

The Mark Of A Disciple Forgiveness

Eph 4:25-32

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

KJV

Disciples of Christ are truthful, meek, generous, and righteous in their communication with others. They are also forgiving.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another**, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

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Between verse 29 and verse 31 Paul inserts this verse.

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After 18 months, I am still experiencing grief. My family still mourns over our loss. We miss Debbie so much. Nearly every day we are confronted with a circumstance that reminds us she is gone.

It is normal for people outside of our family no longer mourn with us they way they did during the first months and the first year.

This does not offend me. You do not continue to feel what we continue to feel because you did not have the same relationship with the one that was lost. You do not live day in

and day out with our loss. You have mourned with us and we are very grateful. We give you permission to move on even as we continue to experience sorrow. We will grieve to some degree for the rest of our lives.

As time passes, it is normal for us to stop identifying with the grief that others are experiencing. But we must never stop identifying with what grieves the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesians 4:30-31, Paul reveals to us that the Holy Spirit can experience grief.

The Holy Spirit grieves when we live in sin. When we live in sin, it creates consequences. The Holy Spirit grieves over these consequences. He grieves over what we lose.

He grieves over what Jesus loses when we live in sin. Jesus deserves to be glorified. To glorify Jesus is the mission of the Holy Spirit. When we live in sin, He cannot fulfill His mission thru us.

If we live in sin and grieve the Holy Spirit, He will not manifest His power thru us. We may have a form of Godliness but it will be without power. The truth we share with others will have little or no impact on the lives of others. We will not experience the extraordinary blessing of God on our ministry. We will create division and disunity in the church.

If we grieve the Holy Spirit, it will affect our local congregation in some measure. There have been many times when I have walked into a local church and I could discern that the Holy Spirit was being grieved by the leaders or by one or more of the members that were living in sin...

There is a spirit of heaviness!

The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of Praise. His mission is to exalt the name of Jesus thru praise. He cannot fulfill His mission thru a local church if He is grieved by the sins of one or more of the members. This will always be the case when one or more of its leaders are living in sin. The power of the Holy Spirit will be quenched and so will praise.

What sins grieve the Holy Spirit?

- Evil Judgment
- Lying
- Unrighteous anger
- Stealing
- Corrupt communication
- Unforgiveness

Now Paul says it grieves the Holy Spirit if we deal with something that offends us in a sinful way.

Eph 4:30-31

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

KJV

Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking, and malice are sinful ways to respond to something that offends you. When you commit any one of these sins, it grieves the Holy Spirit. If you choose to live in these sins without repentance, His power will be quenched in your life and it will affect your church. We are members of one another.

As Christians, we should not be easily offended. Those who are easily offended have a problem with pride. They think more highly of themselves than they should. So they are easily offended. They are quick to become critical. They are quick to judge the motives of others. They have difficulty letting go of offenses.

But even if you are not easily offended, you will be offended nearly every day the rest of your life. Your personal rights will be violated. Your personal expectations will not be fulfilled. You will not be treated the way you feel you deserve to be treated.

Those that will hurt you the most will be those that you are most closely associated. You expect more from them.

When this occurs, you have a choice. How will you deal with what offends you?

That choice will determine whether or not you grieve the Holy Spirit. God help us make the right choice.

Bitterness

Bitterness is pitching a tent on an offense. It is holding on to an offense. Someone offends you and you will not let it go. You can always tell you are bitter because...

- You still have strong feelings about a past situation it is brought up.
- You feel that the person who committed the offense has not done enough to make things right.
- You make yourself the judge and jury about what they need to do to make things right.
- You rehearse past offenses in your mind when certain new situations arise.
- You rehearse it with others if you think they need to be warned.
- You are critical. You jump to conclusions about the person that offended you. It causes you to be judgmental and overly cautious in trusting that person. This poisons your soul and your relationship with the person that committed the offense.

But the worse consequence is that Bitterness grieves the Holy Spirit.

Wrath

You should have a great passion to make things right if you are born again. This passion has been called righteous indignation. Physically, you can tell when you are being affected by this passion because you start breathing hard and that is what the word literally means.

But when you are offended, this passion has to be controlled. It has to be channeled to reveal the truth and to control the one who is guilty so that others will not be injured.

If this passion is not controlled, this passion will become wrath. Wrath is righteous indignation that uses various means to punish others. Only God has the right to show wrath. Wrath in us grieves the Holy Spirit.

Anger

Anger is the excitement of the mind and the emotions when your personal rights are violated or your personal expectations are not fulfilled. Anger is the mind planning the punishment. Anger grieves the Holy Spirit.

Clamour

Clamour means to scream or to shriek. Clamour is the public out cry of an intention to punish someone. Clamour grieves the Holy Spirit.

Evil Speaking

Evil Speaking is the word blasphemy. Evil Speaking is one way to injure others. It means to vilify or defame the reputation of someone.

Evil speaking grieves the Holy Spirit.

Malice

Malice is having a vicious intention or desire to hurt someone even after anger has subsided (Titus 3:3). Malice can be irrational. It can cause you to believe that the person against whom it is directed has the same intention. People who have malice are normally paranoid. This grieves the Holy Spirit.

How are you dealing with what offends you? If you are guilty of these sins, you must repent of these sins or the Holy Spirit will be grieved. His power will be quenched in your life and in some measure in any local church you attend.

The Canadian Revival is the name of a move of God that began in the church in Canada in 1971. Bill McCleod was the Pastor. A few years ago I heard Bill McCleod explain how the revival began. There were two brothers that were leaders in the church. They had not spoken to one another in years due to an offense. The Holy Spirit was grieved. It affected their lives and the church.

At the beginning of the revival, The Holy Spirit convicted these brothers of their sinful way of dealing with the offense. When they repented and then shared their testimony of forgiveness and reconciliation revival broke out in the church. The power of the Holy Spirit was no longer being quenched. It soon spread to other churches as Pastor McLeod was asked to share about the revival in other churches. Many people were saved and many lives were changed.

Look what damage these men had done to themselves and to the church by grieving the Holy Spirit. You have done the same thing if you are guilty of dealing with what offends you in a sinful way. You have done the same things if you are living any of the sins that Paul listed. You have not only quenched the Holy Spirit in your own life, but you have affected an entire congregation. There has to be a change.

The Holy Spirit is grieved in our church. Certainly we have all experienced grief because of our great loss. This is not what grieves the Holy Spirit. Just this week I had lunch with a man who attended Debbie's funeral. He is not a member here. He wanted to tell me how his spiritual life was impacted by the service. We can grieve over our loss without grieving the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is being grieved because of sin!

How is this affecting our congregation?

2000	398	
2001	428	
2002	458	
2003	500	
2004	560	
2005	477	
2006	416	
2007	411	
2008	323	For the last 12 weeks

When I first returned to the church in 2005, I knew there was a problem but I thought the problem was just a difference in beliefs and philosophy among our elders and staff.

There is a great difference in beliefs and philosophy among our elders and staff. It is a very difficult to function when our elders and staff are not like minded.

But I have been convinced since the spring of last year that the Holy Spirit is being grieved by more than just differences in beliefs and philosophy among our leaders and in our congregation. Many of these differences have existed for many years and we have lived in peace and harmony and with the blessing of the Lord.

I am convinced that the Holy Spirit is grieved because of sin.

Since this summer I have intentionally addressed the sins I believe are grieving the Holy Spirit in our congregation.

- Evil Judgment
- Lying
- Unrighteous anger
- Stealing
- Corrupt communication
- Unforgiveness

It is my perception that there has not been repentance. The Holy Spirit is grieved!

What should we do?

We need to pray and examine ourselves before we examine others.

We need to pray for a spirit of humility and repentance for our congregation.

We need to avoid gossip and slander.

We need to meet as a church and discuss our differences in beliefs and philosophy.

I have compared the church to Debbie's life and asked the question if it is time for this ministry to die. People die. Ministries die. Churches die. Dying is a part of living. It is something we must face.

But Debbie died victoriously. She did not die because of sin and neither should we. If we humble ourselves and repent of sin we can live victoriously and if we die, we can die victoriously.

What will we choose? Let's pray together.