



Do Not Grieve The Holy Spirit

As we study Scripture, we often encounter verses that speak volumes. In the midst of Paul's admonition to the believers in Ephesus to live their lives in an upright and holy manner ([Eph 4:17-32](#)), he drops this rather simple yet striking sentence:

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
[Ephesians 4:30](#) NASB

I admit that at first I was trying to glue this statement to either the verse before or after it, thinking it was perhaps a continuation of Paul's thought about unwholesome speech or bitterness and slander. And to be honest, it does fit nicely with either of those as a consequence to not controlling what comes from our mouths. But as I considered it more carefully, it seemed appropriate to zoom out and look at the Holy Spirit's role in our lives and how our actions affect Him.

The doctrine of the Trinity – God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – is foundational to Christian theology. The Scriptures give us great insight into this heavenly relationship, too much to unpack here, so we'll just focus on a few highlights about the Holy Spirit's work.

Jesus told His disciples, ***“but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you,”*** ([John 14:26](#)), and also, ***“when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,”*** ([John 15:26](#)).

Getting technical, “spirit” in the Greek is *“pneuma”* which means *breath* or *wind*. I personally envision this as God's breath of spiritual life in the redeemed. God breathed into Adam's nostrils to give him physical life ([Gen 2:7](#)), and similarly, the Father breathes the Holy Spirit into ours to give us a new life in Him.

In many ways, I believe that as God's elect, the Spirit is quite literally joined with our spirit – He indwells us at the very core of our soul. We see this in [1 Corinthians 6:17](#) where Paul writes, ***“but the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.”*** With this indescribably intimate union, ***we are sealed in Him*** ([Eph 1:13](#)) with the Lord's mark of ownership, ***for the day of redemption*** (eg: Christ's glorious return to earth).

We can see from these verses that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father and is our Helper. So what does He help with? A lot, actually! He testifies about Christ. He speaks truth to us. He



teaches us the will of the Father. He enables us to believe in and remain rooted in our Savior. And, as Paul writes in [Romans 8:26-27](#), ***"In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."***

The Holy Spirit is our gift from God the Father which empowers us to live as believers and do His will, and ultimately to bring Him glory and honor. There is so much more I'd like to explore here, but we'll save that for another time.

Getting back to our verse... how is it that we can grieve the Holy Spirit? The word rendered grieve here is the Greek verb [lupeō](#) and means to *cause sorrow and distress*. As we saw in [Romans 8](#), the Spirit intercedes and prays for us, and at the same time searches our heart. As a parent grieves or is sorrowful when their child makes bad choices, the Holy Spirit is likewise grieved when we, as believers indwelt by Him, live in sin and our heart is turned away from the Lord. This may be during times of severe backsliding, where we live in active, willful, and repeated sin such as described in [Galatians 5:19-21](#) and [Colossians 3:5-6](#), or just a loose tongue that we choose not to control. No matter how big or small the sin, it stings the Spirit Who is comingled with ours.

The lesson here is we must constantly strive to live in obedience to God, just as Christ lives in obedience to the Father ([John 14:31](#), [Phil 2:8](#), etc.). While salvation is fully the work of God ([John 15:16](#), [Eph 2:8-9](#), etc.), obedience is our work. We have a duty to be self-controlled and vigorously resist temptation at all costs ([Matt 5:30](#)). Doing so pleases the Holy Spirit and brings God the honor He so greatly deserves.

Today, let's give thanks to the Lord for sending His Holy Breath to us, our Divine Helper, Who indwells our very soul, and enables us to live lives that are a pleasing aroma around the Father's throne.

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