



holy spirit encounter
groups edition

Holy Spirit Encounter

Session Eight - The God Who Speaks

Begin your time together by watching *The Czech - "Embassy of the Kingdom of Heaven"* if you are able to via this [link](#).

If you are not able to, that's okay. The following session will still make sense.

Pray that God will lead you deeper into your own journey of faithfully living the love of God every day through this session.

Watch the video, **Session Eight - The God Who Speaks**.

This session is very interactive. The study guide provides an outline of the session with key points and instructions for your reference. The activations are contained within the video and your group should pause and join the activity when prompted to do so.

**"...and his sheep follow him because they know his voice."
- John 10:4b (NIV)**

God speaks. Jesus is The Word Made Flesh. We can know God through general revelation as he is revealed to us in the world around us and through creation. We can know God through specific revelation, that is we know His plans and character through scripture. God is also revealed to us through the witness of the Holy Spirit just as He did for Peter and John when they healed the lame man (Acts 3:1-11, NIV). God can speak to us outside of scripture just as He did to Peter and John. Everything that truly comes from God will be consistent with the nature and character of God as revealed in scripture.

We have been given the mind of Christ and can know the thoughts of God.

Review 1 Corinthians 2:10-16:

- The Holy Spirit knows the thoughts of God
- We have received the Holy Spirit at conversion
- We speak words taught by the Spirit
- We explain spiritual realities taught by the Spirit
- This is the mind of Christ.

Would you agree with Doug that we are often more ready to agree that the Spirit can speak conviction to us than He does of righteousness and right decisions? If so, why do you think that is?

Ways God Speaks:

- Audible voice (Acts 9:4-5, NIV)
- Nudges, whispers, and impressions (Acts 15:28, NIV)
- Pictures, dreams, and visions (Acts 2:17, NIV)
- Word pictures, seeing words, 'knowing' words
- Five senses
- Spirit on spirit, word of knowledge (1 Corinthians 14:6, NIV)

Share with each other ways you have experienced God speaking to you.

Principles to keep in mind when practicing listening for God:

- Have expectation without agenda. Generally, the higher your personal agenda in seeking to hear, the lower your ability to discern the voice of God.
- Hearing God's voice takes practice. Come with a childlike posture, without shame or pride. Come willing to try and try again.
- Hearing from God is not a right/wrong or success/failure exercise, but rather, it's cultivating a relationship and learning to recognize how He speaks to you.

Pray & Play! Children learn through play, but sometimes as adults we take ourselves too seriously. God, your very good Father, is happy to teach you in joyful and engaging ways—the spirit of religion robs us of joy and a sense of lighthearted adventure. The Kingdom of God is very serious business, yet absolutely infused with joy. Don't be afraid to explore relationship with God in playful ways.

Invite Jesus to lead you to hear His voice:

“Jesus, I know there's more, so much more you want to teach me. Would you teach me today? I set aside pride and humble myself like a child. Come and teach me. Amen.”

Ask the Father - you are going to ask the Father a question. Go with the first thing that comes to mind when you ask. No edits!

- Ask, *“Father, what game do you want to play with me?”*
- Then ask, *“Father, why that game?”*

Note from God

- Grab a blank piece of paper or your journal and a pen.
- You will not be asked to share this exercise with anyone else unless you want to.
- Write, *“Dear (your name)...”*
- **Pray:** *“Father, I thank you that you love being in relationship with me. Spirit of God, would you come now and allow me to hear the words that you want to speak to me. Thank you for this privilege. Amen.”*
- Start writing whatever words come to you. Do not try to form full thoughts before you write.
- Read over your note and cross out anything that does not agree with the word of God, as well as anything you are not sure of. What's left is the essence of what God wants to speak to you.

- Occasionally, people get an overwhelming voice that is not of Jesus. Don't leave this undone—seek help. If no one in your group is able to help you with this, contact your pastoral staff. If they cannot help you, hopefully they can direct you to someone who can. Ask, seek, knock, until you experience breakthrough and freedom from these voices. Jesus is fully committed to your freedom and will meet you in your place of need!

Chosen One - Hot Seat

- Break into **groups of three**.
- Pick a chosen person to go first.
- The other two people will spend a moment asking God: *"Is there anything you would like to say through me to this person?"*
- **Pause for about two minutes in listening prayer.** Anticipate hearing in any one of the ways explained above.
- Approach with expectation but no agenda—trust God's agenda. He knows stuff you don't know. Don't try to edit, add, or take away from what you sense God saying even if it doesn't make sense to you. Get curious—ask if there's more, anything else, God wants to share with you. When there's nothing more, offer it gently to the person.
- **Share gently and humbly.**
- The recipient might have an immediate witness. If not, just let it go, you are learning. The other person has a responsibility to test the spirit.
- You may not know if what's said is from the Lord or how it applies—if it doesn't make sense, just set it aside. It may become significant and clear in the future.
- If you don't get something in the brief wait, simply pray a blessing over the chosen one.
- Take turns being the chosen person. **Set a timer to allow for ten minutes per person.** It's okay to set these parameters to make sure each one has an opportunity.

Treasure Hunt - Acts 8:26-39, NIV

- Notice Philip is only given a few instructions: Go to Gaza (he never got there), told to run near the chariot...God lead him from there.
- As a group ask the Lord if there's someone He wants you to bless.
- Share what you are hearing/seeing/etc. with your group. No more and no less.
- Write down what you hear/see, etc.
- Jump! Go for it!
- Have fun! If nothing else, have a prayer walk. All glory goes to Jesus!

Going Deeper

When we are living on mission with God every day of our lives is a treasure hunt!

When you're out and about doing life ask God to highlight someone he wants you to encourage. This shouldn't be strange or awkward. It's simply a matter of saying something like, "*I was just asking God if there is a way I could encourage you and...I had this thought/picture/sense...*"

People consistently report that this is a really positive experience. Try not to take yourself too seriously. Allow God's love for others to overwhelm your fear or self-consciousness.

*For a **deeper dive** on this subject, check out **The Empowerment Pivot, Chapter Five: "Pivot to a Revealing God"***