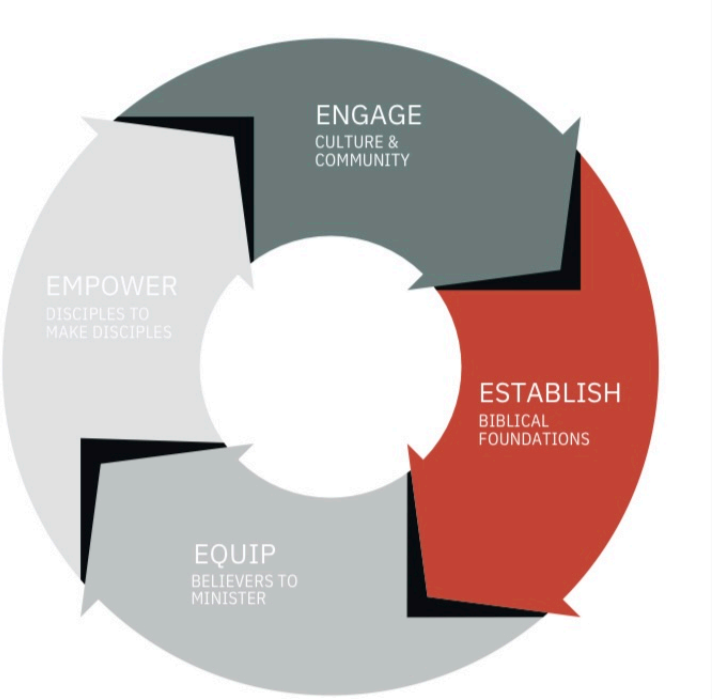
The mission of Rise Up Church is to raise disciples, empower families, and revitalize neighborhoods by the transformational power of the gospel. At Rise Up Church, our discipleship rhythm shapes how we live and expressed in four key movements that we call the 4E's. It is all about following Jesus and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

## 5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

**Based on the Sermon: "The Help That We Need and The Help That We Want"**

### Day 1: You Are Not an Orphan

Reading: John 14:15-18 -- Jesus promises the Spirit as a helper and assures his disciples they will not be left alone.

Devotional: One of the deepest human fears is abandonment. Jesus looked at his disciples -- confused, grieving, unsure of what was coming -- and made them a promise that still stands today. He would not leave them as orphans. He would not walk away and let them figure out life on their own. The same is true for you. Whatever season you are in right now, whatever feels uncertain or overwhelming, the presence of God has not departed. The Holy Spirit dwells with you not as a distant observer but as a close companion. You were never meant to carry your burdens alone. Rest in that truth today.

Reflection: In what areas of your life have you been operating as though God has left the room?

Practical Application: Pause three times today and simply acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit before making a decision or reacting to a difficult moment.

### Day 2: A Helper Who Actually Helps

Reading: John 14:25-26 -- Jesus explains that the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, will teach all things and bring to remembrance what Jesus has spoken.

Devotional: Not all help is created equal. Sometimes the help we receive makes things worse. But the Holy Spirit is not an inexperienced helper offering well-meaning but ineffective assistance. He is the Spirit of truth, sent by the Father, who teaches and reminds. He does not guide you toward a better version of yourself built on your own effort. He guides you toward holiness -- toward a life that reflects the work of Jesus. When you open Scripture and something suddenly makes sense in a new way, that is the Holy Spirit at work. Trust him to lead you into what you cannot reach on your own.

Reflection: Are you relying on your own understanding, or are you inviting the Holy Spirit to teach you as you read Scripture?

Practical Application: Before reading your Bible today, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Write down one thing you sense him revealing to you through the text.

**Day 3: The Gospel That Glorifies Jesus**

Reading: John 16:12-15 -- Jesus describes how the Spirit of truth will guide his followers into all truth and will glorify him by declaring what belongs to him.

Devotional: There are many voices competing for your trust. Opinions, personal beliefs, cultural narratives, and even well-intentioned people will offer you frameworks for understanding life. But Jesus sets a clear standard: the Holy Spirit will always glorify him. Any teaching, belief, or opinion that does not lift up Jesus and point toward his finished work is not from the Spirit of truth. This is not a call to be suspicious of everyone, but it is a call to be discerning. When you evaluate what you hear -- in church, online, or in conversation -- ask one question: does this glorify Jesus? That question cuts through a great deal of confusion.

Reflection: Are there opinions or beliefs you hold that you have never measured against the standard of whether they glorify Jesus?

Practical Application: Identify one belief or assumption you carry about God, faith, or life. Bring it to Scripture today and ask honestly whether it points toward Jesus or toward something else.

**Day 4: Witness, Not Judge**

Reading: John 15:26-27 -- Jesus declares that the Holy Spirit will bear witness about him, and that his followers will also bear witness.

Devotional: The church was never called to be the world's courtroom. The Holy Spirit is the one who convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment -- not you. Your role is to be a witness. A witness simply tells what they have seen, heard, and experienced. They do not manipulate the verdict. When the church has stepped into the role of judge rather than witness, it has often pushed people further from the very Jesus it was meant to introduce them to. Your transformed life, your integrity when no one is watching, your willingness to love people who are difficult to love -- these are your witness. Let the Holy Spirit handle the rest.

Reflection: Have there been moments when you stepped into the role of judge rather than witness in someone's life?

Practical Application: Think of one person in your life who does not know Jesus. Commit to being a witness to them this week through one specific act of genuine love or service -- without any agenda attached to it.

**Day 5: It Is to Your Advantage**

Reading: John 16:7-11 -- Jesus tells his disciples it is to their advantage that he goes away, because his departure makes way for the Holy Spirit to come.

Devotional: There are moments in life when what feels like a loss is actually the doorway to something greater. The disciples could not see how Jesus leaving could possibly be good news. But Jesus knew that the Holy Spirit's coming would mean access to divine power and presence for every believer, not just those physically near him. Peter once denied Jesus out of fear. After the Holy Spirit came upon him, he stood before thousands and preached without hesitation. The same Spirit lives in you. The same power that transformed a frightened fisherman into a bold witness is available to you today. You are not limited to what you can do on your own. That is the advantage.

Reflection: What fear or limitation have you been accepting as permanent that the Holy Spirit may be calling you to move beyond?

Practical Application: Identify one area where you have been holding back out of fear or self-reliance. Take one concrete step in that area today, and ask the Holy Spirit to go before you as you do.

**Koinonia Gathering Guide: The Help That We Need and The Help That We Want**

Based on John 14:15-26, 15:26-27, 16:7-15

## Overview

In this message, we explored what Jesus taught his disciples about the Holy Spirit in the upper room. Jesus was preparing to leave, and rather than abandoning his followers, he promised them a Helper. This guide will help your group dig deeper into three key truths: the Holy Spirit remains with the disciples of Jesus, the Holy Spirit reveals truth about Jesus, and the Holy Spirit bears witness to the world about Jesus.

## Key Takeaways

- The Holy Spirit is not a distant force but a personal Helper who comes alongside believers, dwelling within them permanently.
- The Holy Spirit's primary role is not to make us better people in a general sense but to make us holy people who rely on what Jesus has accomplished.
- Every genuine work of the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus. Any teaching, opinion, or belief that does not glorify Jesus is not from the Spirit.
- It is not our job to convict people of sin. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. Our job is to bear witness.
- Jesus said it is to our advantage that he ascended, because the Holy Spirit is now accessible to all believers everywhere, not limited to one physical location.
- Satan has already been judged. Because of that, believers can live with confidence about their future.

## Discussion Questions

### Opening

1. The pastor opened by describing a moment of wanting his heart and actions to align when loving his wife. Can you relate to that tension between knowing the right thing to do and actually wanting to do it from the heart? Share an example from your own life.

2. Have you ever received help that was not actually helpful? What made it fall short, and what would genuinely useful help have looked like in that situation?

**Part One: The Holy Spirit Remains with Us**

(John 14:15-18, 25-26)

3. Jesus says in John 14:15 that loving him is connected to keeping his commandments. Why do you think he immediately follows that statement with a promise of the Helper rather than leaving it as a command to fulfill on your own?

4. The pastor made a distinction between the Holy Spirit helping us become a better person versus helping us become a holy person. What is the difference, and why does it matter?

5. Jesus promises in John 14:18 that he will not leave his followers as orphans. The pastor connected this to the idea that God's presence does not eliminate suffering but means we do not suffer alone. How has that truth shown up in your own experience?

6. The Holy Spirit is described as dwelling with and within believers permanently. How does living with an awareness of that constant presence change the way you approach your daily decisions, including the ones no one else sees?

**Part Two: The Holy Spirit Reveals Truth About Jesus**

(John 14:25-26, 16:12-15)

7. Jesus promised in John 14:26 that the Holy Spirit would bring to remembrance everything he had said. The pastor connected this to the trustworthiness of Scripture as a unified, Spirit-inspired witness to Jesus across 66 books and roughly 1,500 years. How does that reality affect the way you approach reading and trusting the Bible?

8. The pastor described what he called the "gospel of emo" and the "gospel of ebb," meaning the tendency to lead with personal opinion or personal belief rather than what Scripture says. Where do you notice that tendency most in your own thinking or conversations?

9. Jesus says in John 16:14 that the Holy Spirit will glorify him. The pastor used this as a test: if something does not glorify Jesus, it is not from the Holy Spirit. How can your group use that standard practically when evaluating teachings, ideas, or trends you encounter?

**Part Three: The Holy Spirit Bears Witness to the World**

(John 15:26-27, 16:7-11)

10. The pastor described how Peter denied Jesus three times before the resurrection but then boldly preached to thousands after the Holy Spirit came upon him at Pentecost. What does that contrast tell you about what the Holy Spirit's presence actually does in a person's life?

11. The pastor said the church has sometimes made people feel judged rather than witnessed to, and that this has caused people to look for community elsewhere. Do you agree with that assessment? What does it look like practically to be a witness rather than a judge?

12. John 16:8 describes the Holy Spirit as the one who convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. Since conviction is the Spirit's work and not ours, how does that change the pressure you feel when sharing your faith with someone?

**Practical Applications**

- This week, before making a significant decision, pause and ask the Holy Spirit for guidance rather than relying solely on your own reasoning or outside sources. Notice what changes when you bring that awareness into the moment.

- Identify one area of your life where your actions and your heart are not aligned, similar to what the pastor described in his marriage illustration. Bring that specific tension to God in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to help both align around love for Christ.

- Think of someone in your life who does not know Jesus. Commit to being a witness to them this week, not through argument or pressure, but through how you treat them, speak to them, and show up for them. Trust the Holy Spirit to do the work of conviction.

- Spend time in the Gospel of John this week, particularly chapters 14 through 16. As you read, ask the Holy Spirit to bring clarity and remembrance, trusting that the same Spirit who inspired the text is present with you as you read it.

- Reflect honestly on whether your daily life bears witness to Jesus. Ask yourself: does the way I handle conflict, disappointment, and temptation point people toward Christ or away from him?

**Closing Reflection**

The pastor closed with a direct question: if you are a believer, are you actually asking the Holy Spirit for help, or have you been striving on your own? Take a moment as a group to sit with that question. Close your time together in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to do what only he can do: remain with you, reveal truth to you, and bear witness through you.