

APPLICATION

- What hinders you the most of the three roadblocks we talked about tonight: ignorance of the Holy Spirit, self condemnation or being too self conscious?
- As a pastor, so many times people would come to me and say, "Pastor don't think I'm crazy but ..." Inevitably what would follow would be a description of a supernatural experience that they had. This happened time and time again. In fact, my experience tells me that the vast majority of Christians have supernatural experiences with God but self consciousness or the fear of man keeps them from embracing or sharing the experience.
- Second unto this "Pastor don't think I'm crazy but ..." conversation is a Christian telling me why they don't think they are qualified to be used by God. If God wants to use you why would you disqualify yourself?
- What does it mean to "trust in the Lord?"
- How does putting your trust in the Lord free you from roadblocks and hindrances the enemy sets up in your life to stop your progress in the Lord?
- This week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you, even with regular, everyday things. Ask Him to help you with your work like I did as a software engineer.
- Don't be ashamed of embarrassed of God in your life!

Prayer

Father, may this be a time and a season where You break off all that hinders us. Set us free from any roadblocks that are keeping us from experiencing Your work in our lives. Help us to see and embrace Your Holy Spirit's work. May we not become ensnared by the fear of man, be self condemning, or be unaware of Holy Spirit's presence. We want to live fruitful lives that honor You and Your Kingdom. Help us through Your Holy Spirit and make us more aware of His help. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen



Roadblocks to The Holy Spirit

NOTES

WARM-UP

- The definition of a roadblock is a barrier or barricade on a road; any hindrance. Can you share an instance in your life where there was a physical hindrance in the road you were on such as a fallen tree?
- While roadblocks are often physical things that block us, many times the roadblocks are emotional or spiritual. Can you share a time when you were hindered in your Spiritual walk? Or share a time when something was hindering you from obeying the Lord?

WORD

¹ While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Acts 19:1-2

Growing up, we often talked about the Holy Spirit in church and His love. I always knew of His existence and I knew about His gifts, but it wasn't until I was in my 20s that I began to embrace the Holy Spirit as my helper in life.

When I was a software design engineer at the old AT&T Bell Labs in Columbus, Ohio I became known as the "bug finder" by my colleagues. There would be a mistake in the 1,000s and 1,000s of lines of software code that operated equipment we developed for a client. The mistakes or errors in the computer code are called "bugs". A team of us would have to find this mistake before shipping the software. Our team would spend days and weeks trying to find the "bugs" hiding in the code. That is a lot of time and a lot of work! I began to pray for the Holy Spirit to help me find these bugs. I would ask the Holy Spirit to show me where to find the errors in the code. He would give me small impressions or nudges to look at a section of code. I would go and search that area. I often found the error in less than a day or even within hours. My colleagues were amazed and they wanted to know how I was doing it! These became open doors to sharing Christ with them. Soon we began to talk openly about Jesus in the office on a daily basis. I worked with many Muslim and Hindu people and, through this, they knew Jesus was real!

Roadblock 1: Ignorance

One of the roadblocks to receiving the Holy Spirit or to allowing the Holy Spirit to fully work in one's life is ignorance. In the above Scripture in Acts 19:1-2, the people had "not even heard that there was a Holy Spirit."

We can be ignorant of many things. One of the most devastating things to be ignorant of is the availability of the Holy Spirit in one's life. When I say "ignorant," I do not mean it in a derogatory manner but in the true definition of the word. To be ignorant of something means "lacking knowledge or awareness in general; uneducated; lacking knowledge, information, or awareness about something in particular." We see in Acts 19:1-2, that the people were simply not aware of the Holy Spirit. They were ignorant that He was even available to them as a helper and guide.

Can you share a time in your life when you did not know the Holy Spirit existed? Or did you grow up with the understanding that God's Holy Spirit was available to you? Is there someone you know of right now that has never heard of the Holy Spirit? How could you share the Holy Spirit with them?

Roadblock 2: Condemnation

¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. John 3:17

Another roadblock to allowing the Holy Spirit to work in our lives is condemnation. John 3:17 tells us that Jesus came not to condemn but to save. The Holy Spirit will convict us of our sins so that we will repent or turn away from our sins. However, condemnation is a guilt that reminds us of our past faults and failures to the point that we become spiritually debilitated and even defeated. We lose peace and walk in hopelessness when we walk in condemnation. We then feel unworthy of the Holy Spirit or we feel like God will never help us use us. We disqualify ourselves from God working in us or through us.

Can you share a time when you walked in condemnation and lost peace and hope? Can you share a time when the Holy Spirit convicted you of something and you changed your heart and actions quickly to walk in obedience and experienced joy as a result? Has God used you to your own surprise?

Roadblock 3: Self Consciousness

The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe. Pr. 29:25

The third roadblock is self-consciousness. This Scripture in Proverbs talks about the fear of man being a snare. Those who live to please others live in anxiety while desperately seeking acceptance. Worrying about what others will think keeps us from embracing the work of the Holy Spirit. Can you think of a time when you were too self-conscious or shy to do something the Lord put on your heart to do? How did it become a snare to you?

The second part of Proverbs 29:25 gives us the answer to the fear of man: trust in the Lord! Can you think of a time when you ignored your fear of man and did what God put on your heart because you trusted Him? How did this lead you to a "safe place?"

It is often easier to see the weakness of others than it is to see our own weakness. Without sharing too much or sharing names, can you identify someone you know: Who is in bondage to what others think? Too self-conscious to step out in obedience to the Lord? Too insecure to know that the Lord would use them? Can you see how living like this is a snare in a person's life?
