

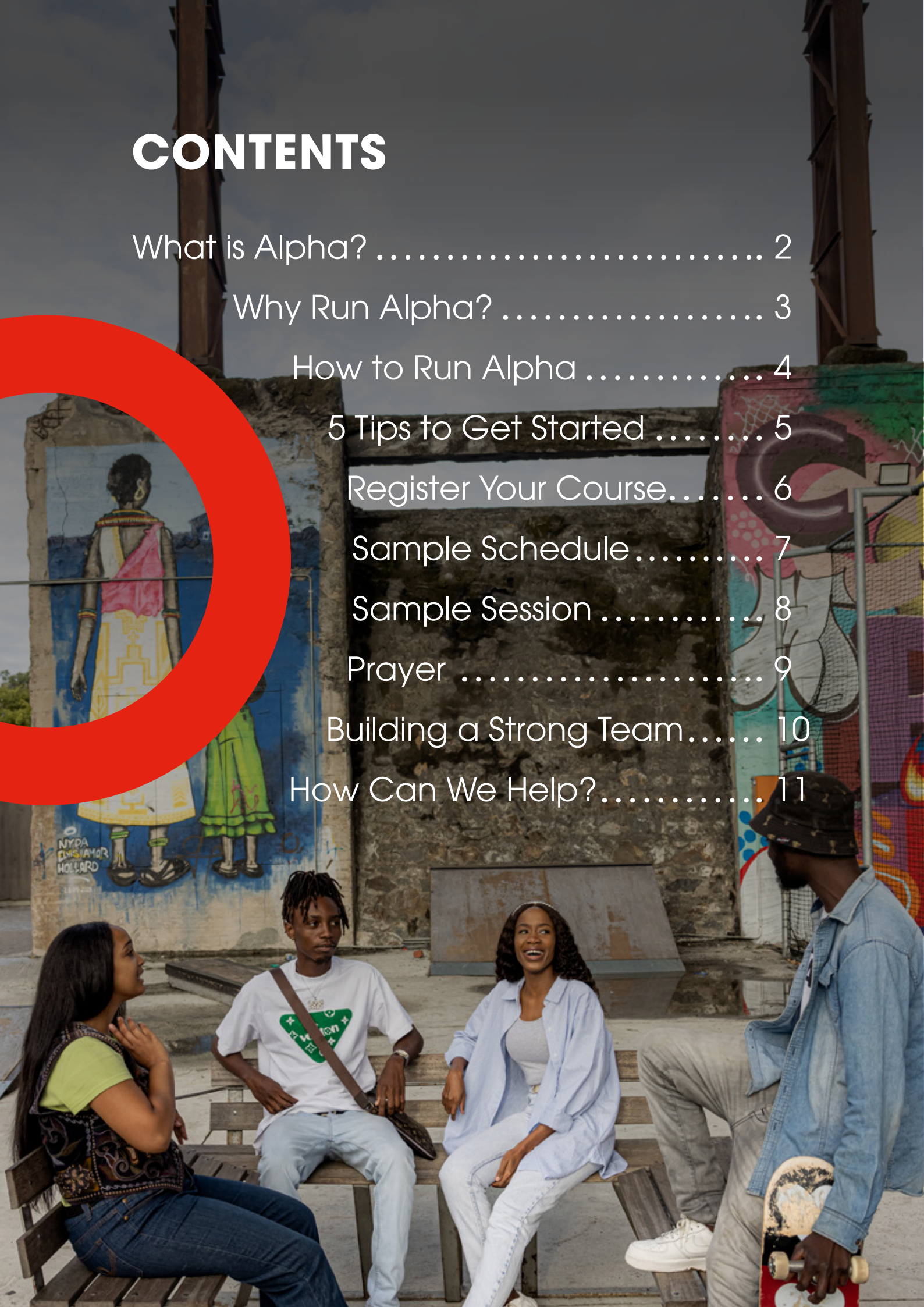


Run Alpha Handbook



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WHAT IS ALPHA?

Alpha is a multiweek course of interactive sessions exploring the basics of the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment.



**No question is off limits.
There's no pressure.
No matter what you believe or think, you are welcome.
There's no cost - just great conversations with thinkers like you.**



WHY RUN ALPHA?



Alpha is REAL

Those who run Alpha are encouraged to be open and authentic, as this allows guests to be real themselves. People are welcome to ask questions and look for answers, with no pressure to contribute, and there's no follow up if they don't come back.



Alpha is RELATIONAL

Alpha is based on real friendships that are built over a few weeks and often last for years afterwards.



Alpha is RELIANT

On Alpha we are reliant on the Holy Spirit because we realise that it is only God who changes people's lives – we just introduce him. If we allow people to be themselves and ask their questions and focus on building relationships and relying on the Holy Spirit, lives are changed.



Alpha is REPRODUCIBLE

Alpha empowers ordinary people to be a part of this extraordinary work. Alpha can be run by anyone and in any context in collaboration with the local church. We often witness that the things that seemingly are small and insignificant can have huge impact when Jesus gets involved.



HOW TO RUN ALPHA

Every Alpha session has three key elements:



1 CONNECT

Almost every social event is centred around food and drink. The food on Alpha allows people from different backgrounds, with a whole variety of questions and ideas about life, to come together, share a meal or snack and get to know one another on a deeper level.



2 CONTENT

After some food and time to get to know one another, a short talk is played as a film or can be given as a live talk. The talks are designed to engage and inspire conversation on big issues around faith. The videos are usually around thirty minutes long. There are 15 Alpha talks that can be explored over 11 weeks, including the Alpha day or weekend.



3 CONVERSATION

The most essential part of any Alpha. This is the chance for people to share their thoughts and ideas on the topic in an open and friendly small group environment. The discussion provides space for building relationships and experiencing what the Christian life really looks like. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing guests can't say.



5 STEPS TO GET STARTED

Click here
to preview
the Alpha
Talks

- 1 **PRAY & keep praying**
 - Timing. Pray for the right time to start Alpha
 - Team. Pray for the right team to gather together to serve
 - Guests. Pray for the hearts of those that will receive the invitation to try Alpha
- 2 **PLAN & REGISTER your Alpha**

Everything you need to host the best Alpha possible is available digitally for free on MyAlpha at app.alpha.org/ssg

 - Go to [MyAlpha](#) to sign up or sign in
 - Create your Alpha to access the resources
 - Follow the steps on the next page if you need help
- 3 **DOWNLOAD the talks and team guides**
 - In MyAlpha click on your registered Alpha
 - Look under [Series Materials](#)
- 4 **SELECT & TRAIN your team**
 - In MyAlpha go to the [Learning Centre](#)
Review Alpha 101 & 7 Best Practices
 - Download & watch the Small Group Training with your team, found in [Series Materials](#)
- 5 **PROMOTE & INVITE**
 - In MyAlpha click on your registered Alpha
 - Look under [Promote](#) for a range of materials

There you go! **You're ready to get started** on your Alpha journey, and we are here to serve in every step. We would love to connect and pray with you so please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

If you are looking for some more information on running Alpha, **keep reading!**

CLICK HERE TO GET STARTED

REGISTER YOUR ALPHA COURSE

Everything that you will need to host the best Alpha possible is available digitally for free on our website: app.alpha.org/ssa.

For any help, please contact us at africa@alpha.org.

Steps to signing up online:

1. Visit **MyAlpha** to sign up for free at: app.alpha.org/ssa
2. When signing in for the first time, click **Sign Up**
3. Enter your information and create a password or login with your Google credentials
4. A verification email will be sent to you. Check your email inbox (or spam) and click on the link to verify your account and complete the sign up process
5. Back on **MyAlpha**, you can now log in to your account

Steps to creating a course:

1. Log in to **MyAlpha** (If you have not yet signed up, please follow the previous steps)
2. On the **Dashboard** tab, click on the red **Register new Alpha** button near the top right corner of your page
3. Preview the available series and select a series that you would like to run
4. Answer a few basic questions about your Alpha such as: Who is your Alpha for? What language do you want the audio to be in? (Should you wish to run your Alpha in multiple languages, please register a course in each language.)
5. Fill in details about your Alpha (start date, associated church/

organisation), review the inputs of previous steps and create your course

- **Church/Organisation:** Even if your Alpha is not run in a church, please add which church you usually attend. This helps us track who is running Alpha in homes, coffee shops, etc. and if there are any trends or patterns with specific churches. Sometimes there are 4 or 5 people from the same church running Home Alphas!

6. You will be prompted to promote your Alpha on the Alpha websites for guests. If your Alpha is open to everyone, be sure to fill out the Alpha name, Email for inquiries, Alpha location, Start date so that people can find the info on the Try Alpha page and sign up.

- When guests sign up, you will receive an email notification. Then you can send them more info (e.g. address, parking info, or Zoom link, etc.).

- If your Alpha is private or a closed group, or if your start date is not yet confirmed, you can edit and toggle your Alpha course back to private.

- Selecting **Make your Alpha public** makes your course visible for anyone to find when they search for a course at alpha.org/try-alpha. **Please practice caution when considering whether this is wise in your context.**

7. You now have access to all the Alpha videos, training videos, small group questions, guest invitations, and more. It's all free online!

Steps to accessing all the resources:

1. Once you have created a course, click on the **My Alpha Courses** tab to preview all your courses
2. Click **View and edit** to open your course. Within the course, click on the **Schedule** tab to make any adjustments to your training and session dates
3. Click on the **Promote** tab to access resources to help you promote your Alpha to your congregation and equip them to invite guests. These include posters, invitation cards, social media content and videos, all for digital or print.
4. Click on the **Series Materials** tab to access team training videos, the talk videos, and additional resources such as guides for your team, guides for guests, guest feedback form, scripts and many other helpful resources
5. Click on the **Team** tab and invite your Alpha team to preview the course you created, and all the resources online



SAMPLE ALPHA SCHEDULE

Alpha Film Series

Week 1 - Is There More to Life Than This? (Launch Party)
Week 2 - Who is Jesus?
Week 3 - Why Did Jesus Die?
Week 4 - How Can I Have Faith?
Week 5 - Why and How Do I Pray?
Week 6 - Why and How Do I Read the Bible?
Week 7 - How Does God Guide Us?

Holy Spirit Sessions

Who Is the Holy Spirit?
What Does the Holy Spirit Do?
How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?
How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
Week 8 - How Can I Resist Evil?
Week 9 - Why and How Should I Tell Others?
Week 10 - Does God Heal Today?
Week 11 - What About the Church?

Alpha Youth Talks Africa

Week 1 - Life: Is This It? (Launch Party)
Week 2 - Jesus: Who Is Jesus?
Week 3 - Cross: Why Did Jesus Die?
Week 4 - Faith: How Can I Have Faith?
Week 5 - Prayer: Why and How Do I Pray?
Week 6 - Bible: Why and How Do I Read the Bible?

Holy Spirit Sessions

Spirit - Who Is the Holy Spirit and What Does He Do?
Fill - How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?
New Life - How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
Week 7 - Evil: How Can I Resist Evil?
Week 8 - Telling Others: Why and How Should I Tell Others?
Week 9 - Healing: Does God Heal Today?
Week 10 - Church: What About the Church?

A **Launch Party** is a fun, pressure-free way to introduce how Alpha will run over the coming weeks. Since Week 1 is a bit different from others, there is less time for discussion. It's more about getting to know each other. In other weeks there will be more time for discussion.

Alpha Youth Series 2024

Week 1 - Welcome to the Conversation (Launch Party)
Week 2 - Jesus Is...?
Week 3 - What Does Real Love Look Like?
Week 4 - Why Would I Want a Relationship With God?
Week 5 - What Does a Relationship With God Look Like?

Holy Spirit Sessions

Who Is the Holy Spirit?
How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit?
Week 6 - How Does God Help Us Overcome Evil?
Week 7 - Does God Heal Today?
Week 8 - What Happens Next?

SAMPLE ALPHA SESSION

Customise these schedules as needed for your group.

Alpha Film Series

1.5 HOUR SESSION

1 hr before – Set up

30 min before – Brief team meeting & prayer time

ALPHA BEGINS

15 min – Guests arrive and mingle

20 min – Food

5 min – Ice breaker game

40 min – Alpha talk with discussion

10 min – Close

ALPHA ENDS

15 min – Debrief with Alpha team

Alpha Youth Series

55 MINUTE SESSION

10 min before – Alpha Team does set up

ALPHA BEGINS

10 min – Guests arrive, eat together, relax/mingle

5 min – Welcome (encourage them to start eating)

35 min – Alpha talk with discussion

5 min – Close

ALPHA ENDS

10 min – Debrief with Alpha team

Alpha Online

1 HOUR & 15 MINUTES SESSION

20 min before – Alpha Team info chat, prayer & tech check

ALPHA BEGINS

5 min – Meet & greet, welcome

10 min – Online Hospitality

30 min – Alpha talk

30 min – Small group discussion

ALPHA ENDS

10 min – Debrief with Alpha team

PRAYER

Prayer during the first few sessions

Depending on what Alpha series you are watching, there may be a short prayer led by one of the presenters at the end of the talk. This is intended to give your guests a chance to pray along silently if they want to.

Session 5 is all about prayer

Small groups are encouraged to discuss the topic and then try praying together at the end. Group hosts might simply say a short prayer or give guests an opportunity to pray out loud. In the following weeks, hosts can choose to end all small group sessions with prayer.

Note: On Alpha, we recommend that you do NOT pray before meals or during small group time until Week 5. This allows the topic of prayer to be introduced thoughtfully and discussed thoroughly in small groups.

Praying for others on the alpha retreat

The Alpha Retreat is usually scheduled about halfway through your Alpha. It's a chance to get away from the busyness of our lives, where people can take time to relax, think, have fun together, learn more about God, and if they're willing, to experience prayer ministry. The Alpha talks on the weekend are primarily about the Holy Spirit - who, why, how the Spirit helps us stay focused on Jesus and in relationship with Him. After the last session, there's time for guests to pray and be prayed for by a host or helper. We want to give them an opportunity to experience God's love through the Holy Spirit.

Prayer and healing

After the Alpha talk about healing, we encourage small groups to discuss the topic and pray for healing. It's often in those prayer times that God surprises us by what he does in people's hearts and in their bodies. God loves to reveal Himself to those who sincerely seek Him.



BUILDING A STRONG TEAM

Being part of an Alpha team can be the most rewarding and fun experience for volunteers. People with a common interest get together and can make new friends, develop their skills and learn how to work together. A strong team will also provide a better, more positive experience for your Alpha guests.

HOSTS & HELPERS

Who loves people well and can facilitate open and honest communication?

HOSPITALITY

Think about people you know who love hospitality. What would it look like if you invited them to help prepare and cook meals/ snacks, or to find creative ways to express hospitality if you are running Alpha Online?

INVITATION

Who can dream up creative ways to make your meeting space more welcoming and fun? Who can equip your community to invite their friends to Alpha?

TECH SUPPORT

Who can make sure you have the right audio and visual gear so that everything goes smoothly? Who knows how to use tools like Zoom? Find those people who love to help out behind the scenes.

WELCOME TEAM

The greeters and registration table will usually be the first people that guests meet. Look for people with a friendly smile and who love connecting.



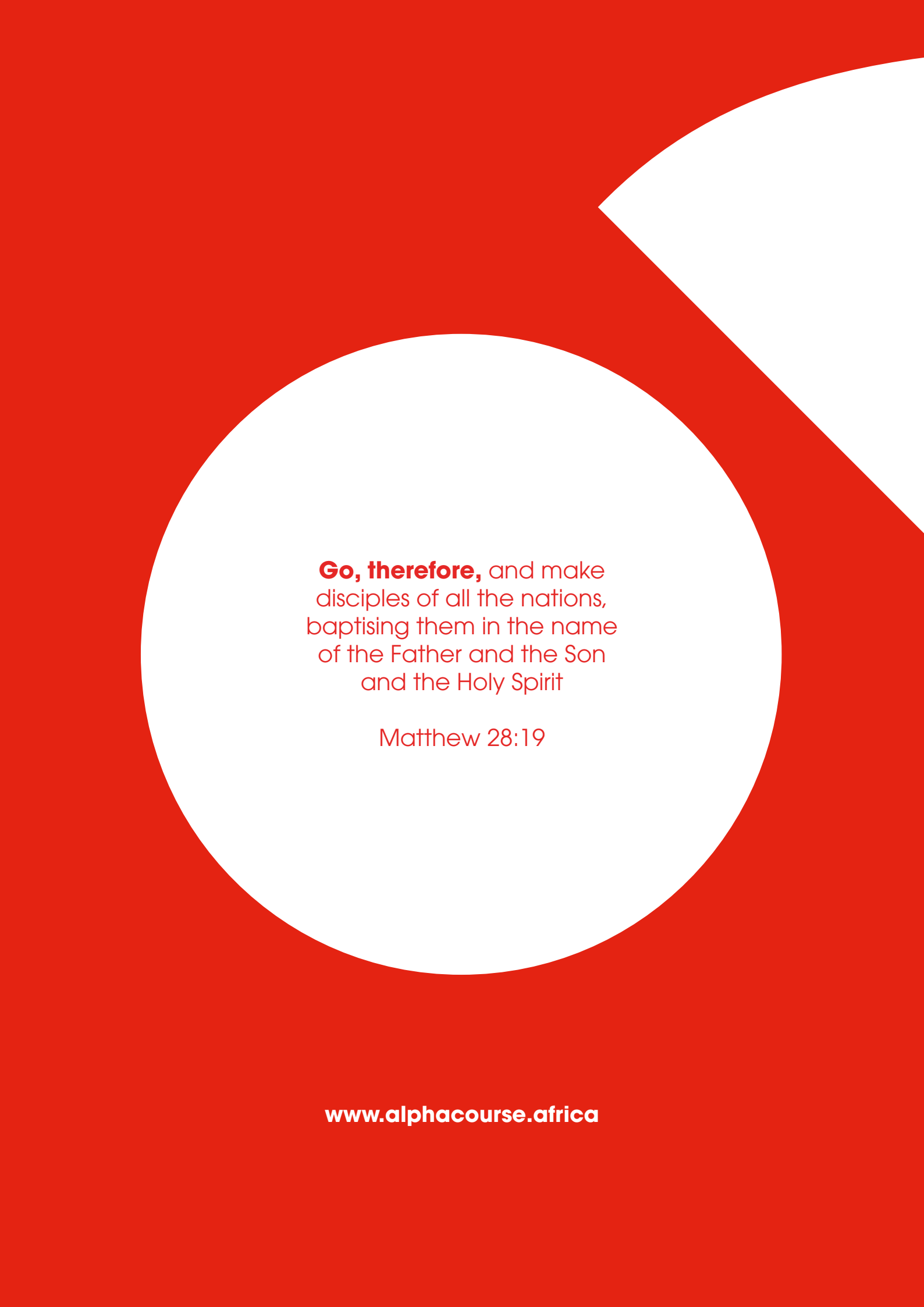
HOW CAN WE HELP?

We know that creating and running an Alpha can be intimidating. You don't have to worry; we are here to help!



Scan the QR code or go to alphacourse.africa to access more info, or message us directly on our [Contact page](#).





Go, therefore, and make
disciples of all the nations,
baptising them in the name
of the Father and the Son
and the Holy Spirit

Matthew 28:19