

Eph 4:17-32
The Holy Spirit Part 2

The Holy Spirit is a person, specifically the third person of the Trinity. He is not a ghost in that He haunts us or was sent to make life difficult. He is not a ghost in that He is disconnected from what He once was, trapped between this world and eternity. No, the Holy Spirit is God, sent by God as Jesus' representative to live with us and in us. The Holy Spirit is literally our resident companion, a perfect one at that. He will not take over space that is not his to occupy. He does not force His ways upon us. He always gives perfect counsel but will not make us adhere to it. He is always guiding us into the way of truth even if we fail to follow him. He is all but ready to help us if we just call on Him. But the question this morning is not what type of resident companion the Holy Spirit is. The question is what type of companion are we? Have we ever considered how our behavior affects God's Holy Spirit, considering the Holy Spirit lives in us. Maybe to our surprise this morning, how we live affects the Holy Spirit. **V30**, "And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live." The ESV says do not grieve the Holy Spirit. To grieve someone is to cause someone to be sorrowful, upset and/or displeased, to cause someone to even lament (cry). Let me state it this way, to cause hurt that lingers beyond the moment. A many of us I would surmise know this type of hurt. Given this fact, we do not want to cause such sorrow for God's Holy Spirit, which lives in us. With this said, I want to share how we bring sorrow to the Holy Spirit in hope that we will no longer do so, at least not out of ignorance.

Ultimately, we bring sorrow to the Holy Spirit when we live like unbelievers. V17-24 “¹⁷ With the Lord’s authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. ¹⁸ Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. ¹⁹ They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that isn’t what you learned about Christ. ²¹ Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, ²² throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. ²³ Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. ²⁴ Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.” The word that most appropriately describes the impetus driving the life of unbelievers’ is selfishness. A life lived in pursuit of pleasing one’s self, not God. A life where all things are acceptable, no boundaries. But not so for believers. Notice here this is where our free will comes into play (reread 20-24). **Listen, we will either walk according to the Spirit (the new self, driven by selflessness) or according to our flesh (the old self, driven by selfishness) and this is our choice. When you come to faith in Christ you are a new creation. That is to say, the grace of God will not leave you unchanged. The grace of God will not let you be at peace with sinful behavior because of the Holy Spirit in you.**

Gal 5:24 “²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there.” **NLT**

2 Cor 5:17 “This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” **NLT**

Now the thrust of our text is not to live like those who do not follow Jesus. So, what does it look like to live like those who do not believe; to live like those who do not have the Holy Spirit of God living in them? **When we lie to one another, we live like unbelievers, grieving the Holy Spirit.** V25 “²⁵ So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.” We must tell the truth even if it means trouble and/or hurt for us or another. Why? When we lie, we take on the character of Satan and we, disciples, are no longer under his sway. And considering the Holy Spirit lives in us how can we continue to reflect the character of Satan, the father of lies?

Proverbs 6:16-19 “There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: ¹⁷haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood,¹⁸ a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, ¹⁹a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.” **NIV**

John 8:44 “⁴⁴ For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.” **NLT**

When we let anger have its way with us, we live like unbelievers, grieving the Holy Spirit. V26-27 “²⁶ And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ for anger gives a foothold to the devil.” God has no problem with anger. The problem is anger out of control; anger not dealt with for that leads to sin, opening a door for the enemy in a disciple’s life. And when we let anger control us, we place ourselves under the sway of the enemy rather than the Holy Spirit. Be angry and sin not and by the Holy Spirit this is absolutely possible for every disciple.

Psalm 4:4 “Don’t sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent.” **NLT**

James 1:19-20 “¹⁹ Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. ²⁰ Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.” **NLT**

When we lack a spirit of trust we live like unbelievers, grieving the Holy Spirit. V28 “²⁸ If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need.” Why would a believer steal, lest he or she believes God will not do what He has promised, which is to provide us. And if one believes God cannot provide, how could one ever be generous. Listen, this constitutes unbelief and unbelief of any type by a believer grieves the Holy Spirit.

Matt 6:24-26 “²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money. ²⁵ “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are?” **NLT**

When we do not guard our mouths we live like unbelievers, grieving the Holy Spirit. V29 “²⁹ Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.” Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt. Lie! Words have tremendous power. It is a dangerous and destructive thing to be

careless with our words. As followers of Jesus, we must learn to guard our mouths. Listen, we will give an account for every word we speak. **Matt 12:36-37** “³⁶I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” **ESV**

Let me close. Why do these behaviors bring sorrow to the Holy Spirit? They do so because these things are contrary to that which the Holy Spirit was sent to produce in us. **V31-32** “³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. ³²Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.” Kindness, compassion, forgiveness; these are among the good things the Holy Spirit will produce in us when we follow him. Remember, he is our resident guide, and we must walk according to him. And what is it to walk according to the Holy Spirit? That’s Part 3. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.