

***“How We Grieve The Holy Spirit”***

James 1: 19 – 27; Colossians 3: 1 – 17; Acts 5:1 – 11; **Ephesians 4:17 - 32 (Sermon)**

On Pentecost Sunday we looked God’s gift of The Holy Spirit to all believers.

Two weeks ago we looked at the ministry of The Holy Spirit.

Last week we looked at the command for us to be filled with The Holy Spirit.

This morning we be looking at the command in Ephesians 4:30 which says; ***“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”***

The word *“grieve”* means to make sorrowful; to cause sadness; to disappoint.

This verse ***“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”*** reveals several important aspects of the Holy Spirit.

First, if we can grieve The Holy Spirit that means The Holy Spirit is a person who has a mind, a will, and emotions.

Every time Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit Jesus said, *“He”* or *“Him”*.

Jesus never referred to The Holy Spirit as *“it”* or as *“the force”*.

The New Testament speaks of numerous examples of how The Holy Spirit carries out functions that only a person can do.

For example, in Acts 13:2 we read, ***“While they were worshiping The Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”***

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity.

We worship one God that has been revealed to us in three persons.

God The Father planned our salvation, God The Son paid for our salvation, and God The Holy Spirit seals us and secures our salvation.

The Holy Spirit lives in every believer and The Holy Spirit is always with us.

The Holy Spirit goes wherever we go.

The Holy Spirit sees everything we do or do not do.

The Holy Spirit hears every word we say.

The Holy Spirit knows all of our thoughts and all of our motives.

Look at the last part of Ephesians: 4:30 again; ***“...with whom you were sealed until the day of redemption.”***

A seal refers to an official mark of identification that was placed on legal documents.

Therefore, the seal of The Holy Spirit signifies that a Christian belongs to God.

This seal guarantees the security of your salvation, and the seal testifies to the authenticity of our salvation.

The Holy Spirit lives in believers and The Holy Spirit will never leave us.

So how do we grieve the Holy Spirit?

Ephesians 4:17 begins with the word *“So”*. *“So, I tell you this and insist on it in The Lord.”*

The Apostle Paul is summarizing what he has previously written to the church at Ephesus.

That means we need to take a close look at the context of this passage.

We need to go back to Ephesians 4:1.

Ephesians chapter 4 deals with unity in the body of Christ.

And Ephesians 4:3 appears to be introducing the topic of unity in the body of Christ.

*“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*

Verse 3 is also the key to understanding how we grieve the Holy Spirit.

In verse 4 Paul describes seven truths that we as Christians have in common and these seven truths unite us as Christians; *“There is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all.”*

These seven truths are a picture of the unity of God The Father, God The Son, and God The Holy Spirit working together to accomplish unity in the church.

When we focus on God and these seven truths, we will enjoy unity in the church.

Conversely, when we fail to focus on these seven truths, unity is destroyed and the church suffers.

Now back to the question we started with; *“How Do We Grieve The Holy Spirit”*.

The Holy Spirit is the agent that establishes unity in the church so anything that I do or say that disrupts unity in the church grieves the Holy Spirit.

Verses 11 – 32 elaborate on **how** we are to preserve unity in the body of Christ.

We disrupt the unity in the church and we grieve The Holy Spirit when we fail to use the gifts that God gave to each of us to build up the body of Christ which is the church. (verses 11 – 12)

The Bible equates the church to a human body and 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:27 tells us that each one of us, as Christians, make up the body of Christ.

***“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.***

Romans 12:4 & 5 remind us that every person in the church is vital.

Every member of the body of Christ has God-given talents that are needed for the church to function as The Lord intended.

***“For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”***

God designed each of us with specific abilities and talents.

God has put each of you here at this specific place at this specific time and has given you specific talents that are to be used to build up His church which is the body of Christ.

Each person has a specific role in making the church function as God designed.

When you are not active in the life of the church this body of believers is not complete and that grieves The Holy Spirit.

When you do not invest the time, the talents, and the money God has blessed you with to further The Kingdom of God this church suffers and that grieves the Holy Spirit.

We disrupt the unity in the church and grieve The Holy Spirit when we as individuals are not growing spiritually (verses 13 & 14)

Our goal is to become more like Jesus.

Romans 10:17 says; ***“faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”***

That is why we stress being a part of one of the Bible study groups at Mt Paran.

You will never become a mature Christian unless you are serious about reading, studying, and mediating on God’s Word to you, which is The Bible.

Colossians 1:28 says; ***“Jesus is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.”***

The Apostle Paul chastised the church at Corinth with these words in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3: 1 – 2. ***Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it.***

If your child is not growing physically, you know there is a problem and you take them to the doctor.

If we are not growing spiritually there is a problem so we need to go to The Great Physician.

We are all here to be equipped so we can tell the unsaved people The Lord put in our life about God's love and the salvation that is available in Jesus.

Anytime an individual or a church loses sight of The Great Commission they grieve the Holy Spirit.

We disrupt the unity in the church and grieve The Holy Spirit when we are not focused on The Lord, His people, and His plans for the church.

When we, as the body of Christ, keep our focus on Jesus and His work we will maintain harmony in the church.

But when we begin to focus on ourselves then the unity of the body is damaged.

One of the biggest threats to the unity and harmony of the church today is the concept of the "*consumer church*" where the people in the church focus on "*what's in it for me*".

When some of the members are here for what they can get out of it, rather than how they can contribute to furthering the purposes of God, there will be conflict and discord.

When we as individual or a church revert back to the "*what's in it for me*" attitude we grieve the Holy Spirit.

We disrupt the unity in the church and we grieve The Holy Spirit when we as individuals revert back to our old sinful way of life.

Beginning in verse 22, Paul described how we are to take off those things that characterized our old way of life and for us to put on the things that are consistent with our new way of life.

Remember 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:17; "***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!***"

Then in verses 25 - 31 Paul gives some examples of the old sinful way of life.

When we do not live like Jesus taught, we grieve the Holy Spirit because Jesus died for our sins.

When we do not tell the truth, we grieve the Holy Spirit because Jesus is Truth.

When we do not love other people, we grieve the Holy Spirit because God is love.

When we complain, when we grumble, when we have a negative attitude and / or when we are grumpy, we grieve the Holy Spirit because Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

When we do not forgive someone, we grieve the Holy Spirit because Jesus died so we could be forgiven.

When we fail to encourage and help each other we grieve the Holy Spirit because we are one in The Spirit.

You see, the way you think about, the way you talk about, and the way you treat one another is a true reflection of your relationship with Jesus Christ.

So, Christians grieve The Holy Spirit when they are living like unsaved people, talking like unsaved people, and thinking like unsaved people.

Verses 23 and 24 tell us that Christians are to have a new attitude.

Our minds were created to be ***“like God in true righteousness and holiness.”***

We disrupt the unity in the church and we grieve The Holy Spirit when we fail to deal with continual and unrepentant sin.

We grieve the Holy Spirit when we are different people on Monday thru Saturday than we are on Sunday morning,

The Holy Spirit is grieved by our indifference and /or our disregard to the things of God.

Ephesians 5:18-19 says; ***“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”***

When a person is filled with The Holy Spirit they have a love for the things of God; they love God’s Word, they love His church, and they are mainly concerned about spiritual matters.

You see a person disrupts the unity of the church and they grieves The Holy Spirit when they focus on them self and their priorities rather than focusing on The Lord and His priorities.

We must never forget that the church does not belong to any individual.

The church belongs to Jesus Christ and Jesus is the head of the church. (Colossians 1:18)

We disrupt the unity in the church and we grieve The Holy Spirit when we do not speak truthfully.

Verse 25 says; ***“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body”***.

When we do not speak the truth, when we stretch the truth, when we make up excuses, or when we only tell part of the story, we grieve The Holy Spirit.

We grieve The Holy Spirit when we are not open and transparent with others.

The ability to speak is a gift from God. Humans are the only animals who have the unique gift of speaking.

Sadly, God’s gift of speech is often abused by us.

While we can encourage and strengthen others through our words, we often end up spreading hatred and lies through our words.

Verse 29 says; ***“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”***

**“Unwholesome talk”** includes vulgar language, abusive and /or slanderous language employed to put other people down.

Ephesians 5:4 says; **“Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place ...”**.

Our words are so powerful that they can defile us and our words can destruct others. (Matthew 15:11)

Jesus warns us that **“we will have to give an account of “every careless word” we speak** (Matthew 12:36).

We disrupt the unity in the church and we grieve The Holy Spirit when we hold on to our anger.

Anger can lead to sin and our anger can allow Satan to bring us down.

**“In your anger do not sin”**; **Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.** (Verses 26 & 27)

Verse 28 warns us about stealing and laziness.

**“Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need”**.

The Holy Spirit is grieved when we do not believe God and/or when we doubt God.

Psalm 78:21 - 22 tell us that the Israelites grieved God; **“When the LORD heard them, he was furious; his fire broke out against Jacob, and his wrath rose against Israel, for they did not believe in God or trust in his deliverance.”**

We can summarize this portion of scripture like this; anything that I do or anything or that I say that does not promote unity in the church grieves The Holy Spirit.

God is doing some wonderful and miraculous things at Mt. Paran.

None of us are perfect but each one of us can and each one of us should do better by doing our part in coming together as one body of believers that love, encourage, and help each other to grow closer to Jesus Christ.

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

*Am I grieving the Holy Spirit with my sinful actions, my negative attitude, my unwholesome talk, or by my selfish actions?*

*“Am I using the gifts God has given me to further The Kingdom of God”*.

*Am I doing all in my power to promote unity in my church family?*

God’s Word to each of us this morning challenges each of us to put aside our selfish desires and for us to come together in the unity of The Holy Spirit and to bring joy to God the Holy Spirit.

**AMEN**