



holy spirit encounter
groups edition

Holy Spirit Encounter

Session Eleven - The Father's Blessing

Begin this session by sharing testimonies of what you have learned about living from above since you last met.

Pray for a fresh encounter with the heart of Father God. Give Him permission to reveal wounds that you might be protecting, ignoring, or denying. Declare your trust in His goodness. Where you are finding it hard to trust, invite Him to increase your faith.

Watch the video, **Session Eleven - The Father's Blessing (or The Orphan Spirit)**.

At the end of this session, you will be able to participate with the exercise in the video. These notes are to help you engage in the conversation within your group later.

Our first understanding of God is often attached to our experience of our earthly father or mother but can be affected by other authority figures as well. Even the best parents and authority figures are imperfect, and the enemy is always at work to inflict wounds on our souls. We often refer to these wounds as “father wounds,” but they are more accurately “authority wounds.” These wounds can leave us with an “orphan spirit”—a sense of homelessness, not belonging, or absence of a place of safety. These wounds are often a significant barrier to receiving the filling of the Spirit and can only truly be healed when we encounter the perfect, unconditional love of God who gives us our true identity.

Ceremonies that serve as a rite of passage, such as a bar mitzvah, make identity declarations over a young man or woman that communicate affirmation, belonging, love, and even gender identity in an atmosphere of love and celebration. Absence of this kind of blessing in some form can leave us with shame, addictions, need for strict religious behaviour, anxiety, and fearfulness. It can leave men desiring women as compensation and women looking to men for affirmation in inappropriate ways.

Jesus received His Father's blessing at His baptism. His Father celebrated Him with the declaration that He was a beloved son (belonging), who He loved (affection), and in whom He was well pleased (affirmation).

Parenting styles that can leave a wound:

- **Abusive:** physically, sexually, or verbally. This breaks trust and makes it hard to receive and experience love.
- **Absentee:** physically or emotionally, by choice or circumstances. Can lead to the functional belief that God doesn't have time or attention for me.
- **Critical:** offering conditional or no approval. Creates a feeling of not good enough or need to perform.

You might have a father/mother wound if:

- You get depressed when corrected
- You envy the success of others
- You are unable to say no without feeling guilty
- You discipline your children because you're embarrassed
- You defend yourself vigorously when your views are challenged
- You are unteachable
- You need a certain position, title, or salary to feel valuable
- You rob your family of time because you are driven to other pursuits
- No amount of affection from the opposite gender satisfies you (often a root of addiction to porn or erotica)

1. Did your father/mother communicate love in a way that was meaningful to you?
2. Do you consistently feel like you have to perform to earn affection?
3. Do you recognize any of the above behaviours in yourself?
4. What do you want to leave behind? What do you want to receive?

Because these behaviours are a form of self-protection, we are not always aware that we engage with them. **Pause and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unhealthy coping mechanisms.** (If you're feeling really brave, you can ask friends and family too!) Confess anything the Spirit brings up. Jesus always trades up! You're about to receive what you have really wanted all along.

**"I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you."
- John 14:18 (NIV)**

Seven images of the Holy Spirit in scripture. If one of these seven resonate with you, this might inform your answer to what you want to receive today.

- **Wind.** (Genesis 1:1, Ezekiel 37:1-14, John 20:19-23, Acts 2:2, NIV) You cannot control, contain or dictate to the Holy Spirit (John 3:8, NIV). If you want to receive the wind of Holy Spirit, you need to surrender control and pride and receive life and peace.
- **Fire.** (Leviticus 9:22-24; Hebrews 12:29; Acts 2:3, NIV) Fire consumes and leaves behind only what is lasting, it sanctifies and purifies; full surrender. Give up sin, hesitancy, reluctance to use gifts, surrender self in exchange for light and freedom.
- **Water.** (Ezekiel 47:1-9; John 7:37-38, NIV) Give up drinking from false wells, doing life in your own strength, idols, that take the place of Jesus, things that block the flow of the river of God in exchange for renewal and vibrancy.
- **Oil.** (James 5:14, NIV) For anointing, for authority, healing, empowerment, ministry. Give up self-sufficiency of your own health or empowerment and doing things on your own strength. Surrender, trauma, abuse, and sickness in exchange for health and empowered living.

- **Comfort.** (John 14, NIV) Give up grief, pain, shame, loneliness, regret in exchange for comfort, companionship, and nurture.
- **Dove.** (Luke 3:21-22, NIV) You can't chase a dove or strive for one to land on you. Be still in gentleness and humility, mindful of the dove's presence. Give up striving, earning merit, and the religious spirit in exchange for identity, affection, and affirmation.
- **Cloud.** (Luke 9:28-36; Exodus 13:21; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14, NIV) The presence of God casts out all fear and reassures us. Surrender fear and in exchange receive glory, protection, covering.

Participate in the Exchange.

- Which of these resonate with you?
- What do you want to exchange?
- Allow the video to serve you. As Doug walks through each image of the Spirit, **pause the video and take the time you need to for each one to receive what they are seeking.**

Activate the Father's Blessing

Break into groups of three to five and ask these questions:

- Invite Spirit to bring a critical memory to mind. How old are you in your memory?
- What do you want to leave behind? (Brief, one sentence, not life story)
- What do you want to ask of your Father?
- Pray the release of then Father's blessing over recipient.

In Jesus name, cut off what is being left behind. In the name of Jesus release the blessing of the Father, the image of the Spirit. Group effort—no spectators.