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Do Not Quench The Spirit 1 Thessalonians 5:19 Part

We have entered the last section of 1 Thessalonians. This section of Scripture which begins in **V. 16** and extends through **V. 22** contain a series of principles or commands dealing with holy living. The principles that are listed for us in this section fall into two groups: **VV. 16-18** deals with principles of the inner life; **VV. 19-22** deals with principles for the corporate life of the church and stresses the responsibility of the readers toward the workings of the Spirit in their assembly.

You will remember that the first group in **VV. 16-18** consisted of the following three commands:

1. **“Rejoice always” in 1 Thess. 5:16**
2. **“Pray without ceasing” in 1 Thess. 5:17**
3. **“In everything give thanks for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.”**

This evening/morning we will now go on to the second group of commands in **VV. 19-22**. In this section of Scripture, five terse commands are given. The first two commands are negative in **VV. 19-20**, and the remaining three, in **VV. 21-22**, are positive. This morning/evening we will be considering the first of these negative commands.

DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT

What is this first negative command? **“Do no quench the Spirit.”** The word “quench” means to extinguish or to stifle. In **Mark 9:48** it is used in reference to putting out a “fire.” In **Matt. 25:8** it is used in reference to putting out a “lamp.” This certainly is a very appropriate word to be used in respect to the **“Spirit.”** For I believe that many of you recognize that the Spirit often times in the Scripture is pictured as a fire. You will remember in **Acts 2** that the Spirit manifested Himself like a “flame of fire” upon each of Christ’s disciples on the Day of Pentecost.

We know that every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. **Romans 8:9** makes this very clear when it says, **“.... But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”** But though we as true Christians have the Spirit indwelling us it does not mean that the Spirit of Christ is necessarily manifesting Himself. It could very well be possible that we have quenched Him. It may very well be that though the Spirit of God is indwelling us and desires to manifest Himself it may be that through our attitudes and actions that we put out His “flame.”

The New Testament also speaks of “grieving the Spirit” in Eph. 4:30. What is the difference? Quenching is what we do to the Spirit and grieving is the personal anguish that the Spirit experiences when He is quenched. We do not quench the Holy Spirit without grieving Him. And we do not grieve the Holy Spirit without having quenched Him. **WHEN WE QUENCH THE SPIRIT HE GRIEVES.**

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Let me ask you a question. How does the Spirit of Christ want to manifest Himself? I believe that the answer to this question is very simple. The Scriptures tell us. He wants to manifest Himself through the “fruit of the Spirit.” In **Gal. 5:19-23** we read the following **“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”** How can we know if the Spirit of God is present and active in our lives? It is when the fruit of His presence is seen in our lives.

A simpler way to answer the question, “How does the Spirit of Christ want to manifest Himself” would be, “He wants to manifest Himself in holiness.” When the Holy Spirit enters our lives on the very first day of our salvation this is the direction he wants us to go. We can either cooperate with this work that He is seeking to perform or we can resist work and effectively quench Him and put out His flame. If we are a believer He will continue to remain present in our lives but He will not be able to manifest Himself.

There are a number of things that the Spirit is seeking to do in order to take us along that path. I would like to take a few moments and review these various activities of the Spirit so that we can evaluate whether or not we are cooperating with the Spirit or quenching Him.

HE ILLUMINATES THE WORD - The Spirit of God is the author of the word **“But know this first of all , that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, (21) for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”** In other words the only one who truly understands the Scripture is the author of the Scripture. This makes sense. So if we are ever to truly understand the truths of the Scriptures as they have been written we need to look to the Spirit. Certainly the necessity of the Holy Spirit in the searching out of truth was clearly communicated by Jesus in **John 14:26** when He said to His disciples, **“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things”** We need to understand that apart from the Spirit of God and His ministry of illumination we can never truly come to understand the truth of which He is the author. In **1 Cor. 2:9, 10** we read the following **“But just as it is written, ‘Things which the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. (10) For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.’** What is Paul saying? Paul is saying that apart from the Spirit working through the Word we would never know the truth of what God has prepared for those who love Him. We would never know the truth about these things because our eyes and ears, by themselves, would not be able to reveal them to us. And neither could our heart reveal them to us. The Holy Spirit illuminating the Word of God is the only way for us as those who love Him to truly come to know the truth.

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We must understand that the Scriptures must be approached differently than other books by virtue of the fact that this book is not authored by men but rather men who were moved by the Holy Spirit to write.

The Holy Spirit is taking us down the path of Holiness. Our we cooperating? Let us begin by asking ourselves the question, “Are we cooperating with His ministry of illumination?” Certainly for us to say that we are cooperating with Him in this matter we must be taking time to read and study the Word of God. If we are not taking the time to do this certainly I believe that it would be fair to say that we are quenching the Spirit. Taking this thought a step further it would seem fair to say that when we come to the Word with no sense of need to be depending upon the Spirit, we certainly also could be accused of quenching the Spirit. HOW ELSE DOES THE SPIRIT WORK TO LEAD US ALONG THE PATH OF HOLINESS?

HE LEADS US INTO WILLING OBEDIENCE - The Scripture tells us that “**All we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to His own way.**” It is one thing to have the Word of God illuminated for us, it is quite another thing to want to live our lives conformed to it.

We must come to a place in our lives where we are convinced that we just do not have the answers. We must come to the place in our lives where we know that continuing to act on our thoughts, on our desires, on our feelings, on our wishes will only lead us to ruin. This is the clear statement of **Prov. 14:12** “**There is a way that seemeth right unto man but the end thereof is death.**” How is it that we will come to the point where we will abandon our destructive ways in order to follow the Lord? It is the work of the Spirit to bring us to this point. In **Ezek. 36:27** the Lord makes this very clear in speaking to the nation of Israel when He says, “**And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.**” In other words “I will give you My Spirit and He will lead you to willingly obey Me. So much so that you will be even exercising care in doing so!!”

Just because the Spirit may be in our lives and is seeking to lead us in the path of righteousness does not mean that we necessarily have to follow Him. We can quench Him. Rather than listening to the clear teachings of God’s Word, or the counsel of Spirit filled believers. I have seen people who will seek out counselors and friends who will say what they want to hear and support them in what they want to do. In fact, I believe one of the primary reasons, if not the primary reason for people leaving this fellowship after they have attended for some length of time is that we are not sharing with them what they want to hear. And from my perspective I would say that they are not wanting to hear what the Spirit of God is trying to say to them as we seek to instruct and counsel them from the Scripture.

The Holy Spirit is taking us down the path of holiness. Are we cooperating? Are we not only cooperating with His illuminating ministry but are we also cooperating with His ministry of leading us into willing obedience? Are we truly seeking to be led down the path of righteousness or are we in fact seeking to find a way to go down the path of our own choosing? If we find ourselves ignoring the instruction and counsel of church leaders, if we find ourselves pulling away from Christian friends who disagree with us on specific matters of conduct it is a signal that we may very well be what? **QUENCHING THE SPIRIT! HOW ELSE DOES THE SPIRIT LEAD US DOWN THE PATH OF HOLINESS?**

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HE SEEKS TO PROVIDE STRENGTH - It is a wonderful thing through the illuminating ministry of the Spirit to come to understand the precepts and principles of God's Word. It is a wonderful thing through the leading ministry of the Spirit of God to want to apply those precepts and principles to your own life. But there is the matter of strength. Apart from the strength that the Spirit Himself provides us we will not be able to perform the will of God.

In **Zech. 4:6** it says, **“Not by might or by power but by My Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts..”** Paul writes these words to the Ephesians in **Eph. 3:14-16** **“For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, (15) from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, (16) that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.”** We must understand that there is nothing that we can do to please God apart from the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is taking us down the path of holiness. Are we cooperating? Are we cooperating with His ministry of illuminating? Are we cooperating with His ministry of leading? Are we cooperating with His ministry of strengthening? Jesus repeatedly attempted to minister to His disciples in this area. I am sure that you remember the Lord's words to His disciples in the garden in **Mt. 26:41**, **“Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”** If we are not going to quench the Spirit in His strengthening ministry then we must be people of prayer. **HOW ELSE DOES THE SPIRIT WORK TO LEAD US ALONG THE PATH OF HOLINESS?**

HE CAUSES US TO FEEL A CLOSENESS WITH GOD - Our obedience to God will hopefully not be characterized by cold and mechanical compliance to God of the universe but rather a heartfelt expression of affection for our heavenly father. In **Romans 8:14-16** it says the following, **“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (15) For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba, Father!” (16) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”** Paul says the same thing in **Gal. 4:4-6**, **“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, (5) in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (6) And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father!”** God does not want us to seek to obey Him at an emotional distance from Him. He wants us to feel closeness that He feels toward us because of the work of His Son.

The Holy Spirit is taking us down the path of holiness. Are we cooperating? Are we cooperating with His illuminating ministry? Are we cooperating with his leading ministry? Are we cooperating with His strengthening ministry? Are we cooperating with his relational ministry? Or have we ignored any kind of pursuit of felt closeness with the Lord? Perhaps we are very satisfied with obeying God from a distance. If we have we are quenching the work of the Spirit. **HOW ELSE DOES THE SPIRIT SEEK TO LEAD US DOWN THE PATH OF HOLINESS?**

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HE KEEPS US FIXED ON THE GOAL - In **Phil. 3:10-14**, “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; (11) In order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (12) Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. (13) Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do; forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, (14) I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” And what is that goal? To be like Jesus!!

Becoming like Jesus ultimately involves being able to see Him in His glory In **1 John 3:2** it says, “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.” One day in the future when we see Jesus face to face we will be like Him. But what about now? Is there any way that we can see Jesus? Perhaps not necessarily in the fullness of His glory but at least a portion of it? And the answer is yes!

The Spirit reveals Christ. In **John 15:26** and **16:14-15** Jesus said, “When the Spirit came that He would bear witness” of Him. CHRIST REVEALED THE FATHER. THE SPIRIT REVEALS THE SON. THE SPIRIT WANTS US TO GIVE UPON THE GLORY OF THE SON.

And what happens as we do this? We will be progressively transformed. In **2 Cor. 3:18** it says, “But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is progressively revealing the glory of Christ to us through the Word of God. If we are going to be able to keep our focus on Christ we must keep ourselves involved in the word of God. If we fail to do this we will in effect quench the Spirit making it impossible for Him to reveal Jesus to us. Making it impossible for Him to show us Christ’s glory. We must understand the goal of the work of the Spirit and cooperate with Him by spending time in God’s Word.

CONCLUSION

THE LORD TELLS US NOT TO QUENCH THE SPIRIT. THIS MORNING/EVENING WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT HOW WE MIGHT DO THIS IN RESPECT TO THE SPIRIT’S WORK IN US.

WE ARE GUILTY OF QUENCHING THE SPIRIT IF WE BY OUR CHOICES RESIST THE SPIRIT’S WORK OF:

1. ILLUMINATING THE WORD

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2. LEADING US INTO WILLING OBEDIENCE
3. STRENGTHENING US
4. CREATING IN US A FEELING OF FATHERLY INTIMACY WITH GOD
5. FOCUSING ON THE GLORY OF CHRIST.