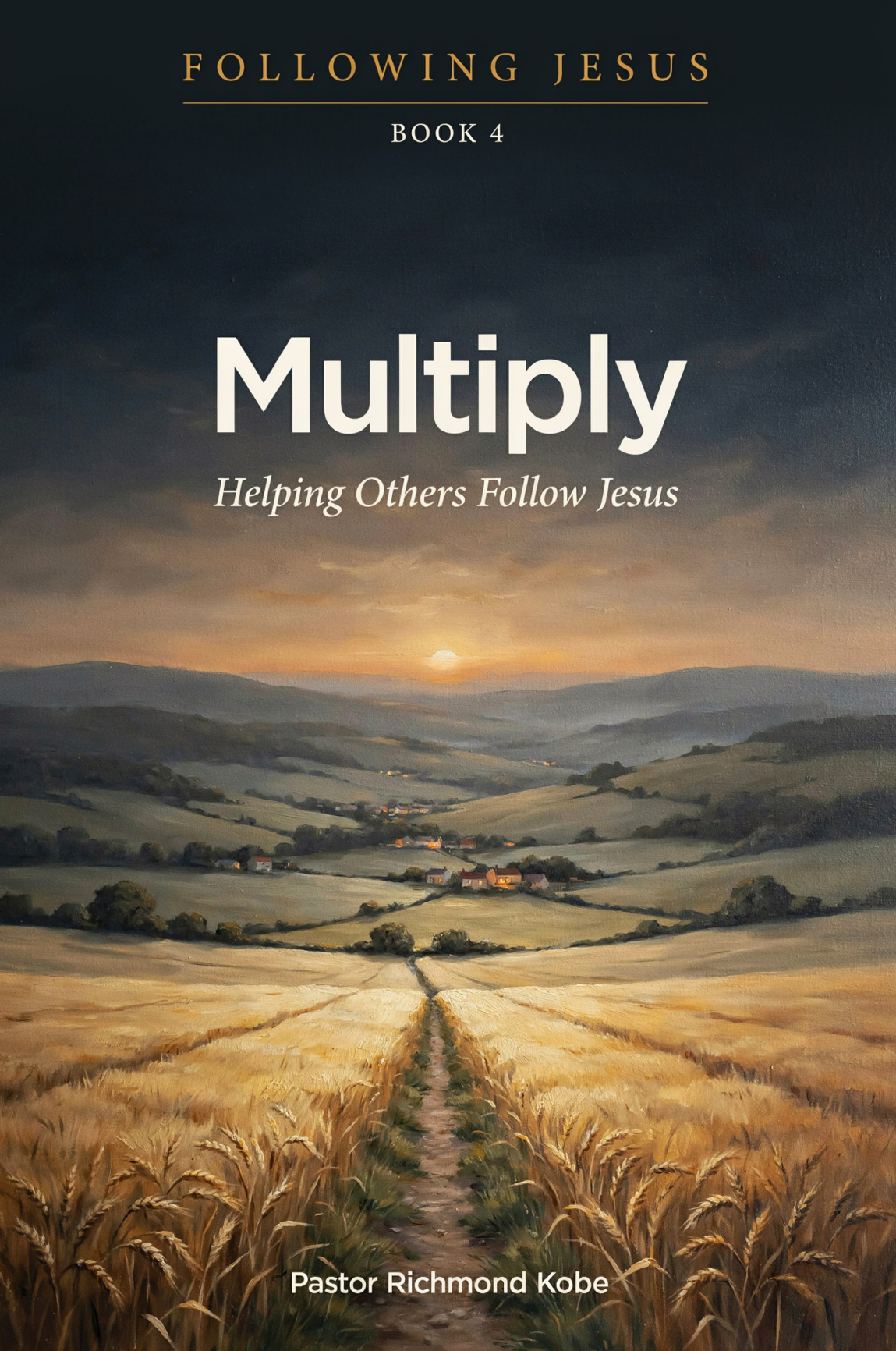
FOLLOWING JESUS

BOOK 4

Multiply

Helping Others Follow Jesus



Pastor Richmond Kobe

FOLLOWING JESUS

Book 4: Multiply

Helping Others Follow Jesus

Chapters 31–40

Pastor Richmond Kobe

Following Jesus, Book 4: Multiply — Helping Others Follow Jesus
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The stories in this book are composites. Names and details have been changed, and they do not describe any one real person.

This book is not a substitute for emergency, medical, legal or professional help. If you or someone else is in danger, see "Safety and Support: Start Here" at the back of this book.

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Starting Book 4: Multiply

Welcome to the fourth stage of the pathway. Book 1 helped you begin. Book 2 helped you understand what Christians believe. Book 3 helped you grow in character and everyday life. Book 4 asks a new question:

> **How can I join Christ's mission and help others follow Jesus, without manipulating or controlling anyone?**

Over the next ten chapters, we will look at being sent by Jesus, living as a witness in everyday life, telling your story honestly, explaining the gospel clearly, responding to questions, using your gifts, walking with a new believer, reading Scripture and praying with someone, listening and knowing your limits, and leading a healthy discipleship group.

This book is not about becoming a salesperson for God or a spiritual authority over others. It is about joining what Jesus is already doing, with humility, respect and healthy accountability. Everything here rests on what came before: the gospel (Book 1), the truths of the faith (Book 2) and Christlike character (Book 3).

If you are starting with Book 4, you are very welcome. Please read Book 1, Chapter 1 first; it explains the gospel, which everything else builds on. Each chapter works the same way as before: one real question, four central truths, one main passage, a short story, simple practices and a seven-day reading plan. Every practice is an invitation, not a test, and no one will ask you to read aloud, pray aloud or share your personal story. Support Pages for urgent help are at the back of this book; Life Guides, which go deeper into particular situations, are in a separate Life Guides booklet.

CHAPTER 31

Every Disciple Is Sent

> *Isn't sharing my faith the job of pastors and evangelists? I'm not confident, and I don't want to pressure anyone.*

Many believers love Jesus but feel uneasy about sharing their faith. Some think it is a job for specialists. Some are shy. Some have seen pushy methods and do not want to treat people as targets. Others live where speaking about Jesus is risky.

In Book 2, Chapter 14, you saw that the Holy Spirit gives "Power to Witness". In Book 2, Chapter 18, you learned to "Live It Now" as citizens of God's kingdom. This chapter shows that every follower of Jesus is sent by him, empowered by the Spirit, and called to bear witness in ordinary places, with love and without pressure.

The short answer

Jesus sends all his followers into the world, as the Father sent him. The Holy Spirit gives the power. We bear witness where we already live. And we do it with love, gentleness and respect, never with pressure.

> **As the Father sent Jesus, Jesus sends his followers. The Spirit empowers ordinary believers to bear witness. We begin where we already live. And we love people freely, with gentleness and respect, leaving the results to God.**

The four parts	In a few words
1. Sent by Jesus	Every follower belongs to Christ's mission, in different ways
2. Empowered by the Spirit	Witness depends on the Spirit, not confidence or personality
3. Witnesses Where We Live	Family, work, school, neighbourhood and online
4. Love Without Pressure	Words and deeds of love; no manipulation, no conditions

Read it for yourself: John 20:21–22

Read or listen to John 20:19–23, preferably twice.

> "Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" (John 20:21–22)

These words come on the evening of the resurrection, to disciples hiding behind locked doors "for fear" (20:19). Jesus greets them with peace, shows them his wounds, and then sends them. The mission begins with his peace and his presence, not with their courage.

Jesus' mission is unique: he is the Son sent by the Father to accomplish the saving work only he could do. Yet those he sends must reflect the character of the one who sends them, with truth, love, humility and willingness to suffer. Jesus spoke these words to the disciples in that room. That his sending reaches every believer is a conclusion drawn from the whole New Testament (Acts 8:4; 1 Peter 2:9), not from this verse alone.

Read it for yourself: Acts 1:8

Now read or listen to Acts 1:1–11.

> "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

The disciples had just asked, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (1:6). Jesus turned them from timetables to mission (Book 2, Chapter 18). The promise of power is linked to the purpose of witness. Acts then tells how the gospel spread, often through ordinary believers, and often amid opposition.

1. Sent by Jesus

After his resurrection, Jesus sent his followers to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Paul calls believers "ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Being sent is not a special calling for a few. When persecution scattered the early church, "those who were scattered went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). These were ordinary believers, not only the apostles. Peter tells all God's people that they are called to "proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

The mission belongs to every follower of Jesus. But believers take part in different ways. Not everyone has the same gift, confidence, opportunity or responsibility. A quiet believer who prays faithfully, loves a colleague well and speaks about Christ when appropriate is as truly part of Christ's mission as a gifted public evangelist.

2. Empowered by the Spirit

Jesus "breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:22), and he promised, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8). Christians understand the relationship between John 20:22 and Pentecost in different ways, but both passages connect Christian mission with the presence and power of the Spirit.

Witness does not depend on confidence, eloquence or a strong personality. The disciples were frightened men behind locked doors. Later, after they prayed, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31). The same Spirit helps ordinary believers today.

And the results belong to God. Paul used the picture of planting and watering to describe different servants labouring in God's work: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth" (1 Corinthians 3:6). The principle keeps us humble in witness too: we can speak, serve and pray faithfully, but only God can produce spiritual life and growth. **Our part is faithful witness, not producing results.** No one's eternal destiny depends on how well you perform.

3. Witnesses Where We Live

Acts 1:8 moves outward from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria and the end of the earth. For most believers, witness begins in the places they already are: family, work, school, neighbourhood and online.

When a Samaritan woman met Jesus at a well, she went straight back to her town and told people about him. "Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony" (John 4:39). She had no training, only an honest account of meeting Jesus.

Jesus calls his followers "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world": "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew

5:13–16). Honest work, kindness, patience and integrity are part of our witness. People often notice how we live alongside what we say we believe.

The early believers' witness amid persecution (Acts 8:1–4) does not mean we should deliberately seek danger or put other Christians at risk.

4. Love Without Pressure

Peter writes, "in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15–16). Paul adds, "Walk in wisdom toward outsiders… Let your speech always be gracious" (Colossians 4:5–6).

Jesus' own ministry joined proclamation with compassionate action. In the synagogue at Nazareth he announced his Spirit-anointed messianic mission: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). His followers cannot repeat his unique saving mission, but our witness should likewise refuse to separate truthful proclamation from genuine love.

Christian witness **never** uses manipulation, deception, fear, bribes, threats, or help that depends on interest in faith. Each person is free to accept or reject the message, and they remain worthy of love and respect, whatever they decide.

Christians differ

- **Whether every believer is called to evangelise.** Some Christians emphasise that every believer is called to share the gospel actively with others (they often point to Matthew 28:19–20, Acts 8:4 and 1 Peter 3:15). Others emphasise that Christ gives some people the particular gift of evangelism, while every believer is called to be a faithful witness in life and to be ready to explain their hope (they often point to Ephesians 4:11 and Acts 21:8). All agree that every

believer bears witness to Christ, that some are especially gifted for evangelism, and that all should support the spread of the gospel.

- **How evangelism and practical care relate.** Some Christians emphasise that proclaiming the gospel is the church's first task, with practical care flowing from it (they often point to Romans 10:14–17 and 1 Corinthians 15:1–4). Others emphasise that word and deed belong together as equal expressions of God's kingdom (they often point to Luke 4:18–19 and Matthew 25:35–40). All agree that practical care must never become bait for conversion, and spoken witness must never become an excuse to neglect suffering.

Ask a trustworthy church leader how the church approaches these matters, and compare what you hear with Scripture.

See it in real life: Oyuna's story

Oyuna's story is a composite drawn from the experiences of many people. It is not a documented testimony.

Oyuna is a dental nurse in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. She came to faith three years ago and loves her small church, but she is quiet and assumed evangelism was for pastors. When her church launched a campaign asking every member to bring five new people to an outreach event, she felt anxious and guilty. She invited no one and began avoiding the announcements.

Her small group leader, Tsetseg, read John 20:21–22 and Acts 1:8 with her. "Jesus sends you with his peace and his Spirit, not with a quota," she said. "Start where you already are. Who do you see every day?" Oyuna named her colleague Gerel, whose young son was often ill. Oyuna began praying for Gerel privately, covered a shift when Gerel's son was in hospital, and brought soup to her home.

A few weeks later Gerel asked, "Why are you so kind to me?" Oyuna answered simply that Jesus had changed her life and that she prayed for Gerel's family. She asked whether Gerel would like her to pray, and

accepted it calmly when Gerel said, "Maybe another time." Oyuna would keep caring for Gerel even if Gerel never asked another question about faith.

Gerel has not become a Christian, but she sometimes asks Oyuna questions, and their friendship has grown. Oyuna talks with Tsetseg about how to be a good friend without pressure, without sharing Gerel's private details. Many believers discover that witness begins with prayer, practical love and honest answers, not with programmes or targets.

Pause and seek help

In some countries, families or workplaces, sharing faith openly can lead to serious danger, legal penalties or loss of livelihood. Your safety and the safety of others matter to God. Seek wise counsel from experienced local believers about what is safe and lawful, and remember that a quiet, faithful life and private conversations when asked are also witness. Never put others at risk by sharing their names or stories without consent.

If a church or ministry pressures you to meet targets for conversions, contacts or invitations, shames you for not "winning souls", or uses manipulative methods, seek advice from a trustworthy person outside that situation. See the Support Page "I am being controlled through prophecy, spiritual language, money or church authority" (at the back of this book).

Take particular care where you hold power over others, for example as an employer, manager, teacher, doctor, aid worker, landlord or church leader. People in these situations may feel unable to say no. Where someone depends on you for work, grades, housing, healthcare, money or essential help, do not start a personal conversation about faith as part of that relationship. If the person asks about your faith, answer respectfully and briefly, make clear that their response will have no effect on the help or treatment they receive, and follow the rules of your profession or organisation.

Speaking about faith with children or vulnerable adults must follow safeguarding procedures (see Chapter 39) and, for children, respect the role of parents or guardians. Never ask a child to keep conversations, meetings, prayer or baptism secret from parents or guardians. If involving the family might put a child at risk, do not act alone or promise secrecy; seek advice at once from the safeguarding lead or a child-protection service.

What this chapter is not saying

- **"Only pastors and evangelists are sent."** Every follower of Jesus belongs to his mission, in different ways.
- **"I must be confident and outgoing to bear witness."** Witness depends on the Spirit, not personality.
- **"People's eternal destiny depends on my performance."** God gives the growth; our part is faithful witness.
- **"Faithfulness is measured by numbers of conversions or contacts."** Christ sends us with peace, not quotas.
- **"Kindness is a technique to get people interested in Jesus."** Care is genuine, and never depends on interest in faith.
- **"I should share my faith whatever the risk to others."** Seek wise counsel where witness is dangerous.

If you are still exploring

You may be reading this as someone Christians have tried to persuade, sometimes well and sometimes badly. This chapter says that real Christian witness should never pressure you, and that you remain worthy of respect whatever you decide. No one will ask you to share faith with others or to say publicly whether you have become a Christian.

Remember

Jesus sends all his followers, the Spirit empowers us, we bear witness where we live, and we love without pressure.

1. **Sent by Jesus:** as the Father sent him, Jesus sends his followers; every believer belongs to his mission, in different ways.
2. **Empowered by the Spirit:** witness depends on the Spirit, not confidence; God gives the growth.
3. **Witnesses Where We Live:** begin in family, work, school, neighbourhood and online; good works point to God.
4. **Love Without Pressure:** gentleness and respect; no manipulation, no conditions; people remain free.

Practices

Practise it now. Read or listen to John 20:21–22 and Acts 1:8. Then write one short line for each part, in your own words. You can use the book to help.

Part	My words
Sent by Jesus	
Empowered by the Spirit	
Witnesses Where We Live	
Love Without Pressure	

Private reflection (optional). Think of the ordinary places where you spend most of your time, and one or two people there whom you could pray for and care for genuinely. If sharing faith is dangerous where you live, think of one safe way to show Christ's love. If you want to write it down, use a separate sheet that you can destroy.

Live it this week. Read or listen using the seven-day plan below. Each day, use one or two of the four questions from Book 2, Chapter 9, and pray for the people you thought of, asking the Spirit for love and wisdom. If you miss a day, simply begin again the next day.

Talk about it (with your group, a mentor or a friend, if you wish)

1. What do people often think about Christians sharing their faith?
2. In John 20:21–22, what does Jesus give his disciples before sending them?
3. What helps Christians share their faith with gentleness and respect?

Look outward. If it is appropriate and safe, continue or begin one ordinary act of care for someone in your life. Let the care be genuine whether or not faith is ever discussed; do not create an opportunity to explain the gospel, but if the person asks, answer honestly and respectfully. Never make help depend on interest in faith. You may talk with your mentor about how to love them well, but do not share the person's name or circumstances without permission. If this is not possible or safe, pray for them.

Looking back. In Chapters 32, 34 and 40, you will look back at Sent by Jesus · Empowered by the Spirit · Witnesses Where We Live · Love Without Pressure. Use the book if you wish. This is a learning exercise, not a test.

After each practice, choose one response: I completed this · I will return to it · This is not appropriate or safe for me · I need support.

If you are still exploring: you are welcome to take part in every practice. When you share, you may begin, "This is what Christians believe about mission." No one will ask you to share faith with others or to say publicly whether you have become a Christian.

Seven-day reading plan (read or listen)

Day	Passage	One thing about being sent
☐ 1	John 20:19–23	
☐ 2	Acts 1:1–11	
☐ 3	Matthew 28:16–20	
☐ 4	Acts 8:1–8	
☐ 5	2 Corinthians 5:14–21	
☐ 6	1 Peter 3:13–17	
☐ 7	Matthew 5:13–16 and Colossians 4:2–6, then look back over the week	