

When the Spirit Leaves: Quenched or Grieved

Do not put out the Spirit's fire. —1 Thessalonians 5:19

The Spirit has feelings, and we can hurt His feelings when we grieve Him by the things we do. The Greek word translated “grieve” (lupeo) comes from lupee, which means “pain” or “sorrow.” It is the opposite of joy.

We know from the apostle Paul that the Holy Spirit can also be quenched. Paul's words put out come from the Greek word sbennumi, which basically means “to quench.” In the ancient Greek world it referred generally to extinguishing fire or burning objects. Paul's warning not to quench the Spirit can only mean that sometimes the Spirit's fire can be put out.

It is hard to know the difference between the Holy Spirit being grieved and being quenched. But there are nuances of understanding we can discover. Grieving the Spirit refers to actions of ours that hinder the Spirit from being Himself—from being what He could be in us. On the other hand, quenching the Spirit refers to actions of ours that hinder the Spirit from doing what He could do through us.

When He is ungrieved in us we will manifest His personality—defined in Galatians 5:22-23 as the “fruit of the Spirit.” If we have not grieved the Spirit in us, we will also demonstrate these characteristics—just as Jesus demonstrated them.

When He is unquenched in us we may well manifest His power, perhaps through the expressions of the gifts of the Spirit. (See 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.)

The anointing must be the totality of all that the Spirit is and is able to do. We must want to exemplify the personality

of Jesus as much as to demonstrate His power. We must experience the Holy Spirit from within—ungrieved in our private lives—before we can anticipate an outward demonstration of His power. If we expect the Dove of the Spirit to remain, it is surely essential that all we are does nothing to cause the Dove to flutter away.

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