



Leader Guide

Last updated 4/18/19

With gratitude for the pioneering efforts of:

Mavuno Church

Nairobi Chapel

Mariners Church

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The Role of the Leader

Thank you for leading a Roots Group! This can be a life changing event for you—as well as the members of your group.

In Roots, your primary job is to facilitate discussion among the group. Rather than “teaching,” leaders encourage participants to share their personal thoughts and experiences, dig deeper into questions and topics, and refer back to Scripture as their guide. You can model depth and authenticity by sharing from your own life, but be sure that you don’t dominate the discussion time. The goal is to help people develop a passion for:

- A personal relationship with Jesus
- Living a lifestyle consistent with their faith
- An open and intimate prayer life
- Intentionally sharing their faith
- Knowing and hearing God’s voice
- Sharing God’s heart in community

Other responsibilities include:

- **Preparation:** Attend a training session/leader meeting if at all possible. Review the Leader Guide notes prior to each group meeting and identify which questions you will focus on. If you share leadership responsibilities, decide who is doing what.
- **Participation:** Complete daily readings and journaling. Memorize weekly Scripture verses. Engage in prayer experience and outreach experience.
- **Presence:** Attend each group gathering (or utilize assistant leader, on rare occasion). Arrive a few minutes early so you can set people at ease.
- **Community building:** Foster a sense of community and safety amongst group members. Pray for and encourage them. Communicate with them outside of class (e.g., Facebook or Google hangout). Follow up within 36 hours with anyone who unexpectedly misses a week to see if they are all right.
- **Leadership development:** Be attentive to group members with leadership potential. Give them the opportunity to take on a leadership role if/when appropriate, especially if it’s an area you could use help with.
- **Celebration:** If someone in your group has grown during Roots, share their story by emailing a GC staff person. Our staff can help to share their story more widely (anonymously, if appropriate) and open our congregation’s eyes to God’s work among us.

This Leader Guide will provide you with practical information to successfully lead a group, but your ultimate guide will be the Holy Spirit, and your greatest tool is prayer. Much of your growth and the success of your group will be based on your ability to hear and obey God’s direction of your efforts. Let’s see where He leads when we listen attentively!

Developing Healthy Spiritual Habits

Daily

- Time with God (devotions 5 times per week)—Bible reading, reflection, prayer

Weekly (or biweekly for some groups)

- Group gatherings—participation in Christian community
- Memory verses—planting God’s word in your heart (see Appendix 1)

Additional Experiences

These additional practices are meant to help you experience God’s presence in situations that may be beyond your comfort zone. God delights in your faith during these challenges and risks.

- Journaling—an opportunity to develop your thoughts by writing them down
- Covenant—yielding, surrender, commitment
- Extended time of prayer—prayer, meditation, silence, solitude
- Sharing your faith—serving as a witness to God’s presence and goodness
- Stepping into a serving opportunity—gifting, serving, leading, belonging, discipleship (for those who aren’t already serving)

Introductory Week

Goals:

- Cast vision for the big picture of Roots
- Build community – learn about your group, so you can most effectively shepherd them
- Encourage commitment – help participants to commit to this journey together

Arrival

- **Roots group roster:** Have all newcomers fill out a registration card.
- **Nametags:** New groups or groups with visitors, have people fill out nametags, if available

Community Builder (15 minutes)

- Leader starts – set the tone; if you are open and authentic, others are more likely to be
- **Introductions:** Each person shares:
 - Name (Pro tip: If nametags are unavailable, try playing an alliterative game to help people remember names, such as the picnic game. “My name is Bob, and I’ll bring bologna to the picnic.” (or the Beach Boys or a beluga whale – have fun!)
 - One thing people who know you casually know about you (job, kids, town, time at GC)
 - One thing people may not know about you (hobby, unique life experience, how you came to faith, how you met your spouse, etc.)

Content for Intro to Roots (30-60 minutes)

- **Restate the big picture:** Roots is a tool to help us grow in 3 core areas:
 - **Go deeper** with God – listen more intently for God’s voice in your life
 - **Get closer** to others – push past surface level talk; love one another as a church family
 - **Reach wider** in our communities – by grace bring good to our neighbors near and far
- **Review key components:** Roots includes 10 weeks of:
 - Daily Scripture/reflection readings (5 days per week)
 - Group gatherings
- **Assist with materials:** Make sure people have *Mizizi* books and journals
- **Why *Mizizi*?** This curriculum comes from our brothers and sisters in Kenya. It helps us engage with God’s word, grow good spiritual habits, and integrate faith and daily life. The GC leadership thinks this is one of the best resources available to help us grow as disciples. However, it’s not perfect. There may be stories, illustrations, grammar, or views that strike you oddly. That’s okay. Simply recognize it and move on, so that you can focus on hearing what God has to say to you.
- **Read 2-page *Mizizi* intro session together: (10 minutes)** (each person reads one paragraph).
- **Discussion questions: (10 minutes)** discuss Matthew 13:44-46.
 - In what ways are the two parables similar? Different?
 - What do the man and merchant recognize?
 - What do they both decide to do?
 - What is the price they are willing to pay?
 - In what ways should our pursuit of the Kingdom of God be parallel?
 - Summary: As we go through Roots, and pursue the Kingdom more fully, let’s do so with joyful abandon and anticipation, knowing that God will meet us.

- **Now, prepare your group for Week 1 readings:**
 - Have them turn to Week 1, Day 1 so they can see that each day’s reading isn’t too long.
 - Weekly memory verse – Each week includes a memory verse, highlighted on Day 1 of the week. We encourage you to work at this. (See Appendix 1.) This is different from the daily “verse to remember” listed with the journal questions. Show them examples.
 - Journal – daily readings include “questions for your journal.” If this is new for you, then purchase a journal ASAP and give this a try. God may meet you in new ways. For those wanting to go deeper, additional questions are available at www.grace.org/roots.
- As you prepare to lead this session, here are clarifications you may want to highlight in *Mizizi*.
 - The sidebar explaining that “Mizizi” means “roots” in Swahili
 - Adapt the leader materials for the length of your group gatherings
 - Monetary cost – covers book, journal, and leader costs; scholarships are available (see www.grace.org/roots for application form)
 - Schedule – Help your people understand when to do the daily readings and when your group is meeting.
 - Aim for at least 8 out of 11 attendance – Emphasize that greater participation will lead to a deeper experience. Even if they miss, we want them to come back.
 - Beyond-your-comfort zone experiences:
 - Extended time of prayer (flexible, according to your schedule)
 - Pay attention to opportunities God provides to share your faith
 - Serve the church or community (if not already doing so)
 - If you consider yourself to be a part of Grace Chapel but have not yet gone through the membership process, make it official this year
 - Covenant – we’re not collecting this; it is between each participant and God. Key notes:
 - Meaningfully engage in this 10-week journey (make time, make changes)
 - Ensure safe environment and open sharing – treat discussions as confidential

Concluding Community Time (15-30 minutes)

- **Share:** Ask each person to share what their hopes are for this journey. Lead off to set the tone. (If someone is very skeptical about Roots, invite them to share their hesitations.)
- **Note** where each person is (e.g., who is searching, cynical, seasoned, etc.). Your insights will be helpful as you encourage them individually and as a group. Observe what change or growth they undergo during Roots. Note the language they use to describe their hopes and spiritual walks. Calibrate your language so you can effectively connect with seekers or young believers.
- **Pray:** Remind them to get off to a great start and close in prayer—for the group, their growth/progress, and thankful anticipation of what God will do.

Midweek Communications

- Send out a midweek email encouraging your group in their daily readings (maybe highlight something that stood out to you). This shows you are thinking and caring about them, and gently reminds them that the group will discuss good, relevant content at the next gathering.

Week One: Our New Identity

Goals:

- Identify false conceptions of God and replace them with healthy ones
- Identify false conceptions of ourselves and replace them with healthy ones
- Foster a sense of belonging in the group

Announcements

(Please communicate these whenever is best for the flow of your group meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Roots overview:** For anyone who missed the content from the intro week, outline the main goals and components of Roots. (See notes from intro week.) Encourage them to read the two-page introduction in *Mizizi*.
- **Journals:** Remind people to use their journal. Explain that journaling during Roots is important because it will help them track progress taking place in their lives and will be useful for the extended prayer experience.
- **Bring a Bible** to the next gathering to discuss Psalm 1.

Arrival

- **Roots group roster:** Collect registration cards from newcomers
- **Nametags:** New groups or groups with visitors: have people fill out nametags, if available
- **Materials:** Make sure that newcomers receive a book

Community Builder (15 minutes)

- Leader starts – set the tone; if you are open and authentic, others are more likely to be
- **Introductions:** You probably didn't get to all of these last time. Try a new introduction!
 - Name (Pro tip: If nametags are unavailable, try playing an alliterative game to help people remember names, such as the picnic game. "My name is Bob, and I'll bring bologna to the picnic." (or the Beach Boys or a beluga whale – have fun!)
 - One thing people who know you casually would know about you (job, kids, town of residence, time at GC, etc.)
 - One thing people may not know about you (hobby, unique life experience, how you came to faith, how you met your spouse, etc.)
- Another icebreaker option: Two Truths and a Lie
 - (If not everyone knows each other's names, start with sharing your name)
 - Share 3 "facts" about yourself – 2 true and 1 false; the group needs to figure out which one is the lie

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Transition from icebreaker:** Sometimes it's hard to discern fact from fiction in our concept of God, and even in our own identities. That's what this week's readings focused on, and what we'll talk about in a minute. First, let's pray.
- **Pray** for the group discussion time
- **Discussion questions** (you don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group):

- Did anyone discover that you did or do believe a lie about God?
- What caught your attention in this week's readings? What did you find helpful, stretching, or challenging?
- Any new insights about God that you want to integrate into your life or identity?
- As a leader, pick one or two journaling questions that you answered and use it/them as a basis for discussion.

Memory Verse: 1 John 5:11-12 (10 minutes)

- Scripture memory is just as important for adults as for kids, but somehow we often aren't in the practice of it. Each week's reading contains a memory verse, highlighted on Day 1 of the week. We encourage you to work at this. Note that the weekly memory verse is different from the daily "verse to remember" listed with the journal questions. (Have people turn to the relevant pages for examples.)
- Say the verse out loud together and/or ask if someone will say it for the group.
 - Affirm their efforts! The purpose of this is to demonstrate to others that they're expected to actually memorize the verse. By asking someone to give it a try, your group sees that it's possible. If no one volunteers, you should.
 - Brainstorm how best to memorize Scripture (write verse down several times; say it over and over; use it to compose a song; get friend to check on you each day; screensaver)
 - Encourage the group to review this verse and memorize the next one

Group Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Sentence prayers:** Get group to go around and pray one sentence each. The idea is to get the group comfortable praying together, and to reduce the fear factor for people who aren't used to praying aloud. "Even if you have never prayed aloud in a group, this would be a good time to take that risk—but no one is required." Explain that each person will say one sentence to God that could be along the lines of anything they've learned this past week. (Someone who isn't comfortable can simply say "pass.") Leader closes.
- Remind everyone of confidentiality and wish them well for the upcoming week.

Midweek Communications

- Send out a midweek email encouraging your group in their daily readings and/or Scripture memory.
- If someone came the first week, but not the second, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Two: Encountering God

Goals:

- Understand that we all have direct access to God and that He speaks to us when we listen
- Value and create space for daily time with God
- Practice using tools that help to focus your time with God

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Deeper, Closer, Wider:** At Grace Chapel, our vision involves going deeper, getting closer, and reaching wider. Tie it with this study and prayer experience, emphasizing the place for daily time with God.

Arrival

- **Roots group roster:** Collect registration cards from newcomers (last week of walk-ins)
- **Nametags:** New groups or groups with visitors: have people fill out nametags, if available
- **Materials:** Make sure that newcomers receive a book
- **Leader development:** Consider asking someone to help you welcome people as they arrive

Community Builder (10 minutes)

- Leader starts – set the tone; if you are open and authentic, others are more likely to be
- **Peaks and Pits:** Each person shares the best and worst part of their week

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:16 (10 minutes)

- Ask for volunteer, then say it together
 - If no volunteers, try giving prompts like, “Let us then _____, so that _____.”
- What worked well as a memorization technique this week?

This Week’s Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Transition from memory verse:** As we memorize Scripture, we are giving God the opportunity to bring it to mind in times of need. That’s one way He can speak to us. This week’s readings were all about hearing His voice. What was helpful for you in this week’s study?
- **Sample quiet time, WRAPS with Psalm 1** (practice what we’re learning)
 - Explain that the next half hour will be a demo quiet time, learning to listen to God. Recap what WRAPS stands for.
 - Ask everyone to open their Bible to Psalm 1 and for the next 20 minutes quietly meditate on it using the WRAPS method (refer to Week 2 Day 2 Daily Quiet Time guidelines). Encourage people to listen to what God may be saying to them as they read.
 - Pro tip: Have printed copies of Psalm 1 available (see Appendix 2).
 - After 20 minutes, regroup and ask people to share what they thought God may have been saying to them (not necessary that everyone shares but it would be good if as many as possible do).
 - Remember to give an encouraging affirmation before moving on to the next person. “Wow, that’s amazing! Anyone else hear something?”

Preparing for the Extended Prayer Experience (10 minutes)

- Remind the group that the prayer experience is this coming week. They are invited to find quiet space, away from phones/cells, where they can focus on God for a longer time they normally would (such as a half-day; if that's overwhelming, try 2 hours; if you have never prayed for 5 minutes, go for 10).
- Distribute the handout (see Appendix 3).
- Briefly encourage the group to ensure they don't miss this exciting adventure. Some will be anxious about this and others may not be sure if they want to do it. Your enthusiasm will encourage them to take this risk!
- Ask them to take out their phones/calendars and block the time out now.

Group Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Sentence prayers:** Get group to go around and pray one sentence each. The idea is to get the group comfortable praying together, and to reduce the fear factor for people who aren't used to praying aloud. "Even if you have never prayed aloud in a group, this would be a good time to take that risk—but no one is required." Explain that each person will say one sentence to God that could be along the lines of anything they've learned this past week. (Someone who isn't comfortable can simply say "pass.") Leader closes.
- Note that we'll try breaking out into prayer partners in a few weeks, but for now we're getting comfortable praying aloud together.

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Encourage group members to make a list of their "wealth" areas. What is most important to you? (examples: education, family, career, financial security, etc.) Why are these areas important? Why would they be difficult to surrender to God? We will present them to God at our next gathering.
- Consider using a digital social platform (private Facebook group, Google groups and hangouts, GroupMe, etc.) to share encouragements, updates, learnings, prayer requests, etc.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Three: Becoming a Christ Follower

Goals:

- Identify an area of your life that God is asking you to surrender to Him, and take concrete steps to do so
- If there are things holding you back from trusting God, identify and deal with them
- Develop a posture of submission to God, so that His plan for your life will be more important than your own

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Prayer Experience:** If you haven't already done this, block out time to give it a try. If you have done it, congratulations for stepping outside of your comfort zone and saying "yes" to God!

Arrival

- **Nametags:** If you think someone is uncertain of names, keep using them
- **Materials:** Make sure that newcomers receive a book
- **Leader development:** Consider asking someone to help you welcome people as they arrive

Community Builder (10 minutes)

- **Peaks and Pits:** Each person shares the best and worst part of their week

Prayer Experience Recap (10 minutes)

- This week, you had the chance to both talk to and listen to God through the extended prayer experience. Were you able to take up this challenge? (Have people share, using the following prompts as appropriate. If no one did it, encourage them to block out a time, even if it's difficult.)
 - What was it like for you?
 - Any surprises or break-throughs?
 - What aspects were the biggest challenges?
 - What were the most satisfying aspects?

This Week's Content (20-60 minutes)

- **Pray** for the group discussion time
- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - This week's material talked a lot about "surrender" and "submission," which can have negative connotations in our society. Are there ways in which you view these concepts differently now?
 - Giving up our resistance toward God in aspects that God has raised and accepting His total reign in our lives
 - Lifelong process
 - Why do you trust God? If you are struggling with trusting God in certain areas, why?

- Anyone willing to share something you struggled to give up, which you realized was not honoring to God?
- Think back over your journey throughout this past year. Can you identify ways in which God has been shaping your character to be more like Christ?

Memory Verse: Galatians 2:20 (5 minutes)

- Use cards and have everyone write out memory verse. Then say the verse together.
- Transition to “dying to self” exercise

Surrendering Control of Wealth Areas (15 minutes)

- This week, people should have made a list of their “wealth” areas. What is most important to you? (examples: education, family, career, financial security, etc.) Why are these areas important? Why would they be difficult to surrender to God? Ask them to take out this list or take a few minutes to answer the prompt now by writing down their list (in silence).
- Encourage people to submit their list to God, surrendering control of these areas to God. A few ways to do this:
 - Sign the Deed of Ownership in *Mizizi*. The language may be awkward for our context, but the value is in moving from a mental decision to a physical step.
 - Have them write something simple at the bottom of their list like, “God, I give these precious people and possessions to You. I will hold loosely to them and follow where You lead, acknowledging that Your plans are better than mine.”
 - Pray about a specific item on your list in prayer partnerships.

Prayer (10 minutes)

- If time and a high level of trust in the group, break into prayer partners. (Best to partner with same gender and age.) Share an area you are surrendering to God; partner will pray for you.
- If newer group, say sentence prayers in a large group. Leader closes.

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Consider using a digital social platform (private Facebook group, Google groups and hangouts, GroupMe, etc.) to share encouragements, updates, learnings, prayer requests, etc.
- Share the strongholds list from Appendix 4 as a resource to help people identify the stronghold(s) in their life. Encourage them with scriptural promises and your prayers.
- Leader prep: Map out prayer partnerships (2-3 people per group), which will begin next week. Bear in mind gender (keep men with men and women with women); spiritual state (pair a younger believer with a mature believer), life stage (best to keep people in similar life stage together), and personalities (who would be comfortable together).
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Four: Holiness & Wholeness

Goals:

- Embrace the call to be set apart for Christ
- Develop a desire to remove sinful areas from your life and pursue holy living
- Understand that our holy living is meant to be a blessing to others
- Seek and accept help from others in the pursuit of holiness

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Memory verse: Romans 12:1-2:** This week's Scripture memory is a longer one. It's okay if you mastered a key phrase, such as "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" or "Do not conform to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." It is a great segment, with precious practical application, and worth getting a good handle on.
- **Almost halfway there:** This week marks the end of topics that deal with personal matters. So far, we have focused on developing a range of spiritual disciplines (quiet time/devos, study, journaling, Scripture memory, prayer, silence, solitude, meditation, surrender, submission). The following weeks will focus on helping us to "make a difference" or "reach wider."

Arrival

- **Nametags:** If you think someone is uncertain of names, keep using them
- **Materials:** Make sure that newcomers receive a book
- **Leader development:** Consider asking someone to help you welcome people as they arrive

Community Builder (10 minutes)

- Share a time when a Christian brother or sister encouraged you in a major way.
- Share a time when a Christian confronted you such that you were really helped.

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Pray** for the group, the challenge of living lives pleasing to God, and our ability to be a source of strength to one another.
- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - Discuss what it means to have a healthy pursuit of holiness, as opposed to an unhealthy pursuit of holiness.
 - What spiritual mental battles are you fighting (e.g., low esteem or prideful arrogance; laziness or legalism; etc.)?
 - How can you put into practice the concept of "guarding your mind"?
 - Based on Col. 3, discuss how to "put on the new self" in your attitudes and actions.
 - Is there someone in your life who could use your encouragement?
 - What part of this week's reading did you find helpful or challenging?

Prayer (10 minutes)

- If you sense that your group is ready, break into prayer partners (2-3 people per group). Assign partnerships based on:
 - Gender (keep men with men and women with women)
 - Spiritual state (pair a younger believer with a mature believer)
 - Life stage (best to keep people in similar life stage together)
 - Personalities (who would be comfortable together)
- Prayer partner prompt: Ask partners to share an area of their life where they would like healing or strengthening, then pray for each other.
- If you sense that it's too soon for the group to break into prayer partners, have a two-part group prayer:
 - Part 1, leader prompts questions, people pray silently: What areas of conflictedness do you recognize in your life? What hopes for healing and wholeness does God stir in your heart?
 - Part 2, leader prays about the discussion topics of the day

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Share resources for next week's discussion:
 - Point people's attention to the Evangelism Styles Questionnaire in the appendix of this week's readings and encourage them to complete it.
 - Share the Spiritual Journey Line (see Appendix 5 in Leader Guide) and ask people to think about where they are on this.
 - Encourage the group in Scripture memory, and (if you decide to do this), tell them that there will be a prize this week for those who have memorized the first five.
- Consider using a digital social platform (private Facebook group, Google groups and hangouts, GroupMe, etc.) to share encouragements, updates, learnings, prayer requests, etc.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Five: Sharing God's Heart (Part 1)

Goals:

- Understand that God actively seeks the lost and has appointed us to help; reaching out to people who don't know God is our privilege and responsibility
- Prepare to articulate our own faith story in natural ways

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Outreach ("open doors") Experience:** This coming week, pray and be on the lookout for opportunities when God "opens the door" for you to share your faith story or the good news of Jesus, or to invite someone to church. When God opens the door, be ready and willing to walk through it. Be prepared, expectant, and bold.

Arrival

- **Nametags:** If you think someone is uncertain of names, keep using them

Memory Verse: Matthew 28:19-20 (10-15 minutes)

- **Pair off** and do the memory verse together in partners (or 3's). Even if some haven't worked on this during the week, you can make progress on it. Note: If you began prayer partnerships last week, have people pair off the same way.
- **5-week challenge:** How many of the previous weeks' verses can you remember? Consider having a small prize for the group that can recite all 5 weeks from memory.

Community Builder (5-10 minutes)

- In under a minute, when and how did you first hear the good news of Jesus Christ?

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - What misconceptions about evangelism did you uncover in your thinking or attitude?
 - What are your greatest fears about sharing your faith? Did anything come up in this week's readings to help you address these?
 - According to this week's questionnaire, what was your evangelism style? How might you use these strengths to reach out to the people on your "impact list" (Day 1 reading)?
 - Were any of the evangelism tools shared in this week's reading especially helpful to you? How so?
 - As you think about the coming week, what situations, contexts, or friendships might present an "open door of opportunity"? (If the "open door" experience wasn't announced yet, see above and walk your group through this challenge.)

Practice Sharing Your Story (20-30 minutes)

- In preparation to walk through an “open door” that God provides, let’s take a few minutes to practice sharing our faith journeys with each other.
- **Leader models** (no more than 5 minutes)
- **Share in partnerships:** Break off into the same groups used for the memory verse exercise and take no more than 5 minutes each to share about your faith journey.
- Tools to guide you:
 - Spiritual Journey line – identify one of the markers on this line and explain what moved you through it
 - Was there a key conversation, event, or struggle that moved you forward in your relationship with Jesus?
 - In what way have you been challenged or encouraged recently in your walk with God?
- **Pray:** When you have finished, take a few minutes to pray for each other, asking that God will open a door this week for you to share Him with someone.

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Encourage the group in the “open doors” experience.
- If your group resonated with The Big Story tool, share the app and video (much easier to understand by watching than reading): www.jameschoung.net/resources/big-story.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Six: Sharing God's Heart (Part 2)

Goals:

- Bring our faith to bear on societal issues. God doesn't just transform individual lives; He restores communities and systems and calls us to join Him.
- Identify an area of passion within the group and prayerfully seek opportunities to make a difference together.

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **GC's local and global partnerships:** As we think about our brothers and sisters across the world, know that Grace Chapel works with many groups to bring God's good news and transformation. See www.grace.org/missions for a list of local and global partnerships.

Arrival

- **Nametags:** If you think someone is uncertain of names, keep using them

Community Builder (10-15 minutes)

- **Roots check-in:** What are you finding to be helpful and personally up-building in Roots? Any surprises or struggles? (Affirm the good progress everyone is making, and the deep benefits of pressing on.)

"Open Door" Recap (10-15 minutes)

- Did anyone experience God opening a door of opportunity for you to share your faith this week? Please share! (If no one shares, be willing to start off—even if your report is that you didn't have an open door experience yet. Encourage people to keep praying and being open and ready.)

Memory Verse: Matthew 25:40 (5 minutes)

- Say it together as a group
- What does this week's memory verse have to do with the content?

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - What kinds of people do you encounter who might be viewed as "the least of these brothers of mine"? What kinds of poverty and injustice do you see in your world?
 - Leaders, consider highlighting the "least of these" list in Matthew 25:34-36. Group members can view The Message translation in their Day 2 reading. If people are reducing poverty to just material poverty, help to expand their understanding.
 - In what ways does the Bible change or challenge your attitude regarding the poor? What are some of the hurdles that you have to overcome?
 - What aspects of God's heart are you most attracted to (see Day 1 chart)? Are there ways in which you are already actively involved in one of these areas?

- What are things you can do to better take care of God's creation? Share some best practices among your group.
- Considering Global Awareness Week partners and/or Spring Serve opportunities, is there a group we'd like to engage and serve with together? Talk about shared areas of passion in the group.
- **Leadership development:** Pay attention to which people in your group might have a heart for social justice, an ability to connect folks with justice and compassion opportunities, and/or the capacity to find consensus among the group on a shared area of passion. Invite these people to lead the group forward in engaging in this issue together.

Prayer (10 minutes)

- If you haven't officially assigned prayer partners yet, do so now (2-3 people per group). Assign partnerships based on:
 - Gender (keep men with men and women with women)
 - Spiritual state (pair a younger believer with a mature believer)
 - Life stage (best to keep people in similar life stage together)
 - Personalities (who would be comfortable together)
- Prompts:
 - How can I pray for you?
 - Is there someone I can join you in praying for?

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Seven: Money Matters

Goals:

- View ourselves as managers rather than owners of our resources (God is the owner)
- Develop more intentional management strategies for our finances, including plans for tithing, saving, and giving

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Further stewardship resources:** If you want to dig deeper into this topic, you may want to reach out to Kurt Drescher, our Pastor of Stewardship, at kdrescher@grace.org.

Community Builder (15-20 minutes)

- Catch up on how everyone is doing. “Open doors” experiences to share?
- When you were growing up, what was your family’s attitude/approach toward money?

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:33 (5-10 minutes)

- Say it together as a group
- Consider introducing the song “Seek Ye First” as a Scripture memory technique.
- What other memory techniques are working for people? Has anyone found good ways to remember the reference/context in addition to the verse itself?

This Week’s Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Pray** for the group and for God’s wisdom as we steward His resources.
- **Discussion questions** (You don’t need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - Why do you think Jesus talks so much about money and possessions?
 - To what degree do you experience the tension between being a money manager and being someone managed by money?
 - In working through this week’s materials, what are one or two insights that really helped you? What practices do you intend to implement?
 - What is a question about the issue of managing money that you would like help with from the group? (tithing? saving? giving to poor? other?)
 - What are some ways you would like to be kept accountable when it comes to money? Who in your life would be best positioned to do that? Will you ask her/him?

Prayer (10 minutes)

- Sentence prayers around today’s topic. Leader closes.

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Encourage group to take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory in the appendix.

Week Eight: Shaped for Service

Goals:

- Understand your unique gifts and SHAPE
- Find a way to joyfully serve God's kingdom in light of who you are

Announcements

(Please communicate whenever is best for the flow of your meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Spring Serve or other follow-up to week 6 discussion:** Check the Grace Chapel calendar for our next Spring Serve date (or other group serve experience, as applicable). This can be a great follow-up to our discussion on sharing God's heart for societal transformation.

Community Builder (15-20 minutes)

- Any highlights or lowlights from your week that you want to share or catch us up on?
- Where did you see God show up in your life this week? Any "open doors" experiences to share?

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 4:10 (5 minutes)

- Say it together as a group
- What are the key ideas in this rather short verse?

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Pray** for the group and each person's ability to share "God's grace in its various forms."
- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - What did you find interesting or challenging in this week's reading?
 - Based on the inventory, what were your top 3 spiritual gifts? Any surprises? Confirmations? Allow the group to affirm the gifts they have noticed in each other.
 - What other aspects of your SHAPE (Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experience) provided good insight about yourself and how God has shaped you for service?
 - Ask group members to share areas where they are currently serving. How are these opportunities a good fit for who God has made them to be?
 - Review together some of the different opportunities available for serving in the church (see www.grace.org/serve). Given people's various SHAPes, which areas of service might each person be well suited for?
 - Let the group suggest some potential matches for each person. Use this time to brainstorm and help one another. If your group is too large, break up into smaller clusters to discuss SHAPes and potential areas of service.
 - This session is not meant to guilt people into serving beyond their capacity; it is meant to encourage those who are not yet serving to give it a try. Affirm those who are already serving, and don't pressure them to sign up for more. Perhaps they can be advocates in explaining areas of service to others in the group.

Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Prayer partners:** Pray for God's guidance in finding a well-suited ministry involvement, and that it would be a blessing to both the servers and those they serve.

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Encourage group members as they connect with serving opportunities. Offer to talk through their questions and/or put them in touch with the right people.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Nine: Welcome to the Family

Goals:

- Overcome our culture's extreme individualism to embrace an alternative culture of community, where the Christian life is lived, shared, grown, and challenged together
- Lean into the 3-fold purpose of care ("closer"), growth ("deeper"), and impact ("wider") and identify an area for your group to improve in
- For new Roots Groups: consider the possibility of continuing to meet as a small group

Announcements

(Please communicate these whenever is best for the flow of your group meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Serving opportunities:** If you were absent last week and want to explore how to get connected to an area of service, talk to your group leader about the list of opportunities.
- **Communion Sunday** is practiced monthly at Grace Chapel. We won't be doing communion in our Roots groups as they do in Nairobi, but do be very attentive as you take communion.
- **Membership:** If you consider yourself to be a part of Grace Chapel but have not yet gone through the membership process, make it official by signing up for one of our upcoming membership classes (www.grace.org/membership). The process includes 3 steps: 1) attend 90-minute class, 3) complete membership application, 4) participate in membership conversation with GC leaders.

Memory Verse: John 13:35 (5 minutes)

- Say it together as a group
- See if you can say it in a circle, each person taking one word, then ramp up the speed. How fast can the group say it?
- Memory verse challenge for next week – can anyone say all 10? (maybe have a prize for the winner)

Community Builder (15-20 minutes)

- What is something that you appreciate about or have experienced in Christian community?

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Pray** for the group and your ability to be a witness for Christ because of your love for each other.
- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - What did you learn or find interesting in this week's reading?
 - What aspects of Christian community are most meaningful or compelling for you?
 - What fears, frustrations, or reservations do you have about community?
 - What makes Christian community different from other community? How have you experienced these differences in your life?
 - How can good community help you grow in your relationship with God?
 - What have you appreciated about our time together as a group? What do you think about continuing to meet regularly as an ongoing group? What would you hope for?

What would be your reservations?

A few items to note:

- *Are people already in an ongoing group? If so, we're not trying to pressure them to join more groups; we just want to encourage everyone to get connected to a small group somehow. People can learn more about current groups at www.grace.org/groups.*
- *Who in the group has leadership potential? Maybe there's someone with hospitality gifts who would be a good host; someone with strengths in teaching or facilitation who would be a good study leader; or a details-oriented person who can coordinate contact info and group updates.*
- If you haven't yet gone through the process to become a Grace Chapel member, have you considered it? What are your hesitations? Any questions you might have? Encourage people to sign up for one of the upcoming classes.
- If are a GC member, what prompted you to become a member? From your perspective, what difference has it made?

Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Prayer partners:** Update each other on answers to past prayer requests. What is one area of thanksgiving and/or one area of concern in each of your lives now. Pray aloud or silently for each other.

Midweek Communications

- If someone was absent this week, reach out to them to see how they are doing.
- Practicing and modeling encouragement: tell each group member (individually or in a group communication) one thing you have appreciated about having them in the group, something that they contribute uniquely. Let them know what a blessing they are.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Week Ten: The Journey Ahead

Goals:

- Each person identifies a next step that will contribute to their spiritual growth. Examples:
 - Move forward with a serving opportunity
 - Join an ongoing small group
 - Become a member at Grace
 - Begin a Bible reading plan that will keep them in God's word regularly
- The group decides what "the journey ahead" looks like collectively. Examples:
 - Form a small group
 - Serve together in a new way
 - Open the doors more widely to "outsiders"

Announcements

(Please communicate these whenever is best for the flow of your group meeting; does not have to be at the outset.)

- **Serving opportunities:** If you missed the "shaped for service" session and want to explore how to get connected to an area of service, talk to your group leader about the list of opportunities.
- **Membership:** If you consider yourself to be a part of Grace Chapel but have not yet gone through the membership process, make it official by signing up for one of our upcoming membership classes (www.grace.org/membership). The process includes 3 steps: 1) attend 90-minute class, 3) complete membership application, 4) participate in membership conversation with GC leaders.

Memory Verse Challenge: All Ten (10-15 minutes)

- If your group has been very engaged in this, hold a mini-contest to see who can recite, write, or fill in the blanks for all 10 from memory, offering a prize for the winner.
- Cooperative version: See if, collectively, the group can remember all 10. Maybe one person will remember when another forgets, and you can help each other.
- This week only: If looking back at all 10 verses is overwhelming, focus on this week's verse. Even if your group hasn't engaged strongly in Scripture memory this season, underscore its value and emphasize that it is never too late to start.

Community Builder (15-20 minutes)

- Share what you as a leader have especially enjoyed about your group time. What have others appreciated about the group experience?
- What have we learned about the value, or challenges, of "doing life together"?

This Week's Content (30-60 minutes)

- **Discussion questions** (You don't need to ask all of these; focus on the ones that are most helpful for your group. Remember, as a leader, you set the tone for vulnerability and honesty. Be prepared to answer these questions with current or recent examples from your own life.):
 - Given the 3 forms of spiritual attack we studied this week (flesh, world, devil), which are you particularly vulnerable to? Why? In what situations do you need to be most "on guard"?

- Now that Roots is done, what will your quiet time/personal devotions consist of, starting tomorrow? Recap WRAPS (Week 2, Day 2). Encourage people to start on the Gospel of Mark (a couple of paragraphs a day), or try *Encounter with God*.
- What are you now doing/thinking differently as a result of this journey?
- Have you identified a next step in your spiritual development? Take a few minutes to talk about this around the table, allowing as many people as possible to participate.
- Continue last week's discussion about the next steps for the group.

Prayer (10 minutes)

- **Table prayer:** Have each person pray for the person on their right, or whatever approach will be comfortable and personal for your group. Make sure each person is prayed for by another person group; we want to conclude by praying for one another.

Midweek Communications

- Follow up on any next steps the group identified.
- Any stories of God at work to celebrate? Share them with the GC staff!

Appendix 1: Memorizing Scripture

One of the most powerful ways you can transform your spiritual life is to learn to memorize Scripture. The Bible says in Proverbs 7:2 “Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down and also keep them deep within your heart” (TLB).

You may not believe you can memorize Bible verses, but that’s just not true. You can memorize what you want to memorize. You’ve probably memorized the national anthem. You may have memorized the Lord’s Prayer. You memorize what’s important to you: song lyrics, football stats, social security number. How important is the Bible to you?

It’s a matter of motivation rather than skill. David wrote in Psalm 119:72, “The law that you gave means more to me than all the money in the world” (GNB). When you understand how important and how valuable God’s word is, you’ll get serious about memorizing significant portions of it.

Why should you memorize God’s word?

It’s the number one tool for resisting temptation. When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, his only defense against this attack was the word of God. If Jesus knew a better way to fight temptation, he would have used it.

It helps you make wise decisions. When you ask God for guidance about something very specific, you may find that the answer comes in a particular Scripture passage, showing you what to do. The Bible says, “Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105 GNB). The more you know what God says, the more you are going to know how God thinks, because the will of God is found in the word of God. The more you fill your mind with the word of God, the more you will know the will of God.

It strengthens you when you’re under stress. We all get stressed from time to time. The Psalmist wrote, “Remember your promise to me; it is my only hope. Your promise revives me; it comforts me in all my troubles” (Psalm 119:49-50 NLT). If you memorize Scripture, your stress level will decrease and your confidence level will increase dramatically.

It comforts you when you’re sad. The Bible is full of comfort. Jeremiah said, “Your words are my joy and my heart’s delight” (Jeremiah 15:16b GWT).

It helps you witness to unbelievers. 1 Peter 3:15 says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (NIV). If someone asks you what the Bible says about an issue or what they should do in a situation, what do you tell them? If you have Scripture memorized, it’ll help you be far more effective in sharing because you can share the truth of God’s word.

Appendix 2: Psalm 1

¹Blessed is the one

 who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
 or sit in the company of mockers,

²but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
 and who meditates on his law day and night.

³That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
 whatever they do prospers.

⁴Not so the wicked!

 They are like chaff
 that the wind blows away.

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
 nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
 but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Appendix 3: Extended Prayer Experience

Purpose: This block of time is intended to be a gift. It is an extended time for you to be in God's presence—an expanded version of what you have recently been doing on a daily basis. The increased time will allow you to go deeper—and to experience God's love and grace more thoroughly. Prepare:

- to be more relaxed and reflective
- to not only read Scripture but also to ponder or meditate upon it
- to speak more extensively with God as you have time for varied aspects of prayer
- and to listen and allow the Holy Spirit and God's word to speak into your life on areas ranging from your identity to your relationships, attitudes, and activities

You determine the length of time for your prayer experience—but try to stretch yourself, whether by 30 minutes, an hour, or several hours. Our hope is that you will discover more of God, and his love, grace, mercy, and help.

Scripture to keep in mind

- Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (The “throne of grace” is an image of entering into God's presence, which is what prayer does.)
- Jeremiah 29:12-13 – “Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”
- James 4:8 – “Come near to God and he will come near to you.”

Ideas on how to use this time

- Gather your Bible, *Mizizi* book, journal, and perhaps a cup of coffee or tea or water bottle.
- Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted and distracted (turn off cell phone).
- Take time to sit still, quiet your heart and mind, focus on God, and invite His presence. It may take 5 or 10 minutes to shed the pressures of daily life and the to-do lists that can dominate your mind. You may want to often first to “unload” stresses.
- Use a Psalm of praise, such as 8 (or 19, 96, 100, 104, 147—there are many ☺) to focus on God.
- Review the pages from this past week in your *Mizizi* book, as you may want to make use of various ideas, such as the “acts” of prayer in Day 5: A Model for Prayer.
- Write in your journal what God has been saying to you—things to mull over, attitudes to develop, or actions to take. What Scriptures or ideas have grabbed your attention?
- Read “Half Day in Prayer” in *Mizizi* as it provides a simple and good structure.
- Pray the Lord's Prayer slowly and deliberately—Luke 11:2-4 or Matthew 6:9-13.
- Pray for others, starting with those closest (relationally or geographically) and radiating outward—family, friends, neighbors, workmates, world-wide.
- Take a walk and notice the beauty of creation—and use that to praise your Creator.
- Write a prayer in your journal; talk to God out loud; enjoy the time!

Example (feel free to adjust times to fit your growth situation)

- Sit still and quiet your mind and heart. Worship God using a Psalm (10-15 min).
- Review recent readings in *Mizizi*, looking for key insights and issues. Ask God to highlight important growth areas for you (15-30 min).

- Journal about these (10-15 minutes).
- Write a prayer that God forms in your heart (10-15 min).
- Read “Half Day in Prayer” in *Mizizi* and pray through the 3 segments (worship of God, prayer for other, prayer for self) (15-30 min).

Appendix 4: Strongholds: What Controls Your Life?

- **Pride:** Putting yourself before others, thinking you are better, not compromising in relationships or teams, not accepting help because “you can handle this”
- **Perfectionism/Control:** Wanting everything to work according to your plan and timetable and not God’s or any authority above you
- **Bitterness/Unforgiveness/Resentment:** Towards self and/or others
- **Lying:** Habitual, to self/others, believing lies above what the word of God says
- **Low Self Esteem:** Believing what others say about you rather than God, feeling ugly/worthless/unworthy of love, etc.
- **Materialism:** Seeking wealth or the accumulation of things at the expense of others or your relationship with God
- **Career:** Putting career before God, doing anything to get ahead in your career
- **Self Image/People Pleasing:** Caring more about others’ perception of you than God’s, fear of losing face in society if you follow God, fear of not looking “Christian enough,” doing things that are contrary to what you know is right to avoid disappointing people, taking criticism personally
- **Achievement/Success:** Prioritizing advancement over following God
- **Greed:** Always wanting more, hoarding money/resources, not willing to share
- **Fear:** Of being alone, failure, loss, etc.
- **Rebellion:** To authorities, society, God, etc.
- **Idolatry:** TV, music, other media, celebrities, etc.
- **Socializing/Entertainment:** Clubbing, going out, placing recreational activities above God/quiet time
- **Legalism:** Prioritizing rules or traditions over God’s prompting
- **Relationships:** Allowing any relationship in your life to supersede your relationship with God (friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, spouse, kids, coworkers, etc.)
- **Addiction:** Trusting anything other than God for pleasure, fulfillment, and the ability to cope with life (alcohol, drugs, smoking, sex, sleep, food, entertainment, etc.)

Appendix 5: Spiritual Journey Line

