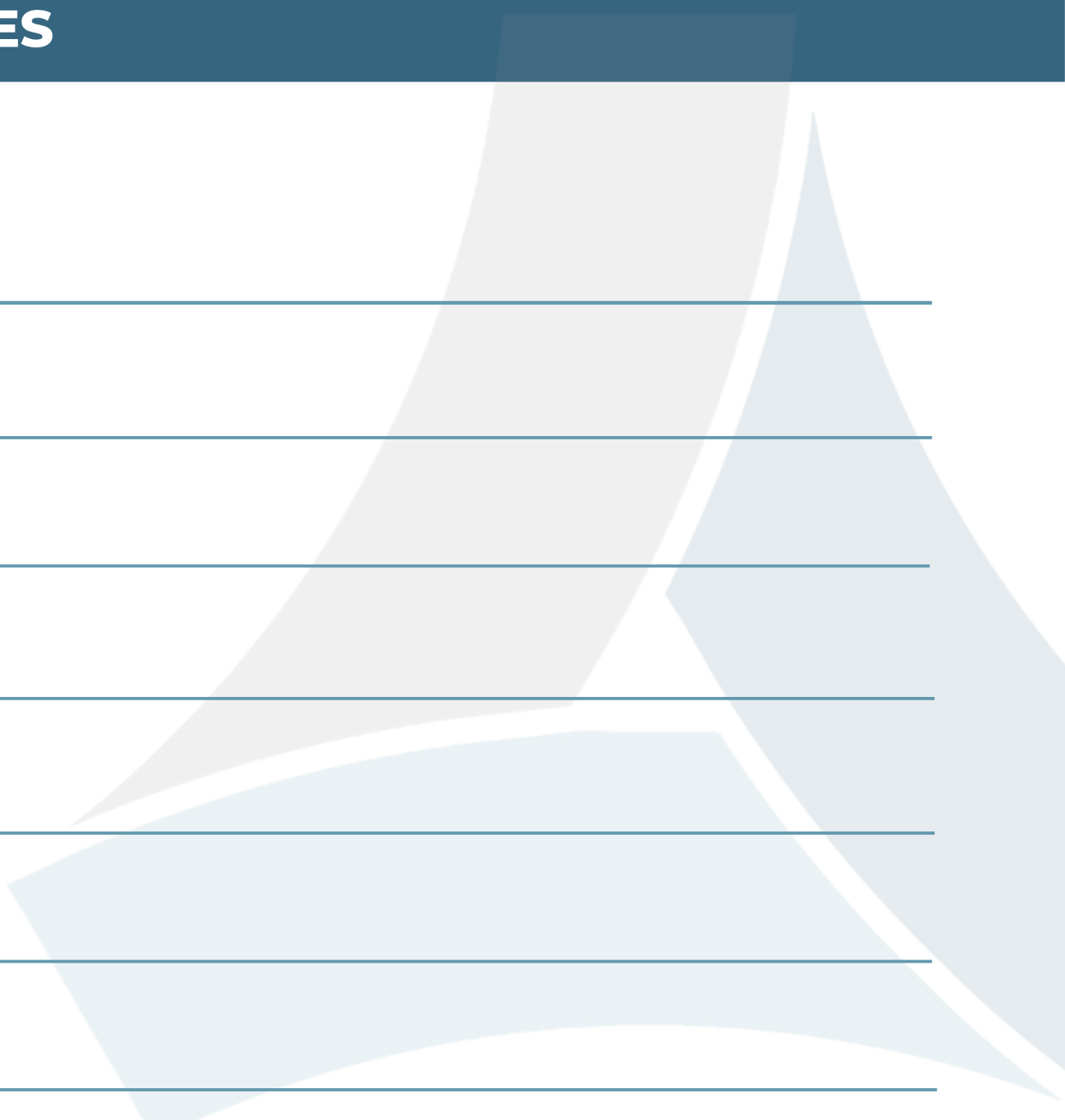
CONNECTING
with other believers

GIVING
of ourselves and our resources

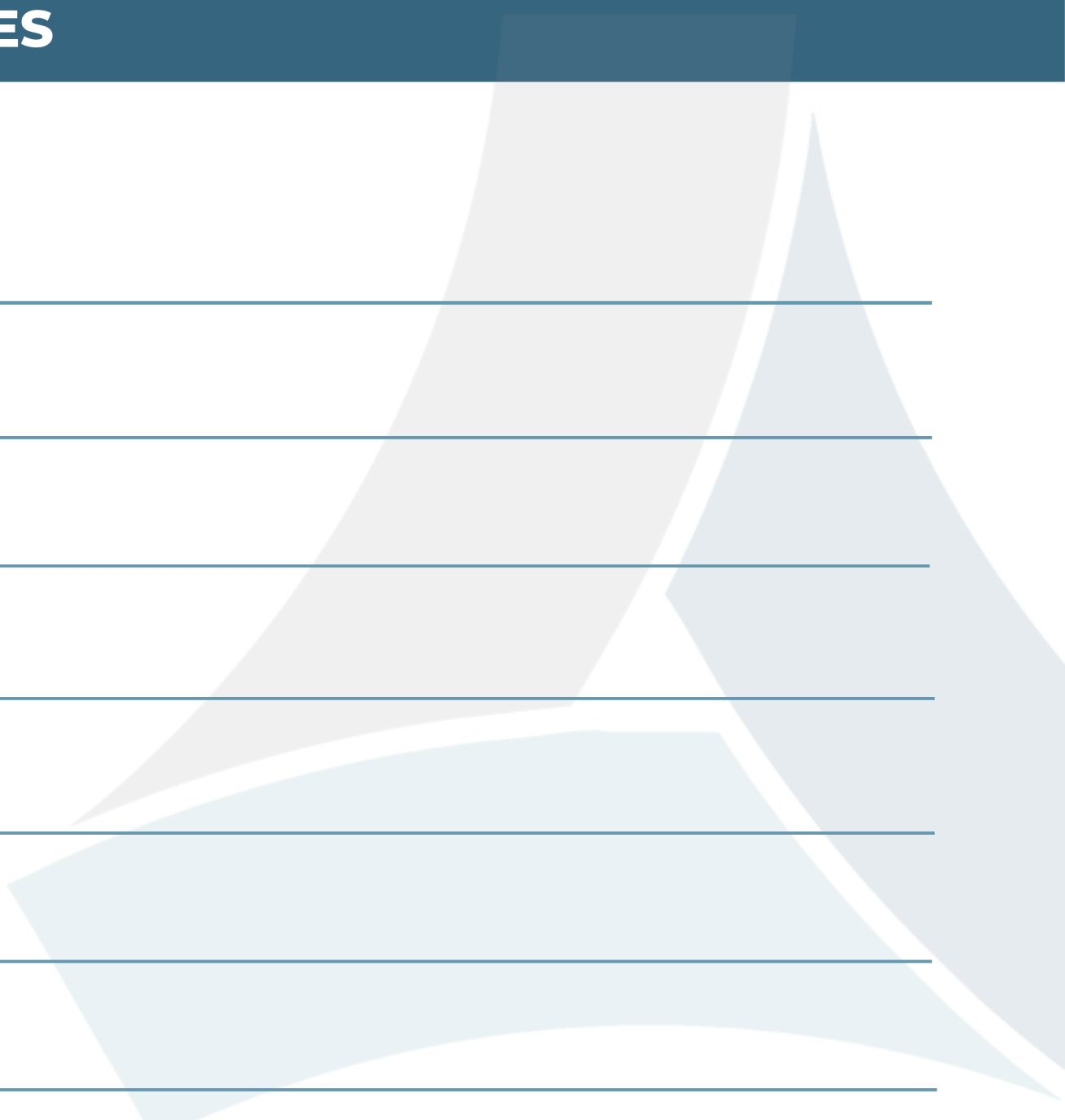
REACHING
those away from God

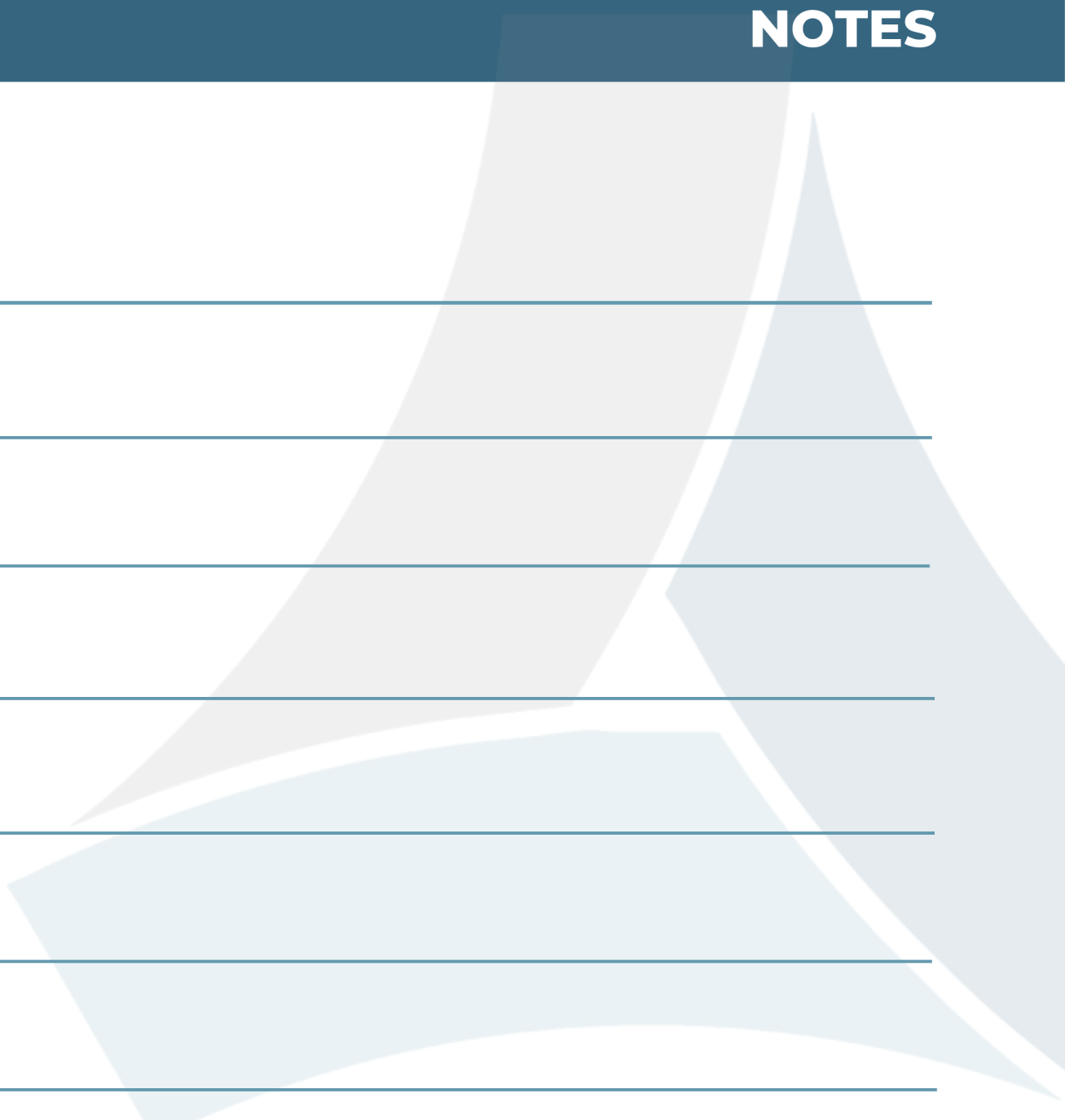
WILLING
to risk comfort

NOTES

A decorative background graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in shades of blue and grey. These shapes are curved and angular, creating a modern, abstract design that spans the width of the page.

NOTES

A decorative background graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent shapes in shades of blue and grey. These shapes are curved and angular, creating a modern, abstract design that spans across the middle of the page.





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