

ENCOUNTERING JESUS PRAYER TRAINING

SESSION ONE, PART TWO: GROUP EXERCISES IN HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD

Hearing the voice of God is something that is available to every believer. God desires to communicate with us and withholds no good thing from us. The apostle Paul writes in I Cor. 14:5, "I desire that you would all prophesy." Before we can do that, we must learn to hear correctly so that when we speak, we do as Jesus did, only saying those things He heard the Father saying. Prophecy is to edify the Body of Christ, which is the Church. It is to build up and not to tear down. It is to call forth and not to cut down. It is to comfort the members of the Body. God speaks with love, not fear; peace, not anxiety; hope, not despair; conviction, not condemnation; clarity, not confusion; comfort, not shame.

EXERCISE ONE: Sitting at your table, have each person number off. Each person with number one, make a new table for number ones. Do the same for number two, three, four, etc. This is so that you will probably not know the people at your new table as well as the ones at your old! Select a table captain. Then follow these instructions:

FIRST: Pray silently for one minute for the person on your right, asking the Holy Spirit to give them JUST ONE POSITIVE WORD for that person. Then offer the word to that person. Repeat this for the person on your left. Team captains will report testimonies of the accuracy of the words.

SECOND: Pray silently for one minute for the person on your right (the same person as before), asking the Holy Spirit for a short scripture for them. Offer it to the person. Repeat as before with the person on your left. Have your team captain report testimonies.

THIRD: Pray silently for one minute, asking the Holy Spirit for a short communication for the person on their right; share it with that person. Repeat with the person on your left. If you don't hear anything, just pass; don't force it if you haven't heard something. Have the team captain report testimonies.

FOURTH: Offer a brief prayer – one minute – to the person on your right; repeat with the one on your left.

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EXERCISE TWO: In your group, pray together this simple prayer: "Father, quiet every voice other than Yours. What are You saying?" Take two or three minutes and write whatever thoughts pop into your head, not judging or dismissing them. The thought might sound like your own voice or any other thought you might have. We are practicing trusting that when we

ask Him to quiet other voices, including our own, He will. Even if these things don't seem to make sense, write them down. Share them with your group.

EXERCISE THREE: Ask God this question: "If You could play any game with me, what would it be?" Write down the first thing that comes to mind. Then ask, "God, why did You pick this game?" "What do You want to show or teach me through this game?" "God, do You have a scripture to give me about this?" Share with your group. Have your team captain report testimonies. .

EXERCISE FOUR: Ask God this question: "If You could have a special meeting with me right now anywhere in the whole world (either a real or imaginary place), where would it be?" Then ask, "God, why did you choose this place? What's so special about it?" Then ask, "God, show me what this place looks like." Finally, "As we are here in this place You have chosen, what would You like to say to me?" Share with your group and have the team captain report testimonies.

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"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit; instead, test the spirits to see whether they are from God." (I John 4:1)

To ensure that you are hearing correctly, check yourself with the following:

- **Test the ORIGIN.** If the word is truly from God, it will "bubble up" from your innermost being rather spontaneously and not be something you devise or calculate.
- **Make sure it lines up with the written WORD of God and biblical principles.** God will never contradict Himself.
- **Ascertain that it is consistent with God's CHARACTER** as we know Him and His many names and traits outlined in the scriptures.
- **Test its EFFECT on your soul and your innermost being.** Does it encourage and strengthen you, quickening your spirit and bringing the fruit of the Spirit? God speaks gently and with conviction; the enemy, the father of lies, creates condemnation, doubt, confusion and even arrogance.
- **Test it with OTHERS in the BODY of CHRIST** whom you know and trust.