



holy spirit encounter
groups edition

Holy Spirit Encounter

Session One – Introduction

Begin this session by getting to know one another a little better. Specifically, share your personal experience around the work of the Spirit. Each one of us bring a story to the table and through this series you are going to write another chapter together.

Pray a prayer of invitation. Invite the Trinity—Father, Son, and Spirit—to speak to you in this session.

Watch the video, **Session One – Introduction**.

1. Doug asks the question, *“What if the Holy Spirit actually shows up and does something?”* Ask yourself this question and consider your gut response. Share with the group.
2. *“Do you believe you can trust the heart of Jesus?”* How does your response to this question impact or intersect with your answer to the first question?

“I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge— That you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” - Ephesians 3:16-19 (NIV)

3. **Consider** – your physical, emotional, and spiritual health. What would change if you:
 - a) Had more strength and power in your inner being?
 - b) Were more rooted and established in love?
 - c) Had a greater grasp of how high and wide and long and deep the love of Christ is for you and those around you?
 - d) Were filled to the top with all the fullness of God?

The answers to these questions are mind blowing. We have limited capacity to even imagine what that would look like, but it’s good to open your heart and mind to the possibility of what is available to us.

Notice that each member of the Trinity is mentioned in this passage. The love of God is referenced three times. All of the “more” we long for begins, not with head knowledge, but an encounter with the love of God. We cannot strive our way into these things.

“Let him lead me to the banquet hall and let his banner over me be love.” - Song of Solomon 2:4 (NIV)

“The Lord is my Banner.” - Exodus 17:15 (NIV)

In the video Doug tells part of his story and how a banner of rejection had been flying over his life. He traded that banner for God’s banner of love over him.

All the way through scripture, banners are a military symbol. When an army marches out, the banner leads the way. Everything the banner passes over becomes its territory. It claims the ground under it. The banner leads the way in the victory celebration. It is military and it is festive. It’s also intimate and loving.

4. You may feel like you know God’s love, but have you experienced it? Have you ever been overwhelmed with the love of God?
5. Do you have a story similar to Doug’s story of discovering that rejection was a banner over his life? What is the banner over your life? As much you are comfortable, share briefly with your group. This is not the time for the long story—it is important to leave time for each one to share—but it is significant to make note of this as you are going to experience more of God’s love in your story in the coming weeks.

Your heavenly Father carries your banner. He is fighting for the health of your soul. He is also the lover of your soul. Will you let him love you? It’s time to stop striving and receive His love.

Pray for each other. **Declare** the banner of God’s love over each other. This is as simple as saying, “ (name), *God’s banner over you is love. He loves you and He is fighting for you.*”

There is More for You!

Going Deeper

Read **Ephesians 3:16-19** every day this week and allow it to speak to you. Here are some ways to engage with this passage:

- Read it out loud slowly, three times in a row. **Listen for what stands out.**
- Picture what it would mean to **experience more** of this in your life.
- Father, Son and Spirit are present as you read—**what are they speaking to you?**
- Turn the words into a prayer. **Pray it as a petition for more.** Pray it as thanksgiving for the promise in it.
- Notice your **change of heart and mind** throughout the week as you absorb this passage.
- **Tell someone else** about what God is doing in your life through these verses.
- Choose an **image, picture, or symbol** to remind you of what God is doing in your life and the ‘more’ that is promised through this passage.