



holy spirit encounter
groups edition

Holy Spirit Encounter

Session Six - Roadblocks of Control, Guilt & Unforgiveness

Begin this session by sharing testimonies of what Jesus has done this week since dealing with fear, unbelief, and apathy.

Pray a prayer of thanksgiving for what God has done and invite him to continue His good work in this session.

Review – this session is a continuation of a teaching that was originally recorded as one longer session. As you watch the next video, remember that we are talking about the strategies of the enemy that can clog our souls and block the flow of the Spirit in our lives. These blockages are often the result of an ungodly response to an unmet need. Sometimes they are because of our broken responses to pain caused by others.

Watch the video, **Session Six - Roadblocks of Control, Guilt & Unforgiveness.**

Control is one of the ungodly ways we respond to fear. When we try to remain in control of our own lives and the lives of those around us instead of surrendering to God, we are making an idol of ourselves. We are trying to be the god of our own lives.

**“Be still and know that I am God.”
- Psalm 46:10 (NIV)**

**“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
- Isaiah 55:8-9 (NIV)**

Control keeps us from understanding and knowing the nature and character of God because we are suspicious of anything beyond our control and our understanding. This limits the work of God in our lives - His ways are greater than our ways and often beyond our human understanding. When we are afraid of what the Spirit might do and respond with control, we are quenching the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 explicitly tells us not to quench, suppress, extinguish, or subdue the Spirit. A flip side of control may be trying to ‘force’ the Spirit to do something.

1. In our humanity we are all susceptible to control. Ask Jesus to show you if you are hanging on to something. Ask Him to show you what you have been trying to control. The only remedy for control is to repent and invite the Spirit to teach us how to walk in a new way. **Take turns praying something like the following prayer out loud.**

“Jesus, I acknowledge that I have tried to be the lord of my own life and sometimes lord in the lives of those around me. I repent of this, and I ask you to forgive me. I receive your grace for this and ask you now to come and fill me again with your Holy Spirit so I can learn how to walk in a new way.”

Pause in His presence and allow Him to speak to you.

2. Invite the Lord to work in difficult places in your life where you may have the impulse to control rather than trust. Pray a “kingdom prayer” for those issues you desire to control. Rather than, “fix it, Jesus...” pray, “I trust you to be at work in this situation...teach me...guide them...”

Guilt can manifest in our life as feelings of being unworthy, feeling like we don’t deserve God’s presence or gifts, or a desire to hide from really being known by others. It often comes to us when we have gotten something wrong, slipped into old sin patterns, or feel like our inner life doesn’t match our outer life. We may believe with our heads that God has forgiven us, but we have not received grace (forgiven ourselves).

Guilt and shame block us from receiving from the Spirit who is the ultimate source of freedom from all addictive and destructive behaviour. When we believe the lie that we are unworthy, we are agreeing with the accuser rather than the words of our heavenly Father who runs to us with His arms wide open (Luke 15:20, NIV). Nothing can separate you from the love of God—it gave Him great pleasure to make you His own!

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” – Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

**“God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.”
– Ephesians 1:5 (NIV)**

3. Confession is hard, but darkness loses its power when we bring things into the light. Do you have a secret that is hiding? The truth of the gospel is that you are loved and forgiven. Access grace by confessing your sin. Receive love.
4. Guilt, shame, and unworthiness lose their power when we break agreement with the lie that we are separated from the love of God. Speak the following declaration out loud, using whichever phrases resonate with you, and add anything the Spirit is prompting:

“In the name of Jesus, I break any agreement I have made, known or unknown, with the lie that:

- *I am not worthy of love*
- *I am not worthy of the gifts of the Spirit*
- *That God does not want to talk to me*
- *There is no hope of freedom for me*
- *If people really knew me, they would not like me*

I ask you, Jesus, to take this lie far away from me and show me the truth of how you feel about me.”

Unforgiveness and bitterness take root in our souls when someone sins against us and we experience the losses and consequences of their actions. Anger, annoyance, irritability, and impatience can be indicators of unresolved bitterness in our lives.

When bitterness takes root, it blocks the flow of the Spirit in our lives. Forgiving can be incredibly hard, but it is the pathway to spiritual and emotional wholeness. Forgiveness is a choice that we make even if we don't feel like it because we have been forgiven. Forgiving is not saying that what happened to us is okay or that the other person is getting away with whatever they did. It is choosing to release them to Jesus for Him to deal with. It is emptying our hands—giving Him our pain and loss—so we can receive grace from Jesus for what was done for us. He has already paid for the restoration needed because of this sin against you—engaging with forgiveness activates the restoration.

“But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.” - Matthew 5:44-45a (NIV)

“Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. This is what God has called you to do, and he will bless you for it.” - 1 Peter 3:8b-9 (NIV)

5. Ask the Lord who you need to forgive. You might be surprised by some of the names that come to mind, but trust that God knows things you don't know. Do you need to forgive yourself (receive grace for what you have done)? Sometimes we need to “forgive God” which is to release Him from judgments we have made about him in times of disappointment or loss.
6. Make note of those you need to forgive and name the loss you experienced because of their actions/inactions. **Pray a prayer of forgiveness.**

“Thank you, Jesus, for forgiving me. Now I choose to forgive (name) for (action/inaction) . What they did made me feel . I give this pain and loss to you, Jesus, and put all my hope for restoration in you. I release (name of offender) to you and I release them of any obligation to me and of any judgements I have made. I bless them with knowing your love and restoration in their lives. Amen.”

Celebrate the goodness of God together! You have just done some intense spiritual warfare. The Father is celebrating over you (Zephaniah 3:17, NIV). It is His good pleasure to bring Kingdom restoration in your life!

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.” - Luke 12:32 (NIV)

Going Deeper

- Invite the Holy Spirit to convict any impulse to control. When he does, invite Him to teach you how to walk in a new way.
- Practice praying “kingdom prayers” rather than fear-based prayers. Rather than praying for the absence of troubles, pray for wisdom and strategies from heaven when you encounter trouble. Rather than trying to fix people, pray that the Spirit will change you and bless the other one with experiencing the work of the Spirit in their lives too.
- Break agreement with lies of unworthiness and shame any time they come up. Continue to declare God’s love over you—out loud! Tell yourself the truth of His love often.
- You may have more work to do around forgiving others. Set aside time to work through this forgiveness process.

*For a **deeper dive** on this subject, check out **The Empowerment Pivot, Chapter Six: “Pivot to a Transformational God”***