



Scripture: 1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6:10–12

Hey everyone, I'm glad you're here tonight. Whether this is your first time with us or you've been coming for years, I want you to know this is a space where you're welcome.

We're kicking off a brand-new series tonight called **"Experience Jesus."** We're going to talk honestly about what it means to not just know about Jesus, but to really experience Him.

So, here's the big idea that's going to guide us through the whole series: to experience Jesus fully, we must recognize the battle around us, receive the relationship offered to us, realize the presence within us, and respond through rhythms, stillness, and surrender.

Now, I realize that phrase the idea of experiencing Jesus might mean very different things depending on where you're at. Some of you already have a relationship with Jesus. You've seen Him show up in your life. You've felt His presence when you pray. You've read the Bible and it's felt like He was speaking directly to you. And maybe you're hoping this series will help you grow deeper in that connection.

On the other hand, some of you are not sure what to think about Jesus. Maybe you've heard people talk about Him, but you haven't experienced anything personally. Maybe you don't even know what that would look like to experience Him.

Wherever you are on that spectrum, I want to invite you into this journey, because Jesus isn't meant to be observed from a distance. He wants you to know Him and experience Him personally. He's alive, He's real, and He's pursuing you. And over these next weeks, we're going to explore what it looks like to truly experience Him in a way that moves beyond information, and hopefully, into transformation.

So, we start this conversation talking about war. Yes, war. You heard me right. Because before you can experience Jesus deeply, you need to know that there's something trying to keep you from Him. It's something very

real. There's a spiritual battle going on for your heart, your thoughts, and your faith. And we need to learn how to recognize it.

Let's start with a word of prayer and then we can talk more.

[\[Prayer\]](#)

Alright, so when we examine Scripture, we realize there is more happening than we can see with our eyes. It introduces us to a very real spiritual realm, with angels, demons, and the power of God moving through it all.

Let's build a little awareness of what the Bible says about this spiritual world.

In Isaiah 6, the prophet Isaiah got a front-row seat to something incredible: God's throne room. And it wasn't just impressive, it was overwhelming. He saw these wild angelic beings called seraphim, each with six wings. Two wings covered their faces—because even angels can't look straight at God's glory. That's how powerful His presence is. Two wings covered their feet, a reminder that even in heaven, they're still created beings under God's authority. And with the other two wing, they flew.

As they hovered, they shouted, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty!" In Hebrew, repeating something three times is like saying it with full volume and bolded ALL CAPS. It's the Bible's way of saying there is no one, absolutely no one, like our God.

You might be thinking, okay, but angels sound kind of distant. What does this have to do with me?

Let me tell you a story from 2 Kings 6. The prophet Elisha and his servant were surrounded by an enemy army. The servant was freaking out but Elisha was calm. Why? Because he saw what the servant could not. Elisha prayed, "Lord, open his eyes." And in that moment, the servant saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire; God's angel army surrounding and protecting them. It had been there the whole time. This reminds us that just because you can't see something doesn't mean it's not there.

Think about it; there are microscopic organisms floating in the air around you right now. You don't see them. But that doesn't mean they aren't real.



- How does it feel to hear that God created you on purpose and in His image? How can knowing this change the way you see yourself?
- What do you think it means to have a relationship *with* Jesus, not just know *about* Him?
- Think about your closest friendship. What makes that relationship strong? How do you think those same things can help your relationship with Jesus grow?
- How does it impact you to know that Jesus loved and died for you “while you were still a sinner”?
- What are some ways you’ve experienced God’s love or presence in your own life, even in small ways?
- If Jesus invited you to go on a walk today and just talk, what’s one thing you’d want to say or ask Him?

Deeper Dive Toolbox

The Deeper Dive Toolbox is designed to help you keep the conversation going. You can choose from the ready-to-use tools (a short text message, discussion questions, and a half-page devotional) to help students reflect, apply, and live out biblical truth throughout the week.

Text Message

Send this as an individual or group text to your students during the week to encourage them to go deeper in their faith.

God isn't far off—because of Jesus, His Spirit lives in you. Where have you noticed (or ignored) God's presence in your everyday life lately? Sometime today, take three minutes of quiet, turn off notifications, and ask: "Holy Spirit, what's distracting me from You?" Then read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and thank God for being with you.

Discussion Question(s)

Post these questions in your group chat, equip your small group leaders with them, or use them to spark meaningful conversation at your next gathering.

1. If God's presence is in us, what helps you notice Him during a normal school day—and what usually drowns Him out?
2. What is one practical change you could make this week (habit, space, or priority) to be more aware of the Holy Spirit?

Half-Page Devotional

This half-page devotional can be printed and handed out the night of your ministry or sent digitally later in the week to help students spend personal time with God.

Jesus tore the barrier between us and God, and now the Holy Spirit makes His home in us. God's presence isn't limited to church services or camp highs—He is with you in hallways, at practice, and in your room.

Read: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Read it slowly two or three times. Let the words "your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit" sink in.

Reflection prompts:

1. Awareness: What noises (stress, screens, habits) make it hardest for you to notice God? What would it look like to turn one of those down this week?
2. Alignment: Are there any choices or patterns that don't honor God with your body, mind, or time? What step of obedience could you take today?
3. Abiding: Where could you create a daily two- to five-minute "quiet pocket" to sit with God—before school, at lunch, or before bed?

Closing prayer:

Holy Spirit, thank You for living in me because of Jesus. Help me notice Your presence today. Show me what to turn down and what to turn toward so I can honor You with my whole life. Give me courage to take one step of obedience this week. Amen.

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