

Field Guide

to the Holy Spirit





GHOST STORIES

Encountering the Holy Spirit

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Start with prayer.

Frequently pray The Ghost Stories Prayer on page 7.

Read *Who Is the Holy Spirit* on page 8.

The Rule of Life is, by far, the most important part of Ghost Stories.

Familiarize yourself with the Rule of Life on page 12.

Practice the Rule of Life for each of the three weeks of this study. The Rule of Life guide is found on page 14.

Remember the three essential things to help you be successful with the Rule of Life:

1. Choose one daily and one weekly practice.
Keep it small enough for your busiest day.'
2. The Rule of Life is not about “trying harder.” It’s about “abiding deeper.”
3. Grace rule: Miss a day? Don’t make up—keep going.
The Spirit is a Comforter, not a critic.

House Church Leaders

Spend some time with the *Starting the Fire* questions and then read the *Sitting Around the Fire* Bible verses together. Then watch the ten-minute teaching video.

The *Campfire Questions* discuss the video teaching and help the group encounter a deeper understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit. *Making S'mores* is a time to encourage, be encouraged, and build community. *Telling Ghost Stories* normalizes encountering the Holy Spirit and allows us to see how God is working in each other's lives.

The most important part of the discussion is *Tending the Fire*. Depending on how long your group lasts and/or how lively the discussion is, make sure to **save time for this**. It is a weekly check-in to see how the Rule of Life is working in others' lives.

Individual Participants

You will read the Bible verses from *Sitting Around the Fire* and then watch the ten-minute teaching video. Reflect on the *Campfire Questions*, then move on to *Tending the Fire*. Complete the Rule of Life for Week 1 and live it out for the seven days. You can choose new practices for Week 2 and Week 3, or keep the same ones. This is a great study to invite a family member or friend to do with you!

Ghost Stories Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit—fire to warm, light to guide,
breath to give life.

Father, You have loved us from the beginning.
Lord Jesus, You have not left us as orphans.

Holy Spirit, be with us and within us.

Quiet our hurry and fear. Gather our thoughts like kindling
and set a steady flame—small yet faithful.

Teach us Your nearness where we live, work, and play.
Grow the fruit of Jesus in us—love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Guide our steps with holy nudges and listening hearts.
Give trust in waiting and courage in going. Keep us in step
with You.

Let our Rule of Life be a trellis to abide, not a treadmill
to perform. Send us to our neighbors with good news and
good works. Make this church a campfire—welcoming and
warm, pointing to Your light.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord—who lives and reigns with
You, Father, and with You, Holy Spirit, one God, now and
forever.

Amen.

Not an “it.” Not a vibe. The Holy Spirit is God’s personal presence—with you and within you—sent by the Father at Jesus’ request to guide, comfort, empower, and make us new from the inside out (John 14:16–17).

The church has described the Holy Spirit this way for a long time. **Augustine** called the Spirit the love and gift shared by the Father and the Son—the living bond of divine love. So when the Spirit shows up, love shows up. Expect a warmer heart toward God and people, not colder doctrine or stranger behavior.

John Wesley taught that the Spirit does two crucial things: (1) gives the witness of adoption—assuring us we’re God’s children (Romans 8:16), and (2) grows holiness through ordinary means of grace—Scripture, prayer, and community—as regular channels the Holy Spirit uses to change us.

N. T. Wright emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is God’s future breaking into the present—the power of new creation at work in our lives. The church becomes a living preview of what God will one day do for the whole world, worshiping and working in the Holy Spirit’s power.

Tim Keller often points to the Holy Spirit bringing deep assurance, reshaping our identity, and moving the Gospel from head to heart as we live as God’s beloved sons and daughters.

So what does this mean on an average day in Omaha?

- PRESENCE** You are not alone. The Holy Spirit makes Jesus real—right here, right now.
- POWER** Not hype; holy love. The Holy Spirit forms Jesus' character in us and gives power to serve.
- GUIDANCE** The Holy Spirit nudges, convicts, and leads—always in line with Scripture and toward love.
- COMMUNITY** The Holy Spirit builds a people who worship, witness, and practice the way of Jesus together.
- HOPE** The Spirit is the down payment of God's new world—evidence that resurrection life is already at work.

Think of a campfire: small sticks, steady heat, shared warmth. Our **Rule of Life** is the fire ring—tiny, repeatable practices that help us “keep in step with the Holy Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). Expect to learn a little—but more than that, expect to **experience** God and take a few faithful steps with Him.

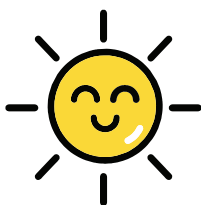
But the Holy Spirit produces
this kind of fruit in
our lives: love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, and
self-control. There is no law
against these things!

-Galatians 5:22-23



**LOVE**

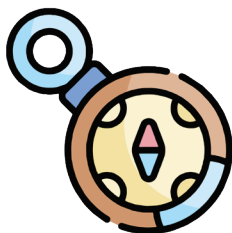
The fire that warms every campsite. Shared freely, it never runs out.

**JOY**

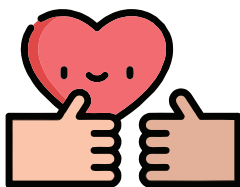
Bubbles up like laughter around the campfire. Found in both sunshine and storms.

**PEACE**

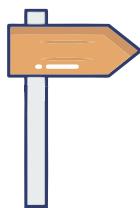
A calm lake at sunrise. Keeps the heart steady when the trail gets rough.

**PATIENCE**

Like waiting for water to boil. Slow, but worth it. Trust the timing.

**KINDNESS**

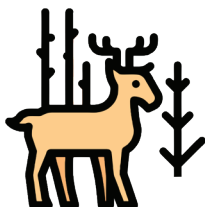
Handing a neighbor your last marshmallow. Small acts make a big impact.

**GOODNESS**

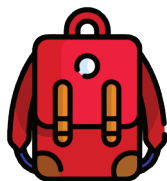
A trail sign pointing the right way. Walk steady; others are following.

**FAITHFULNESS**

A tent that holds firm in the wind. Reliable, steady, always there.

**GENTLENESS**

A deer in the clearing; approach softly. Strength under control.

**SELF-CONTROL**

A packed backpack: essentials in order, nothing weighing you down.

If *Ghost Stories* is our campfire, a Rule of Life is the fire ring—a simple structure that helps the flame burn steady. It's not about earning points with God; it's about making room for the Holy Spirit to warm, guide, and grow us.

An ancient, tried-and-true way to grow

- The **early church** had rhythms of prayer, Scripture, meals, generosity, and mission. (Acts 2)
- **Monastic communities** called their shared practices *a regula*—a pattern that supports life with God.
- John Wesley organized the **early Methodists** into class and band meetings with agreed-upon practices, the “general rules,” to pursue holiness together.

Across the centuries, a rule of life has never been about spiritual perfection—it's about **attention** and **intention**. Jesus says, “Remain in me” (John 15), and Paul urges us to “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). A good rule helps us do that.

A simple definition

A Rule of Life is a small, chosen set of practices that fit your real life and help you stay attentive to the Holy Spirit. Think trellis and vine: the trellis doesn't make grapes; it gives the vine something to grow on. The Holy Spirit grows the fruit; the rule provides rhythm.

Why this matters

- **Clarity**

You know what “walking with the Spirit” looks like today.

- **Consistency**

Tiny, repeatable steps beat big, occasional surges.

- **Calm**

Rhythms create margin; margin makes room for God.

- **Character**

The Spirit grows the fruit of Jesus in everyday places.

- **Community**

Shared practices give us a common language and encouragement.

- **Correction**

When you drift, your rule helps you start again—without shame.

What a Rule of Life is not

- Not a scoreboard or guilt machine.
- Not one-size-fits-all or forever; rules flex with seasons.
- Not “try harder.” It’s “**abide deeper.**”

How we’ll use it in Ghost Stories

Each week includes a Tending the Fire section. Choose one daily and one weekly practice. Keep it small enough for your busiest day.

tending the fire in our souls

Daily

SURRENDER

On waking, open your hands and pray:
Holy Spirit, be with me, be within me.
Amen.

ABIDE

Read today's Bible passage found on page 16. Circle a word or a phrase.
Ask: What is God speaking to me today?

BLESS

Intentionally bless one person daily (note, text, prayer, small service, etc).

RELATE

Share one "I noticed God when..." story with a family member or friend.

EXAMEN

Where did I walk with God? Where did I resist?

Weekly

TAKE THREE SMALL STEPS

One toward God
One toward people
One toward mission

FRUIT FOCUS

Choose one fruit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) this week. Commit to growing in this area or demonstrating this fruit throughout the week.

MINI SABBATH

Spend one tech-free hour outdoors this week.

Three Essential Things to Know About the Rule of Life

1. Choose one daily and one weekly practice.
Keep it small enough for your busiest day.
2. The Rule of Life is not about “trying harder.”
It’s about “abiding deeper.”
3. Grace rule: Miss a day? Don’t make up— keep going. The Spirit is a Comforter, not a critic.

Not Ghosted

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| ☐ Sunday, October 12 | John 14:15–27 |
| ☐ Monday, October 13 | Psalms 139:7–12 |
| ☐ Tuesday, October 14 | Romans 8:9–17 |
| ☐ Wednesday, October 15 | 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 |
| ☐ Thursday, October 16 | John 16:5–15 |
| ☐ Friday, October 17 | Ezekiel 36:26–27 |
| ☐ Saturday, October 18 | Acts 2:1–13, 38–39 |

Ghost Power

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| ☐ Sunday, October 19 | Acts 1:4–8 |
| ☐ Monday, October 20 | Galatians 5:16–26 |
| ☐ Tuesday, October 21 | 2 Corinthians 3:17–18 |
| ☐ Wednesday, October 22 | 1 Corinthians 12:4–11 |
| ☐ Thursday, October 23 | Romans 12:3–8 |
| ☐ Friday, October 24 | Acts 4:23–31 |
| ☐ Saturday, October 25 | 2 Timothy 1:6–8 |

Ghost Steps

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| ☐ Sunday, October 26 | Galatians 5:25–26 |
| ☐ Monday, October 27 | Acts 16:6–10 |
| ☐ Tuesday, October 28 | Proverbs 3:5–6 |
| ☐ Wednesday, October 29 | Acts 8:26–40 |
| ☐ Thursday, October 30 | Colossians 3:15–17 |
| ☐ Friday, October 31 | Isaiah 30:18–21 |
| ☐ Saturday, November 1 | Acts 13:1–4 |
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The Holy Spirit is God's personal presence with you and within you.

Starting The Fire *(Reflect)*

1. Ghost Stories is a three-week immersion into learning about and experiencing the Holy Spirit. What is something you are hoping God does during these next three weeks?

2. What pictures of the Holy Spirit have shaped your understanding of the Holy Spirit (helpful or unhelpful)?

Sitting Around The Fire *(Read)*

I can never escape from your Spirit!

I can never get away from your presence!

If I go up to heaven, you are there;

if I go down to the grave, you are there.

If I ride the wings of the morning,

if I dwell by the farthest oceans,

even there your hand will guide me,

and your strength will support me.

-Psalm 139:7-10

If you love me, obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you.

He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.

-John 14:15-17

Warming Up (Watch)



Campfire Questions (Discuss)

The following questions are for house church discussion and individual reflection and are based on the Around the Fire readings and the Warming Up video.

1. Share a time you felt “ghosted” by people—how did you respond?
2. The above readings from Psalm 139 and John 14 share that God doesn’t “ghost” us. Has this been your experience?
3. How do you typically experience God’s nearness?
4. If the Holy Spirit lives in you, does that change the way you see yourself? If so, how?
5. What are the things that fuel doubt that the Holy Spirit is near?
6. What small boundary (time, technology, pace) would create space for you to encounter more of the Holy Spirit’s presence?
7. What would change in your life if you experienced the Holy Spirit as the one who walks alongside you?

Making S'mores *(Community)*

Graham crackers, chocolate, and marshmallows are all good by themselves. They are better together, especially when roasted over a fire. Use this time to encourage each other—knowing we are better together. (If you are using this guide for individual reflection, spend this time with the Holy Spirit and invite Him to speak into your life.)

1. People can ghost us, but the Holy Spirit remains present with us. We resemble God most when we remain present with each other. Share with another person in the group how they stayed present with you. Talk about how this was a blessing to you.



Telling Ghost Stories *(Experience)*

Note: responses to the following question will vary greatly.

1. When is a time that you sensed the Holy Spirit's presence?
What was it like for you?

Tending the Fire *(Accountability)*

Choose one daily and one weekly practice from the Ghost Stories Rule of Life found on page 14-15.

Remember these important guidelines:

- *Keep it small enough for your busiest day.*
- *The Rule of Life is not about "trying harder." It's about "abiding deeper."*
- *Grace rule: Miss a day? Don't make up—restart. The Spirit is a Comforter, not a critic.*

Discuss your plans with each other and make this a time of support while you listen to others.

1. What two practices are you going to do?
 2. What do you see as an obstacle to your being successful?
 3. How can others help you be faithful?
-

The Holy Spirit doesn't make you weird; He makes you like Jesus.

Starting The Fire *(Reflect)*

1. What makes somebody weird? When you hear that somebody is weird, is that usually a good thing or a bad thing?
2. Who is somebody you personally know who resembles Jesus? What is it about them that makes them look like Jesus?

Sitting Around The Fire *(Read)*

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

-Galatians 5:22-26

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have. **-1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

Warming Up (Watch)



Campfire Questions (Discuss)

The following questions are for house church discussion and individual reflection and are based on the Around the Fire readings and the Warming Up video.

1. When you hear “Spirit-filled,” what comes to mind?
Where have we made it weirder than Jesus?
2. Does character matter as much as capability? If so, how?
3. How can you allow the Holy Spirit to form your character more into the likeness of Christ?
4. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” -2 Timothy 1:7
What are some ways fear presents itself and hinders us from cooperating with the Holy Spirit?
5. Share a time you overcame fear and followed the Holy Spirit.
What was that like for you?
6. Tell a story of “quiet power” (gentleness, patience, self-control) changing a situation.
7. If Jesus had your calendar this week, what would look different?

Making S'mores *(Community)*

Graham crackers, chocolate, and marshmallows are all good by themselves. They are better together, especially when roasted over a fire. Use this time to encourage each other—knowing we are better together. (If you are using this guide for individual reflection, spend this time with the Holy Spirit and invite Him to speak into your life.)

1. The fruits of the Holy Spirit from Galatians 5 are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Go around the group and share the fruits of the Holy Spirit you see in each other.
2. Share a specific fruit of the Holy Spirit you would like to harvest. Talk about how this fruit would be helpful in your life and your ministry.



Telling Ghost Stories *(Experience)*

Note: responses to the following question will vary greatly.

1. Tell a story of how you encountered the Holy Spirit this week.

Tending the Fire *(Accountability)*

Discuss these questions to support, encourage, and practice accountability as you live your Ghost Stories Rule of Life found on page 14-15.

1. Name your two practices. On a scale of 1–5, how consistent were you?
2. Where did the Holy Spirit meet you because of your one daily + one weekly practice?
3. What barrier tripped you up? What does your restart look like tomorrow?
4. What two practices are you going to do this coming week?

Fruit of the Spirit:

evidence of God
at work within you.

Small steps with the Holy Spirit beat big intentions without Him.

Starting The Fire *(Reflect)*

1. Name a big intention you never started. What got in the way?
2. Name a big intention you never completed. What got in the way?

Sitting Around The Fire *(Read)*

Trust in the Lord with all your heart;
do not depend on your own understanding.

Seek his will in all you do,
and he will show you which path to take.

-Proverbs 3:5–6

Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there. So instead, they went on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas.

That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there.

-Acts 16:6–10

Warming Up (Watch)



Campfire Questions (Discuss)

The following questions are for house church discussion and individual reflection and are based on the Around the Fire readings and the Warming Up video.

1. How do you discern a Spirit nudge vs. an impulse?
2. Where have you felt a “nudge” lately? Did you act on it?
If not, what keeps you from acting on it?
3. How do you typically handle a missed opportunity? If shame or regret is a common reaction for you, how do you move from that to a Spirit-led restart?
4. What does it look like for you to keep in step when God says, “not here, not now” (Acts 16)?
5. One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is patience (Galatians 5:22–23). How can the Holy Spirit help you develop more patience?
6. Who’s your “trail buddy” for accountability? How are you going to invite them to help you follow the Holy Spirit?

Making S'mores *(Community)*

Graham crackers, chocolate, and marshmallows are all good by themselves. They are better together, especially when roasted over a fire. Use this time to encourage each other—knowing we are better together. (If you are using this guide for individual reflection, spend this time with the Holy Spirit and invite Him to speak into your life.)

1. Share about how you have witnessed somebody in the group take small steps (or big steps) with the Holy Spirit and how that was an inspiration to you.



Telling Ghost Stories *(Experience)*

Note: responses to the following question will vary greatly.

1. Tell a story of how you encountered the Holy Spirit this week.

Tending the Fire *(Accountability)*

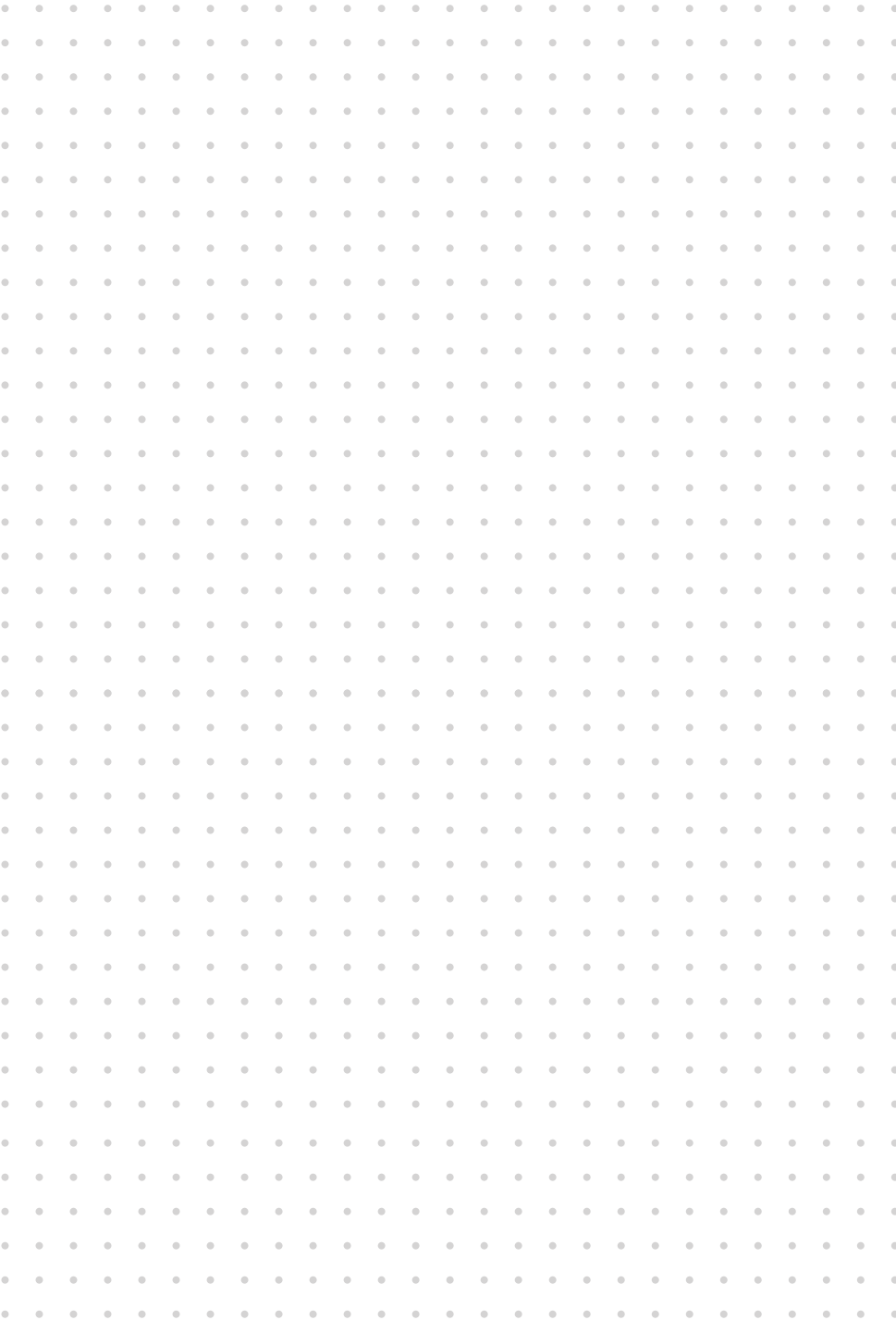
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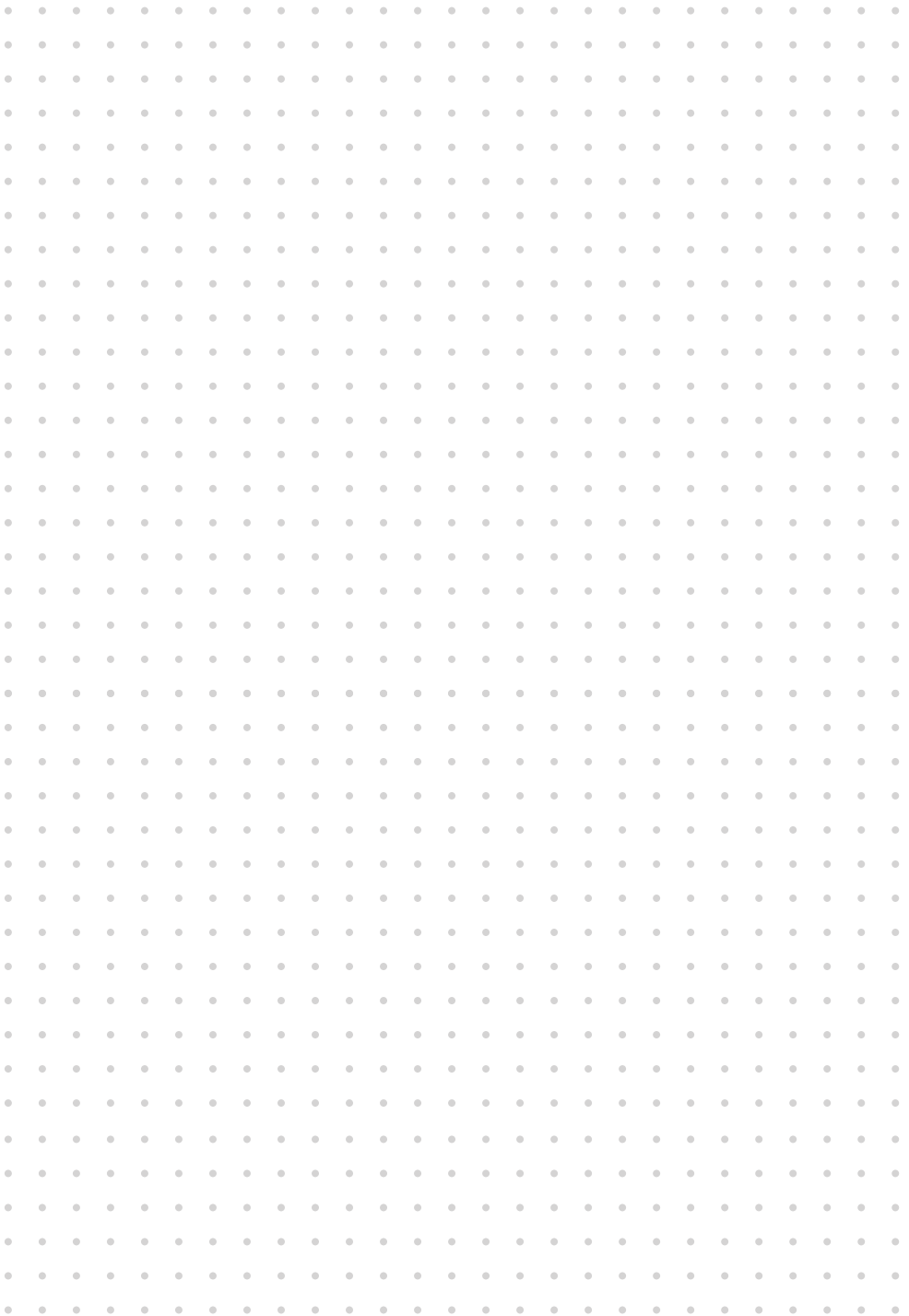
1. Name your two practices. On a scale of 1–5, how consistent were you?
2. Where did the Holy Spirit meet you because of your one daily + one weekly practice? Tell the story.
3. What barrier tripped you up?
4. As this series ends, what is your plan to remain in community with the Holy Spirit?

Name your two practices.

1.

2.







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