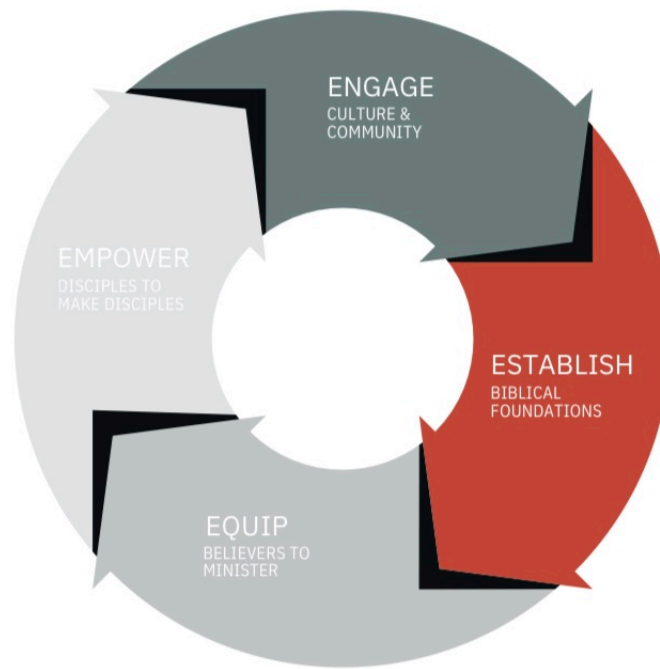


The mission of Rise Up Church is to raise disciples, empower families, and revitalize neighborhoods by the transformational power of the gospel. At Rise Up Church, our discipleship rhythm shapes how we live and expressed in four key movements that we call the 4E's. It is all about following Jesus and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

Text: Ezra 1:1-11

Theme: Even when we feel scattered and broken, God's power can reunite us, restore us, and rebuild us-if we respond to His stirring.

Background Information

Jeremiah's Prophecies:

- Jeremiah 25:11: If you don't turn back to God, the temple will fall, and you will live in exile. The people ignored this warning. Babylon invaded, destroyed the temple, and carried the people into exile.
- Jeremiah 29:10: After 70 years in Babylon, I will visit you and bring you back. A promise of restoration after discipline.

Ezra 1: These two prophecies meet. After 70 years, God moves the heart of King Cyrus of Persia to send the exiles home to rebuild His temple. Though the book is named after Ezra, he does not appear in this chapter. The focus is on God's love and faithfulness to an unfaithful people.

Summary of Ezra 1

The people were scattered and broken in exile-disconnected from God, from their identity, and from their place of worship.

But God's power:

- Reunites His people back to Himself, to worship, and to their land.
- Restores what was lost-returning temple treasures and providing resources.
- Rebuilds what was destroyed-calling His people to build differently, stronger, and with new patterns.
- Requires a response-only those who said yes experienced reunion, restoration, and rebuilding.

Discussion Questions

Hook / Icebreaker

Have you ever had something in your life feel scattered-like you were pulled in many directions-or broken-like nothing felt whole? Share briefly.

Point 1: God's Power to Reunite (vv.1-4)

- How do you see God's power in using Cyrus (a pagan king) to fulfill His plan?
- What does it mean that God was reuniting His people not just to a land but to Himself and to worship?
- Reflection: Where in your life do you need to be reunited with God-spiritually, emotionally, or relationally?

Point 2: God's Power to Restore (vv.4, 7-8)

- What does restoration mean in this passage? What specific things were restored to the people?

- Share a time when God restored something in your life-or when you're praying for Him to.
- Reflection: What do you feel you've lost-peace, joy, direction-and how might God want to restore it?

Point 3: God's Power to Rebuild (vv.5-6, 9-11)

- Why is rebuilding significant? (Hint: something was broken or destroyed first.)
- What does it mean to rebuild differently than before?
- Reflection: What might God be calling you to rebuild in your life right now?

Point 4: Responding to God's Stirring (v.5)

- How do you discern when God is stirring your heart?
- What might keep someone from responding to God's stirring?
- Reflection: What step of response is God calling you to take this week?

Christ Connection

God reunited His people through Cyrus, but He reunites us to Himself through Jesus.

God restored the temple treasures, but He restores our souls through Jesus' blood.

God rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem, but He rebuilds us into living temples of the Holy Spirit.

Just as the people had to respond to Cyrus' decree, we must respond to Jesus' call.

Defeater Beliefs and Truths

I've messed up too badly. - God restored Israel after their sin.

It's been broken too long. - The temple was destroyed for 70 years, yet God restored it.

God doesn't care about me. - God stirred Cyrus' heart for His people.

Prayer

Pray together:

- Thank God for His faithfulness to reunite, restore, and rebuild.
- Ask Him to stir hearts in your group.
- Pray over specific areas of brokenness or scatteredness shared in the discussion.

5-Day Bible Devotional (Individual)

Day 1 - God's Power to Reunite

Reading: Ezra 1:1-4, Isaiah 45:1-4

God moved the heart of King Cyrus to send His people home. Even though they were scattered in exile, God had not forgotten them. Reunion begins with God drawing us back to Himself. Where do you feel distant from God? Ask Him to reunite you to His presence today.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for calling me back to You. Reunite my heart to Your presence and restore my joy in You.

Day 2 - God's Power to Restore

Reading: Ezra 1:4, 7-8; Haggai 2:3-9

God not only brought His people back, He restored what they had lost. The temple treasures that were stolen were returned. God loves to restore what the enemy has taken. What do you feel you've lost that only God can restore?

Prayer: Father, I believe You can restore my heart, my relationships, and my hope. Restore what has been lost in my life.

Day 3 - God's Power to Rebuild

Reading: Ezra 1:5-6, 9-11; Nehemiah 2:17-18

Rebuilding means taking action after restoration. It means not staying in the ruins but trusting God to build something new. What area of your life needs rebuilding? How can you build differently this time, stronger and wiser in God's ways?

Prayer: Lord, give me courage to rebuild what was broken. Help me build my life on Your truth and strength.

Day 4 - Responding to God's Stirring

Reading: Ezra 1:5, James 1:22

Only those who responded to God's stirring experienced reunion, restoration, and rebuilding. Are you ignoring His promptings, or are you ready to respond?

Prayer: God, stir my heart to say yes to You. Help me obey quickly and wholeheartedly.

Day 5 - Christ Connection

Reading: John 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:4-5

Cyrus sent the people home, but Jesus brings us home to God forever. Through His death and resurrection, He rebuilds us into living temples of the Holy Spirit. Spend time today thanking Jesus for His work in your life.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for reuniting me to the Father, restoring my soul, and rebuilding me into Your image.

5-Day Family Devotional

Day 1 - God Reunites His People

Reading: Ezra 1:1-4

Talk: Ask everyone: Have you ever felt far from home or far from God? How did that feel? God brought His people back from exile to worship Him again.

Activity: Draw or write down ways you can be close to God as a family (prayer, worship, reading the Bible).

Prayer: Lord, reunite our family to You. Help us stay close to You in all we do.

Day 2 - God Restores What Was Lost

Reading: Ezra 1:4, 7-8

Talk: Discuss: What is something special you have lost before? How did you feel when you found it again? God gave back the treasures that had been taken.

Activity: As a family, list things you're thankful God has given back to you.

Prayer: God, thank You for restoring good things in our lives. Help us trust You to restore what we've lost.

Day 3 - God Helps Us Rebuild

Reading: Ezra 1:5-6

Talk: Talk about something your family has worked on fixing or building. Rebuilding means starting again and doing it stronger.

Activity: Build something together-like with blocks or Lego-and talk about how God helps us rebuild our lives.

Prayer: Lord, help our family rebuild anything that is broken with Your help.

Day 4 - Respond to God

Reading: Ezra 1:5

Talk: Discuss: When God gives you a chance to do something good, how do you respond? The people had to say yes to go back.

Activity: Each person share one thing they will do this week to say yes to God.

Prayer: Jesus, help us respond to You with a willing heart.

Day 5 - Jesus Makes Us God's Temple

Reading: John 2:19-22

Talk: Explain: The people rebuilt the temple, but Jesus makes us God's living temple when we believe in Him.

Activity: As a family, pray for each other to be strong temples for God.

Prayer: Jesus, thank You for making us Your home. Help us live for You every day.