

Presence of Mind of the Spirit

Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. **—Ezekiel 18:31**

Something happens when we grieve the Holy Spirit: not the loss of salvation, but presence of mind. I like to call it the presence of the mind of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is depicted in the New Testament as a dove (Matt. 3:16; John 1:32). The dove is a very shy bird and extremely sensitive. When the Spirit is grieved He backs away, as it were, like a dove that quietly and unobtrusively flies away. The result of this is that we are not able to flow in the Spirit as long as the Spirit is grieved and the Dove is not around.

Bitterness and unforgiveness are the main ways in which we grieve the Spirit. We know this is true because the very next thing Paul says (after commanding us not to grieve the Spirit) is, “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Eph. 4:31-32). Bitterness is not the only way we grieve the Spirit, and Paul continues to show what else grieves the Spirit: sexual immorality, greed, obscenity, foolish talk, or coarse joking (Eph. 5:3-4). But bitterness is the chief way we grieve the Spirit, and that is why He puts it at the top of the list of things we can do to grieve the Spirit.

This means that all of us are accountable to God to forgive and to make sure the Holy Spirit is ungrieved in our hearts and lives. And when the Holy Spirit in us is ungrieved—like the dove coming down and remaining (see John 1:32-33)—we will

show the fruit of the Spirit, be able to witness for Jesus with power, and flow in the Spirit.

Excerpted from *Pure Joy* (Charisma House, 2006).