

Ephesians 4:30

Today's verse is easily understood in some respects, but it requires us to think long and hard about the expectations of the Lord and the impact our lives have on our level of intimacy in our walk with Him. Interestingly enough, we will see that the building blocks for v. 30 have been laid in v. 25-29 which provide a marvelous unveiling of what Paul desires for us both to avoid and pursue as we strive to walk in the Spirit.

1. What does it mean to grieve the Spirit?
 - a. There is a very clear prohibition in this passage against "grieving" but we must have a faithful definition of grieving if we are going to understand what is at stake
 - b. It seems to me that Charles Hodge encapsulates the intended meaning nicely saying, "To grieve Him is to wound Him on Whom our salvation depends. Though He will not finally withdraw from those in whom He dwells, yet when grieved, He withholds the manifestations of His presence"
 - i. Hodge gives us a nice definition, but it still begs the question... how do we wound, or grieve, the Spirit?
 - ii. As is often the case, biblical context is our friend in this respect
2. How do we grieve the Spirit?
 - a. There is a subtlety in the original language of this passage that might be helpful as we begin to think about grieving the Spirit
 - b. A.T. Robertson writes, the following:
 - i. "Note that the first word in the Greek is "kai" (and) which unfortunately is not translated by the usually relatively literal NASB95 edition or the 2020 revision (but it was translated in the NAS77 edition!) And in this context is important because it clearly links the grieving of the Holy Spirit with Eph 4:29 regarding unwholesome speech. In short, the implication is that "rotten" speech will grieve the Holy Spirit. Of course, this verse may also be linked to Ep 4:25-28 to indicate that lying, unrighteous anger, and stealing also hurt Him. And finally, it is also related to the sins that follow in Eph 4:31, all of which grieve the Holy Spirit.
 - c. The point here is that there is a continuation of thought between verse 30 and the immediately preceding list of prohibitions
 - i. Evidently, Paul is linking the prospect of sin with the unfortunate result of grieving the Spirit
 - ii. Stated in the positive, we grieve the Spirit by sinning against God!
 - d. Proactively

- i. Most of the prohibitions given in Ephesians 4 are warnings and commands to either pursue OR avoid a certain behavior
 - 1. We are to speak the truth in love all the while guarding against corrupting speech
 - 2. We are to be righteously angry all the while avoiding rage-filled sin
 - 3. The thief is to quit stealing and pursue a faithful vocation
- ii. In all these things, we are reminded that there are good things to pursue and evil pursuits to avoid!
- iii. This means that our actions, or the deeds we undertake, can lead to either a sweet communion with God OR an estranged relationship with a grieved Spirit
- iv. The warning here is simple... what you do will either enhance or erode your intimacy with the Lord

e. Passively

- i. There is another category of sin that should be noted and those are sins of “omission”
- ii. These are sins that are the product of our avoiding holy, necessary actions
- iii. Passivity can be a huge stumbling block for a Christian
 - 1. We are guilty of sins of omission when we:
 - a. Refuse to share our faith
 - b. Avoid pursuing fellowship with the Lord in prayer, Bible study, and meditation
 - c. Neglect the corporate assembly of the church
 - d. Avoid tithes and offerings and the like
- iv. These are sometimes more subtle precisely because these sins are not committed but omitted!
 - 1. We must search our lives often and ask if there are other things that should be present which are neglected
 - 2. These negated duties can harm our fellowship with the Lord just as badly as sins we are guilty of committing

3. A precious Promise

- a. Don't miss the final clause in this wonderful passage... “by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
 - i. The term “sealed” means to engrave and often denotes ownership
 - ii. The link between being engraved or sealed by the Spirit and the day of redemption is intended to calm the otherwise nervous believer who

may be tempted to think that grieving the Holy Spirit would lead to a separation between man and the Spirit

1. Paul reminds us that while the Christian can grieve the Spirit and, therefore, forfeit all of the blessings of perceived intimacy; a true believer will not break the seal that guarantees our eternal hope

iii. This should lead us to repentance which produces joy!

1. Some of you are grieving the Spirit right now... if your sin has caused you to wound Him, rest in knowing that while He is grief-stricken over sin, He is faithful and trustworthy to continue to indwell you to the day of redemption
2. This means that we have no reason to flee from Him when our sin becomes apparent, instead we have every reason to run to Him when our sin is brought to our attention trusting that He will never cast us out of the family