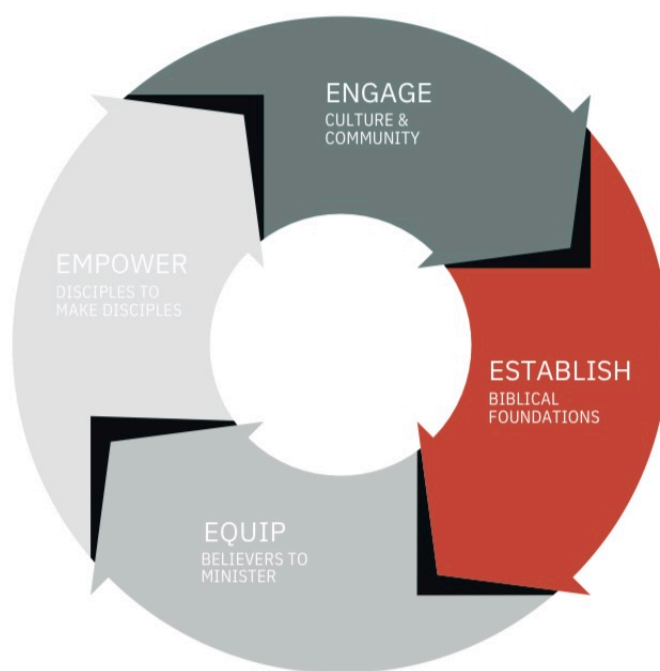


The mission of Rise Up Church is to raise disciples, empower families, and revitalize neighborhoods by the transformational power of the gospel. At Rise Up Church, our discipleship rhythm shapes how we live and expressed in four key movements that we call the 4E's. It is all about following Jesus and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

Based on John 6:25-40

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Icebreaker Question: What's the best meal you've ever had, and what made it so memorable?

Introduction (5 minutes)

This week's sermon challenged us to examine what we hunger and thirst for versus what we truly need. Jesus confronts a crowd that followed Him for temporary satisfaction rather than eternal transformation. As we discuss, let's be honest about where we seek fulfillment and whether we're truly seeing Jesus for who He is.

Key Takeaways

1. **We often chase temporary satisfaction when Jesus offers eternal fulfillment**
 - The crowd followed Jesus for physical bread, not spiritual transformation
 - We can desire comfort over change
2. **We try to earn what Jesus came to freely give**
 - Salvation is not about our works but about believing in Jesus
 - The only "work" required is faith in Christ
3. **We ask for more proof while ignoring what God has already revealed**
 - The crowd asked for signs after witnessing multiple miracles
 - We often want God to prove Himself again instead of trusting what He's shown us
4. **Jesus Himself is what we really need**
 - He is the Bread of Life—our essential, sustaining nourishment
 - Only He can satisfy our deepest spiritual hunger

Discussion Questions

Section 1: Temporary vs. Eternal (15 minutes)

1. **Revisit the opening question from the sermon:** What do you hunger and thirst for? Now dig deeper—what does that thing represent to you? (Security? Validation? Control? Comfort?)
2. Read John 6:26-27. Jesus tells the crowd they're following Him for the wrong reasons. When have you pursued Jesus more for what He could give you than for who He is?
3. Pastor Kelsey mentioned chasing nicer cars, vacation homes, or making decisions based solely on salary. What are some modern "foods that spoil" that our culture tells us will satisfy?
4. How can we tell the difference between meeting legitimate needs and chasing temporary satisfaction?

Section 2: Works vs. Faith (15 minutes)

5. Read John 6:28-29 and Ephesians 2:8-9. Why do you think we're so tempted to try to earn God's love and salvation?
6. Pastor Kelsey shared how she wanted to "do a good job at this Christian thing." Have you ever fallen into performance-based Christianity? What did that look like, and how did it affect your relationship with God?
7. What does it practically look like to "believe in the one He has sent" rather than trying to work for God's approval?

Section 3: Asking for Signs (15 minutes)

8. The crowd asked Jesus for a sign after He had already performed multiple miracles. When have you asked God for more proof when He's already shown you enough?
9. The Israelites complained about hunger in the wilderness despite God just delivering them from slavery. Why do we so quickly forget God's faithfulness in difficult seasons?

10. What are some ways we look for "temporary comfort in bondage" rather than accepting the freedom and transformation Jesus offers?

Section 4: Jesus, the Bread of Life (15 minutes)

11. Read John 6:35. Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." What does this promise mean to you personally?
12. Pastor Kelsey shared three ways our hunger shows up:
 - We crave things that cannot satisfy us
 - We expect people to give us what only God can give
 - We're not aware of what our deepest need really is
13. Which of these resonates most with your current season? Why?
14. The pastor shared a powerful story about seeking to be adored by people when God had already given her that love. Have you ever looked to humans for something only God can provide? What happened?
15. Jesus never promises comfort, success, or earthly approval—He promises we'll never hunger or thirst spiritually and we'll have eternal life. How does this shift your expectations of what following Jesus should look like?

Personal Reflection (10 minutes)

Take a few moments of silence for personal reflection. Consider journaling responses to these questions:

- What is one area where my "appetite is off"—where I'm seeking satisfaction in something other than Jesus?
- What has God already shown me that I need to stop asking Him to prove again?
- What would it look like for me to come to Jesus as the Bread of Life this week?

Practical Applications

Choose one or two to commit to this week:

Daily Practice:

- Each morning this week, before checking your phone or starting your day, pray: "Jesus, You are the Bread of Life. Help me seek satisfaction in You alone today."

Appetite Audit:

- Track what you turn to first when you're stressed, lonely, bored, or anxious. Is it food? Social media? Shopping? A person? Ask God to help you turn to Him instead.

Gratitude Exercise:

- Make a list of ways God has already proven Himself faithful in your life. When you're tempted to ask for more signs, review this list.

Scripture Memorization:

- Memorize John 6:35: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Honest Conversation:

- Share with a trusted friend or this small group one area where you've been trying to earn God's love instead of receiving it by faith. Ask them to pray for you and hold you accountable.

Sabbath from Substitutes:

- Choose one day this week to fast from something you typically turn to for comfort (social media, TV, shopping, etc.) and intentionally spend that time with Jesus instead.

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer (10 minutes)

Share & Pray:

- What is one specific way you need Jesus to be the Bread of Life for you this week?
- How can we pray for each other?

Closing Prayer: *Jesus, thank You that You are the Bread of Life. Thank You that You don't just want to meet our temporary needs—You want to transform us from the inside out. Help us to stop chasing things that will never satisfy. Help us to see You for who You really are. Forgive us for the times we've looked for proof when You've already shown us enough. We confess that we need You—not just Your blessings, but You. Feed us with Your presence. Fill us with Your Spirit. And help us to believe. In Your name, Amen.*

Before Next Week

- Read John 6:41-71 in preparation for next week's discussion
- Practice one of the applications you committed to
- Reach out to one group member to encourage them this week

Leader Notes

- Be prepared to share your own answers to the questions, especially about seeking satisfaction in temporary things
- Create a safe space for vulnerability—some may share about addictions, broken relationships, or spiritual doubts
- Have tissues available; the story about seeking to be adored may resonate deeply with some
- If someone shares they're not sure they believe in Jesus yet, celebrate their honesty and pray for them specifically
- Consider playing the worship song mentioned in the sermon ("Just Breathe" or similar) during reflection time

5-Day Devotional: What You Really Need

Day 1: Beyond Temporary Satisfaction

Reading: John 6:25-27; Matthew 6:19-21

Devotional: Jesus confronted the crowd not with condemnation, but with clarity: "You're following me for the wrong reasons." How often do we approach God primarily as a problem-solver rather than as our Savior? We bring Him our grocery lists of needs—financial relief, relationship fixes, career advancements—while missing the deeper hunger of our souls. The crowd wanted bread; Jesus offered Himself. They wanted comfort; He offered transformation. Today, examine what you're truly seeking from Jesus. Are you working for food that spoils or food that endures to eternal life? The temporary will always leave you empty. Only Jesus satisfies the deepest hunger. Ask Him to reveal where you've substituted earthly comfort for eternal fulfillment, and surrender those false securities to Him.

Day 2: The Work of Believing

Reading: John 6:28-29; Ephesians 2:8-10

Devotional: "What must we do?" the crowd asked, revealing our universal tendency to earn what God freely gives. We're performance-driven people living in a grace-saturated gospel. Jesus' answer is revolutionary: "Believe in the one He has sent." That's it. Not ten steps to spiritual success. Not a religious checklist. Just belief. This doesn't mean faith is passive—true belief transforms everything—but it means we stop trying to make ourselves worthy of love we already have. You cannot work your way into God's favor because Jesus already finished that work on the cross. His righteousness, not your resume, secures your salvation. Today, release the burden of earning what's already been given. Rest in the sufficiency of Christ's finished work and let belief, not striving, be your foundation.

Day 3: Seeing the Signs Already Given

Reading: John 6:30-34; Psalm 77:11-15

Devotional: "What sign will you give us?" they asked the One who had just fed five thousand, healed the sick, and walked on water. How quickly we forget God's faithfulness when facing new challenges. We demand fresh proof while ignoring the miracles already in our rearview mirror. The Israelites remembered the manna but forgot the liberation. They craved the meat of Egypt while dismissing the bondage that

came with it. What has God already shown you? Where has He already proven faithful? Before asking for another sign, rehearse His past provision. Write down the ways He's moved in your life. Remember the prayers He's answered, the doors He's opened, the comfort He's provided. Your history with God is evidence enough for your future with Him. He who brought you this far will not abandon you now.

Day 4: The Bread of Life

Reading: John 6:35-40; Psalm 34:8-10

Devotional: "I am the bread of life." Not "I have bread" or "I know where to find bread." Jesus IS the sustenance we need. Just as physical bread was essential for daily survival in that culture, Jesus declares Himself essential for spiritual survival. Without food and water, our bodies die. Without Jesus, our souls perish. But here's the beautiful promise: whoever comes to Him will never hunger or thirst again. This isn't about eliminating earthly desires but satisfying spiritual ones. In Christ, the restless searching ends. The striving ceases. The emptiness fills. He doesn't promise you'll never want anything again; He promises that He Himself will be enough. Today, come to Jesus not for what He can give you, but for who He is. Taste and see that the Lord is good. Let Him fill the God-shaped void nothing else can satisfy.

Day 5: Misplaced Appetites

Reading: Philippians 3:7-11; Psalm 42:1-2

Devotional: Our appetites reveal our hearts. What we hunger for shows what we worship. The crowd craved physical bread while standing before the Bread of Heaven. We often do the same—seeking fulfillment in careers, relationships, achievements, or comforts while Jesus stands ready to satisfy our deepest needs. Sometimes we crave things that cannot satisfy us. Sometimes we expect people to give what only God can give. Sometimes we're unaware of our deepest need altogether. Take inventory today: What are you truly hungry for? Security? Love? Purpose? Validation? Trace each desire back to its source. That promotion you're chasing—is it really about provision, or about proving your worth? That relationship you're clinging to—is it about companionship, or about filling a God-sized void? Jesus already adores you, secures you, validates you, and provides for you. Realign your appetites with the only One who can truly satisfy them.