

“Do Not Quench The Holy Spirit”
Romans 12: 1 – 21; Galatians 5: 13 – 26; Hebrews 3: 7 – 18;
1st Thessalonians 5: 12 – 28 (Sermon)

On Pentecost Sunday we began a series on The Holy Spirit.

We have looked at God’s gift of The Holy Spirit to all believers, the Ministry of The Holy Spirit being filled with The Holy Spirit, and how we grieve The Holy Spirit.

This morning we be looking at the command in 1st Thessalonians 5: 19 which says; ***“Do Not Quench The Spirit.”***

The dictionary defines ***“quench”*** this way; *to extinguish; to put out a fire or a light; to cool; to calm; to stifle; to put at rest.*

The Holy Spirit has several major functions in the life of a believer.

The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual life.

“Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (John 3:5-6)

Jesus told Nicodemus, ***“You must be born again”*** (John 3:3).

The Holy Spirit gives us power (Acts 1:8) over sin and temptation so we can live the victorious abundant life (John 10:10).

The Holy Spirit gives us the assurance of our salvation.

“You have been sealed by The Holy Spirit”. (Ephesians 4:30)

The Holy Spirit guides and leads us (Romans 8:14).

The Holy Spirit comforts us in our sorrow (2nd Corinthians 1:14).

The Holy Spirit teaches us. (John 14:26).

But the ministry of the Holy Spirit that I want us to focus on this morning is the continuing work of transforming a believer’s life.

The minute we accepted Jesus as our Savior we were justified.

If we confess and repent of our sins Jesus forgives our sins and declares us to be righteous.

Justification means our sins are covered by the blood of Jesus.

God loved us just like we were however God loves us too much to leave us the way we were.

Once we were justified, the Holy Spirit begins His work of conforming us into the image of Jesus.

That work of The Holy Spirit is called “*sanctification*”.

Sanctification is a lifelong process that begins when we asked Jesus to be our personal savior and ends when The Lord calls us home.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters” (Romans 8:28-29).

Becoming a genuine Christian is not a matter of us reaching down and pulling up our self by our spiritual bootstraps.

Becoming a genuine Christian is a life-long transformation process.

The more we cooperate with The Holy Spirit the more we will think like Jesus, talk like Jesus, and act like Jesus.

In Ephesians 5:18 we are commanded to be ***“filled with the Holy Spirit”***.

In Galatians 5:16 we are commanded to ***“live by the Spirit”***, in Galatians 5:25 we are commanded ***“to walk in the Spirit”***, and in Ephesians 4:30 we are commanded ***“not to grieve the Holy Spirit.”***

God’s desire is for each one of us to be like Jesus.

That is why we are commanded ***“not to put out the Spirit’s fire”***

The Holy Spirit is in the process of transforming us so that our lives will exhibit the fruit of the Spirit that we read about in our lesson from Galatians.

In the 5th chapter of Galatians, the Apostle Paul records a beautiful portrait of 9 personality traits of God.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

These same 9 personality traits will become evident in our lives ***if*** we do ***not*** try to stifle the transforming work of The Holy Spirit.

Throughout the New Testament the Holy Spirit is associated with fire.

John The Baptist was referring to Jesus when he said: ***“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”*** (Matthew 3:11)

At Pentecost the people “...saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:3 – 4)

And in verse 19 of this morning’s lesson from 1st Thessalonians we read the command, “***Do not quench The Spirit’s fire.***”

Fire provides comfort and warmth.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit provides warmth, encouragement, and companionship to us when we are faced with the cold harshness of life.

Fire consumes and God referred to Himself as a “***consuming fire***”.

The consuming fire is a fire of judgment, burning and destroying sin.

Fire also purifies.

In Isaiah 6:7 we read, “***An angel flew to me with a burning coal from the altar and touched it to my lips and said ‘see this has touched your lips; your guilt has been taken away and your sin atoned for.’***”

And so it is with the Holy Spirit working in our life.

The Holy Spirit needs to purify our minds and our hearts from sin.

Fire also softens things so they can be molded or reshaped.

Likewise, when the Holy Spirit works in our life, He softens the hardness of our hearts so our lives can be reshaped to be more Christ-like.

So, this morning I want us to think about **how** we put out the Spirit’s fire.

I think it is helpful to look at other translations of this verse “***do not quince The Spirit.***” in order to get a better understanding of what Paul is writing about.

The New Life version translates this verse this way; “***Do not try to stop the work of the Holy Spirit.***”

And the International Standard Version says; “***Do not put out the Spirit’s fire.***”

The Message “***Do not suppress the Spirit***”;

J.B. Phillips translation “***Never dampen the fire of the Spirit***”;

Knox translation “***Do not stifle the Spirit***”; and

Berkeley’s translation, “***Do not extinguish the Spirit***”.

In Ezekiel 36:26 God said, ***“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”***

Many times in The Old Testament God accused the Israelites of being hard-hearted.

In the New Testament Jesus told the Jewish religious leaders that their hearts were hard.

In the Bible hard-heart referred to a person who had an unresponsive, insensitive, angry, rebellious, and/or an independent attitude.

This kind of attitude is directed to God and toward other people.

God wants us to have a new heart.

God gave us the gift of The Holy Spirit so that we could have a new heart. But in order to have a new heart we have to cooperate with The Holy Spirit by seriously studying our Bibles.

Remember several weeks ago we saw that we are filled with The Holy Spirit as we are filled with God’s Holy Word.

John 1:14 tells us ***The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us”.***

Jesus is The Word.

We worship one God; so we cannot separate The Word and The Spirit.

God’s Word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves *“Am I willing to let the Holy Spirit change me?”*

Do I look forward to reading my Bible each day?

You see we are resisting The Holy Spirit when are not actively engaged in a Bible Study group.

In Romans 12:1-2 we are told God wants us to have a new mind.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

But in order to have a new mind we have to cooperate with The Holy Spirit.

Our minds wander and we spend endless hours watching television or reading books instead of meditating on God’s Word every day.

Psalm 1:2 promises a blessing if we meditate on God’s Word.

In Philippians 4:8 we are told, ***“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”***

God’s Word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves *“Do I have a burning desire to know more about Jesus and to know The Lord’s will for my life?”*

In 2nd Timothy the Apostle Paul charges Timothy, a young preacher, to ***“Preach the Word”***.

And then Paul warns Timothy saying, ***“For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths”*** (2nd Timothy 4:3-4).

God wants to give us new ears but we have to cooperate with The Holy Spirit if we want to have our spiritual ears opened.

Throughout the New Testament Jesus said, ***“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says”*** (Revelation 2:29).

God’s primary way of speaking to His people is through His Word, The Bible.

The essence of Christianity is having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

And as you know you cannot have a relationship without communicating.

That is why we are commanded ***“not to put out the Spirit’s fire”***.

God’s Word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves *“Do I have a burning desire to hear God’s word and for Jesus to be a part of my daily life?”*

In the third chapter of James we are told our tongues have the power to destroy and the power to build up.

“The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell” (James 3:6).

And then in verses 9 and 10 we read, ***“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.”***

What comes out of your mouth is a true reflection of what is in your heart.

God wants to give us a new tongue but we have to cooperate with the work of The Holy Spirit if we want a new tongue.

James also tells us, ***“Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless”*** (James 1:26).

Matthew 12:34 says, ***“You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”***

God’s word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves if my words are helpful and encouraging to others or are my words hurtful and degrading other people.

Ecclesiastes 10:18 warns us about idle hands and Proverbs 6:17 tells us God hates hands that shed innocent blood.

Then in Matthew 5:30 Jesus says, ***“And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.”***

Jesus wants to give us new hands but we have to cooperate with the Holy Spirit working in our life if we want new hands.

Throughout Jesus’ ministry, Jesus touched people to show His love and His concern for them.

And Jesus wants us to be compassionate loving people.

In 1st Timothy we see that it is God’s desire that ***“men everywhere lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing”***.

And in Galatians 2:8 Paul encourages Christians to extend the right hand of fellowship to other believers.

In Luke 9:62, Jesus said, ***“No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”***

God’s word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves if we are so busy working for ourselves that we have little time left to work for The Kingdom of God.

In 2nd Corinthians 5:20 Paul told the Christians at Corinth that ***“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.”***

An ambassador is someone who lives in a foreign country and represents their government as well as representing the head of their government.

As Christians we represent Jesus Christ and Jesus’ Kingdom.

We are to speak for Jesus, we are to explain the policies of Jesus’ Kingdom to unbelievers, and we act on Jesus’ behalf.

As Christians our job is to tell other people that God loves them and the forgiveness of sin by belief in Jesus Christ. It takes courage and commitment to be Christ Ambassador.

When someone is **not** willing to stand up for what they believe in we say that person is a spineless coward or that they have no backbone.

Jesus wants to give you a new backbone so that you will be a bold witness for Him.

But you have to cooperate with the Holy Spirit working in your life if you want a new backbone.

In Acts 1:8 we are told, ***“You shall be my witnesses.”***

In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus commanded His disciples, ***“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”***

God’s Word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves,

“Am I telling my unsaved friends about Jesus Christ?”

“Would Jesus say I am an effective ambassador?” Would Jesus say I am a good witness?”

Christians will never make a tremendous difference in this evil world until the world sees a tremendous difference in our life.

You all are familiar with 2nd Corinthians 5:17 which says; ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”***

The moment you accepted Jesus as your personal savior you began your new spiritual life but you do not become a mature Christian overnight.

Just as a baby grows physically as baby Christians we need to grow spiritually.

The Holy Spirit teaches us, leads us, encourages us, and convicts us of sinful way.

Our rate of spiritual growth is dependent upon our cooperation with the transforming work of The Holy Spirit.

You see you cannot put The Holy Spirit out of your life.

However, you sure can resist The Holy Spirit’s efforts to change you into the image of Jesus Christ by *suppressing The Holy Spirit, throwing cold water on His plans, and / or stifling His efforts.*

God’s Word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves *“Am I cooperating with The Holy Spirit’s desire to transform me into the image of Jesus Christ?”*

Verse 20 tells us ***“not to treat prophecies with contempt.”***

Prophecies are one of the spiritual gifts listed in 1st Corinthians 12:28.

We were all given spiritual gifts to encourage others and for the church to accomplish our mission.

God’s Word to us today challenges each of us to ask ourselves *“Am I stifling the work of The Holy Spirit by not using my spiritual gifts for the glory of God.”*

God’s Word to us today is a stern warning to each one of us not to put out The Spirit’s fire in our life and / or in the life of our church.

AMEN