



WEEK



Your Story

Finding your place
in the story

Weekend Message Notes

Next Steps...

Big Idea..

Behind the story

Family Chapter (optional)

Watch DVD/Notes

Have you ever had someone ask you a question that brought clarity to a situation, opened your eyes to what the problem truly was, or gave you an insight about God that you weren't seeing before? We were created for relationship and God has a plan to use us in the lives of the people around us. Could it be that God never intended us to have all the answers, but only to ask the right questions?

1. Describe what you think a healthy and vital small group looks like.

Refer to Philippians 2

2. In this chapter, what is God telling us about our relationship with others?

3. To have a vital small group, all the members should be mutually invested in each other, but that is not always easy. What might keep someone from fully investing in a group?

And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all."

Mark 10:42-44

4. God uses others to shape our lives. Share an example of a time when someone has invested in your life.

5. *In Mark 10, Jesus states that “whoever would be great among you must be your servant.” What does this mean practically in our relationships today?*

6. *We complete our story by entering into others’ stories. As a part of our spiritual pathway at Grace, we believe that “connect” and “impact” are vital parts of taking next steps in our personal spiritual growth.*

Take time as a group to silently read over the questions under “connect” and “impact.” What is the one question that sticks out to you the most? What is one thing that God would have you take a step toward right now in your life? Share your responses with the group.

connect

How are my relationships with my friends?

Do I keep my promises?

How easy is it for me to trust people?

Am I experiencing intimacy in relationships?

Am I making myself vulnerable to others?

Do I have a heart for others in my church family?

impact

Do I have a heart for those who don't have a relationship with Jesus?

How often do I share my faith?

Do I have time for relationships with unbelievers?

Do I have a mission from God?

Am I proud of the Gospel or ashamed?

Am I serving and using my gifts for God's kingdom work?

Talking to the Author

Oh Lord,
We exalt Your name above all names, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth. Help us to humble ourselves before You and others and open our eyes to see how You want to use us to be Your hands and feet to the people in our lives. Help us to listen to Your voice and ask the right questions that lead others to seek answers from You, oh Lord, not from us. Unite us together, by your Holy Spirit, to form a safe and healthy place where we are invested in others, and they are invested in us; where we can be vulnerable and able to trust others enough to invite them into our stories. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Group prayer requests

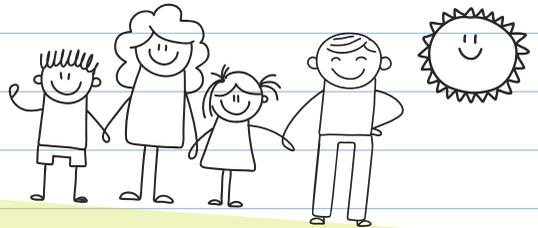
Unfinished reflections

Do you believe that with God you have something to offer others?

What would have to change in your life for you to be involved in someone else's story?

Who does God want you to invest in right now?

Family Chapter



"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 28:19-20

In groups of 3-5, develop a 30 second "commercial" to "promote" Jesus to the world. Include words that describe who God is, things He has done, and what He wants for His children. Discuss with your group who your audience is, what they need to hear, and how they will hear it best. Record your "commercial" on a cell phone and post it on social media or show it to friends and family.

Digging deeper into the story

walls

We all have walls. While some of us are more open than others, there are certain areas that we want to hide from others. The Church has typically not been great at moving beyond our walls. When we never get deeper than talking about the weather, sports, or the latest movie, we don't really connect. Sure, we may know names and even enjoy one another's company, but with our walls up and intact we can feel lonely, not known, and distant.

Why do you think we put up walls?

What are some topics or areas of your life you would not share or discuss with someone else?

Read Ephesians 2:13-21 & 4:1-32

While the wall that Paul speaks of here is a racial and religious one (*Jews/Gentiles*), we do need to remember that Jesus' intention is to connect us - first to God and then to each other.

How personal/vulnerable should we be in order to have the kind of unity that Paul dreams for Christians in chapter 4?

What might help you connect better with others?

What do you need to overcome in order to connect in true biblical community?

Digging deeper into the story

others

The New Testament is full of what is often called “one another” passages such as “love one another,” “pray for one another,” “encourage one another,” “serve one another,” etc. Why do you think this is so important to God?

Read Romans 12:1-21

Rewrite verse 3 in your own words:

*What do you learn about how we are to interact with each other from this passage?
Make a long list of everything you can find in these verses on this topic:*

*Choose two things from the above list that you personally want to experiment with
and work on this week with the people you know (or don't yet know):*

