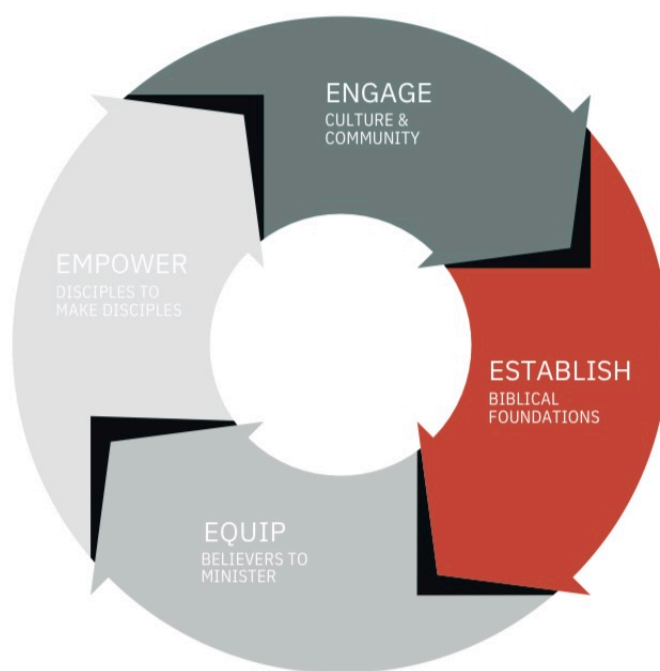


The mission of Rise Up Church is to raise disciples, empower families, and revitalize neighborhoods by the transformational power of the gospel. At Rise Up Church, our discipleship rhythm shapes how we live and expressed in four key movements that we call the 4E's. It is all about following Jesus and helping others do the same.



The purpose of our Koinonia Gatherings is to establish people in biblical foundations by building Christ-centered connections. We believe the Scriptures teaches that life change happens best in community, as we grow together in God's Word and are led by the Holy Spirit.

Below, you'll find a sermon-based guide from the most recent sermon to help lead a Rise Up Church Koinonia Gathering, along with a five day devotional designed to help you apply the sermon throughout the week.

## Koinonia Group Guide: Jesus the King Who Lays Down His Life

### Good Friday Sermon - John 19:16-30

#### Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by thanking God for His sacrifice on Good Friday and asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and reveal areas where each person needs to surrender to Jesus.

#### Ice Breaker

Share a time when you experienced peer pressure (as a child or adult). How did you respond? What did you learn from that experience?

#### Sermon Summary

This Good Friday message explores Jesus' interactions in his final hours with three groups: the powerful (Pilate), the hostile (the crowd), and the hopeless (the thieves, John, and Mary). Through these encounters, we see that Jesus is the King who willingly laid down His life for all mankind—including those who lack courage, those who are fickle in their faith, and those who feel hopeless.

#### Key Takeaways

1. **Jesus died for the powerful who lack courage** - Pilate knew Jesus was innocent but compromised truth for comfort and status.
2. **Jesus died for the fickle and hostile** - The same crowd that shouted "Hosanna!" demanded "Crucify Him!" when Jesus didn't meet their expectations.
3. **Jesus died for the hopeless** - He laid down His life for those dying beside Him and those watching their hope seemingly die with Him.
4. **"It is finished" (Tetelestai)** - This declaration means "paid in full"—our sin debt is completely satisfied through Christ's sacrifice.

## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text

1. Read John 19:16-30 together. What details stand out to you that you hadn't noticed before?
2. What does the contrast between Palm Sunday ("Hosanna!") and Good Friday ("Crucify Him!") reveal about human nature and expectations of Jesus?
3. Why is it significant that Jesus said "It is finished" rather than "I am finished"? What's the difference?

### Personal Reflection

4. **The Pilate in Us:** In what areas of your life are you tempted to compromise your convictions for comfort, status, or to avoid conflict? Be specific.
5. **The Fickle Crowd:** When have you been "all in" for Jesus, and when have you struggled to even acknowledge Him? What circumstances tend to make you waver?
6. **The Hopeless:** What situation in your life feels hopeless right now? How does Jesus' sacrifice on the cross speak to your hopelessness?

### Going Deeper

7. The sermon mentioned that when we "willingly choose to do what we want over what God has instructed us to do, we are crucifying Him." How does this perspective challenge you?
8. Jesus laid down His life while people mocked Him, while His vision seemed to be dying, and while those around Him felt hopeless. What does this teach us about God's faithfulness even when we can't see the outcome?
9. How does understanding that Jesus laid down His life for "the powerful, the hostile, and the hopeless" expand your view of the gospel?

## Practical Application

### This Week's Challenge

The sermon calls us to respond to Jesus' sacrifice in three ways:

1. **Surrender** - Not choosing comfort over conviction
2. **Commitment** - Following Jesus even when costly
3. **Faith** - Trusting God to complete what He started in us

### Personal Action Steps:

- **Identify:** Which of the three groups (powerful who lack courage, fickle/hostile, or hopeless) do you most identify with right now?
- **Confess:** Share with one trusted person in your group an area where you need to surrender, commit, or exercise faith.
- **Apply:** Choose one specific action you'll take this week in response to Jesus laying down His life for you.

### Practical Examples:

- If you lack courage: Have that difficult conversation you've been avoiding
- If you've been fickle: Establish a daily practice to stay connected to Jesus
- If you feel hopeless: Memorize "It is finished" and speak it over your situation daily

## Group Prayer Time

### Prayer Prompts:

1. **Confession:** Take time for silent confession of areas where you've compromised convictions or been fickle in your faith.
2. **Gratitude:** Thank Jesus specifically for laying down His life for you, naming what He's saved you from.
3. **Surrender:** Pray for each person who shared an area where they need to surrender, commit, or trust God.
4. **Hopeless Situations:** Lift up specific situations group members are facing that feel hopeless, declaring "It is finished" over them.
5. **Anticipation:** Close by thanking God that Sunday is coming—resurrection follows crucifixion.

## Looking Ahead

As you prepare for Easter Sunday:

- Reflect daily on what "It is finished" means for your specific struggles
- Journal about how Jesus has laid down His life for you personally
- Consider: How will you live differently because of Good Friday?

## Additional Resources

### Scripture for Further Study:

- Isaiah 53:1-12 (Prophecy of the suffering servant)
- Philippians 2:5-11 (Christ's humility and exaltation)
- Hebrews 12:1-3 (Fixing our eyes on Jesus)
- 1 Peter 2:21-25 (Christ's example in suffering)

### Reflection Questions for the Week:

- What does it mean that Jesus is King even while dying on a cross?
- How does Good Friday being "good" for us change how I live?
- Where do I need to remember "It is finished" this week?

## Closing Thought

"Jesus laid down his life for all of mankind, including you and me, which is good news. And however we might identify with these scriptures...Jesus laid down his life for you."

*Remember: The cross wasn't the end of the story. Sunday is coming!*

## 5-Day Devotional: The King Who Laid Down His Life

### Day 1: The Courage to Stand for Truth

**Reading:** John 18:28-40

**Devotional:** Pilate knew Jesus was innocent, yet he surrendered truth to the pressure of the crowd. How often do we compromise our convictions for comfort, acceptance, or personal gain? Pilate's failure reminds us that knowing what is right means nothing without the courage to act on it. Jesus, however, stood firm in truth even when it led to the cross. Today, examine areas where peer pressure—whether from culture, social media, or relationships—tempts you to compromise your faith. Remember, Jesus laid down His life for those moments when we lack courage. His finished work gives us strength to stand firm. Will you choose conviction over comfort today?

### Day 2: When Expectations Go Unmet

**Reading:** Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19

**Devotional:** The same crowd that shouted "Hosanna!" soon cried "Crucify Him!" They wanted a political deliverer, but Jesus came as a spiritual Savior. How often do we become disappointed with God because He doesn't answer our prayers the way we expect? The crowd's fickleness reveals our own tendency to follow Jesus only when He meets our expectations. Yet even as they rejected Him, Jesus was answering their deepest cry—"save us"—in a way far greater than they imagined. When God's plans don't align with yours, trust that He sees what you cannot. His ways are higher. Surrender your expectations and embrace His perfect will, knowing He is accomplishing something greater than you can ask or imagine.

### Day 3: Hope in the Midst of Hopelessness

**Reading:** Luke 23:32-43; John 19:25-27

**Devotional:** At the cross stood those drowning in hopelessness: criminals facing death, a disciple watching his dreams die, a mother beholding her son's execution. Yet even in this darkest moment, Jesus brought hope. He saved one thief, secured John's future, and fulfilled prophecy. When your circumstances seem hopeless—when relationships crumble, health fails, or dreams die—remember that Sunday is coming. Jesus specializes in resurrection. The very moment that appeared to be ultimate defeat was actually ultimate victory. What feels finished in your life may be exactly where God is working His greatest miracle. Hold on. The story isn't over. Jesus laid down His life to give you hope beyond what you can see.

## **Day 4: It Is Finished**

**Reading:** John 19:28-30; Hebrews 10:1-18

**Devotional:** "It is finished"—tetelestai—paid in full. With His final breath, Jesus didn't declare defeat but victory. The debt of sin: paid. The prophecies: fulfilled. The power of death: broken. The sacrificial system: completed. You don't have to earn God's love or work for your salvation. Jesus finished the work. Yet how often do we live as though we must prove ourselves worthy? We strive, perform, and exhaust ourselves trying to complete what Christ already finished. Today, rest in the finished work of Jesus. Your acceptance isn't based on your performance but on His perfection. Stop striving and start receiving. The work is done. Your sins are forgiven. You are loved completely. It is finished.

## **Day 5: Our Response to His Sacrifice**

**Reading:** Romans 12:1-2; Luke 9:23-26

**Devotional:** Jesus laid down His life for the powerful who lack courage, the fickle and hostile, and the hopeless. He laid it down for you. What will your response be? Surrender—choosing conviction over comfort. Commitment—following Jesus even when costly. Faith—trusting He will complete what He started. Good Friday demands a response. Will you continue living for yourself, or will you take up your cross daily? Jesus didn't hold back; He gave everything. True discipleship costs something. It means dying to self-interest, worldly approval, and personal ambition. But in losing your life for Him, you find it. Today, lay down whatever keeps you from fully following Jesus. Surrender it at His feet. Let this Good Friday mark a new beginning—a life fully devoted to the King who laid down His life for you.