

## Koinonia Gathering Guide: "Get Up - do You Want to Be Healed?"

### Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by asking God to help you encounter Him through His Word, not just read about Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where group members might be "stuck" and open hearts to receive freedom.

### Soul Check

Check in on how people are doing. Ask one of the following questions:

1. "How are you doing in your soul?"
2. "What is one major low for you since the last time we gathered?"
3. "What are you currently believing God for?"

### Ice Breaker

Share a time when you felt physically stuck (in traffic, in an elevator, etc.). How did that feeling compare to being spiritually or emotionally stuck?

### Scripture Reading

Read John 5:1-15 together as a group.

### Discussion Questions

#### Understanding the Text

1. **The Setting:** Why is it significant that this healing took place at the Pool of Bethesda (House of Mercy) near the sheep gate where sacrifices were made?
2. **The Question:** Why do you think Jesus asked, "Do you want to be healed?" instead of just healing the man immediately? What does this question reveal about how God works in our lives?
3. **The 38 Years:** The sermon connected this man's 38 years to Israel's 38 years of wandering in Deuteronomy 2. What's the connection between unbelief and being stuck?

## Personal Reflection

4. **Identifying "Stuck":** The pastor asked, "Where are you stuck?" Take a moment of silence, then invite anyone comfortable to share:
  - Stuck in the same pattern?
  - Stuck in an emotional drought?
  - Stuck in the same sin?
  - Stuck in the same way of thinking?
5. **Excuses vs. Obedience:** The invalid gave Jesus excuses instead of saying "yes." What excuses do we commonly give God when He calls us to freedom?
  - "If my spouse/situation was different..."
  - "If those people hadn't done that to me..."
  - "I've tried before and it didn't work..."
6. Which of these resonates with you?
7. **The Mat:** Jesus told the man to "take your mat and walk." The mat represented what once held him down. What "mat" (testimony of deliverance) has Jesus given you to carry as a witness to others?

## Going Deeper

7. **The Religious Leaders' Response:** Why were the religious leaders more concerned about Sabbath rules than the miracle? How do we sometimes prioritize rules or appearances over genuine transformation?
8. **"Sin No More":** Jesus warned the man that something worse could happen if he returned to sin. How does this challenge the idea that grace means we can live however we want?
9. **Community Matters:** Jesus found the healed man in the temple among God's people, not back at the pool. Why is staying in Christian community essential to staying free? What makes this difficult?

## Key Takeaways

### How to Get Unstuck:

1. **Identify** what has you stuck (be honest)
2. **Listen** to what Jesus says about that thing
3. **Follow** Jesus into where He says to go

### How to Stay Free:

1. **Stay close to Jesus** - Freedom flows from relationship
2. **Stay in community** - Freedom increases in accountability
3. **Stay in obedience** - Freedom is sustained by a daily "yes" to Jesus

### Three Commands of Jesus:

- **Get up** - Out of what you're stuck in
- **Take your mat** - Carry your testimony of deliverance
- **Walk** - Walk by faith, walk by the Spirit, walk in love, walk in your calling

## Practical Application

### This Week's Challenge:

#### Day 1-2: Identify

- Spend time in prayer asking God to reveal where you're stuck
- Journal about it honestly—no excuses, no blaming others

#### Day 3-4: Listen

- Search Scripture for what God says about your "stuck" area
- Write down specific promises or commands you find

#### Day 5-6: Follow

- Take one concrete step of obedience toward freedom
- Share your step with an accountability partner from this group

#### Day 7: Testify

- Share with someone (in person or text) what God is doing to set you free
- "Take your mat" - let your testimony encourage others

## Accountability Partners

Pair up with someone in the group this week. Exchange contact information and commit to:

- Checking in at least twice this week
- Praying for each other's specific "stuck" areas
- Celebrating steps of obedience, no matter how small

## Group Ministry Time

### Prayer Focus:

1. **For those who need to get unstuck:**
  - Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal specific areas
  - Pray for courage to be honest about struggles
  - Ask for faith to believe Jesus can and will heal
2. **For those who need to stay free:**
  - Pray for strength to stay in community
  - Ask for daily grace to say "yes" to Jesus
  - Pray against the temptation to return to old patterns
3. **For those who need to encounter Jesus for the first time:**
  - Pray for anyone in the group or in their circles who doesn't know Christ
  - Ask God to reveal their spiritual "deadness" and their need for the Savior

### Ministry Opportunity:

Ask if anyone wants specific prayer for their "stuck" area. Have 2-3 people gather around each person who requests prayer. Pray specifically and boldly for freedom.

## Closing Reflection

**The Question Remains:** "Do you want to be healed?"

Jesus is not just asking this question to read about in Scripture—He's asking YOU today. Your healing is waiting. The miracle is waiting. Will you get up, take your testimony, and walk in freedom?

End by reading together: *"If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."* (John 8:36)

## **For Next Week**

- Continue daily quiet times focusing on freedom in Christ
- Be ready to share testimonies of steps toward freedom
- Bring your Bible and a journal
- Invite someone new who might be "stuck" and needs community

## **Leader Notes**

- Create a safe, non-judgmental environment for sharing
- Be prepared to share your own "stuck" areas to model vulnerability
- Have resources ready (counseling referrals, addiction support groups, etc.) for those dealing with serious issues
- Follow up individually with anyone who shared something significant
- Celebrate even small steps of obedience and freedom

## 5-Day Devotional: Getting Unstuck and Walking in Freedom

### Day 1: The Question That Changes Everything

**Reading:** John 5:1-9

**Devotional:** "Do you want to be healed?" Jesus asks this penetrating question to a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years. Notice that Jesus doesn't ask if the man deserves healing or if he's tried hard enough. He simply asks about desire. This question exposes our hearts. Sometimes we've become so comfortable with our brokenness that we've stopped believing change is possible. We've rehearsed our excuses so long they've become our identity. Today, Jesus asks you the same question. Not to shame you, but to invite you into transformation. Your honest answer—not your excuses—is the starting point of freedom. What condition have you accepted that Jesus never intended for you?

### Day 2: When God's Word Transforms

**Reading:** Psalm 107:17-22

**Devotional:** "He sent out his word and healed them." God's word doesn't just inform; it transforms. When Jesus told the paralyzed man to "get up, take your mat and walk," His word contained the power to accomplish what it commanded. You may feel spiritually atrophied, unable to move toward freedom. But when God speaks into your situation, His word carries resurrection power. The same voice that spoke creation into existence speaks to your broken places today. Your part is not to manufacture strength you don't have, but to respond in faith to what He's already spoken. What has God's Word said about your situation that you need to believe and act upon today?

### Day 3: Take Your Mat—Own Your Testimony

**Reading:** Psalm 40:1-5

**Devotional:** Jesus told the healed man to take the very mat he'd been lying on for 38 years. This wasn't cruel; it was purposeful. That mat represented his past bondage, but now it became his testimony of God's power. You don't have to pretend your past didn't happen. Instead, God redeems it as evidence of His transforming grace. The addiction you've overcome, the bitterness you've released, the sin you've conquered—these become your platform to glorify God and encourage others. Your deliverance is not just for you; it's for everyone who needs to see that Jesus still heals. What part of your story can become a testimony of God's faithfulness?

## **Day 4: Freedom Flows From Relationship**

**Reading:** John 15:1-11

**Devotional:** After healing the man, Jesus found him in the temple and warned him to "sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." Freedom isn't a one-time event; it's sustained through ongoing relationship with Jesus. The healed man didn't return to the pool; he went to the temple, to God's presence. Many believers experience initial freedom but gradually drift back toward old patterns because they neglect daily intimacy with Christ. Yesterday's encounter with God won't sustain today's battles. You need fresh bread, fresh grace, fresh encounters. Staying close to Jesus, staying in His Word, staying connected to His people—this is how freedom becomes your lifestyle, not just a moment.

## **Day 5: Walk in Your New Identity**

**Reading:** Ephesians 4:17-24

**Devotional:** "Walk" was Jesus' final command to the healed man. Walk by faith. Walk in the Spirit. Walk in love. Walk in a manner worthy of your calling. This is about embracing your new identity in Christ and living from that place. You're no longer defined by what held you captive for years. You're no longer the person stuck in that sin, that mindset, that brokenness. In Christ, you are new. But you must actively walk in that newness, making daily choices that align with who God says you are rather than who you used to be. Don't let others keep you in your old identity. Jesus has spoken freedom over you. Now walk in it.

**Closing Reflection:** This week, Jesus has asked you the most important question: "Do you want to be healed?" He's spoken His transforming word over your life. He's invited you to take your testimony and walk in freedom. The question now is: Will you respond? Will you get up from what's held you down? Will you stay close to Him and walk in your new identity? Freedom is yours in Christ—now walk in it.