

23. THE BEHAVIOUR OF SAINTS TOWARDS THE

HOLY SPIRIT

The commands given to believers concerning their relationship with the Holy Spirit are: do not grieve Him, do not quench Him and do not resist Him.

Although the Holy Spirit cannot be grieved because grief implies change, weakness and disappointment – all these being incompatible with His infinite perfections, yet man in his behaviour may actively do that which is able to grieve others that may have our best interest at heart. It is no thanks to us that we cannot grieve Him, but our intentions or negligence are to be condemned.

Because of His love to us, our sinning is said to grieve Him. This we do by coming short of that complete sanctification which our having been grafted into Christ requires of us. Therefore, to not grieve the Holy Spirit we need to diligently pursue holiness. He is the one who delights in our obedience, yet by our unthinking foolishness we are said to grieve Him.

The Holy Spirit is infinite kindness to us. Let us continually meditate on this wonderful comfort. He is sent to us, willingly, freely and powerfully. Shall we neglect what He wants to do for us? Does He not contain me in my foolishness daily as I go about my business? It is He who watches over me, who guides me, who comforts me.

We are not to quench the Spirit. **1 THES 5:19** “Do not put out the Spirit’s fire”. Generally, we understand quench as to douse a flame – thus nullifying the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was typified by the fire that was always kept alive on the alter in the temple.

Should we be angered by an incident that happens in our lives, we could be said to be quenching the work that God has given us to do through the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit – because we would be trying to thwart the work of God as a witness to the suffering of our Blessed Lord on our behalf.

The Holy Spirit is also called the “Spirit of burning”. So, when we want to resist the fire of the Spirit, we quench it. Therefore, any opposition to the work of the Spirit in our lives is said to be “quenching the Spirit”. The Holy Spirit is striving with us, encouraging growth, grace, obedience and so producing holy fruit in us. Paul warns us not to allow our lusts and temptations to quench the works of good will in us.

So, if we are to have communion with the Holy Spirit, we are to consider Him as the author of all the grace that we need for all the good works in our hearts and all the help we need in wrestling with sin. This will bring us into fellowship with Him.

Do not resist the Holy Spirit. The Jews were told by Stephan that they had resisted the Holy Spirit in their dealings with Christ – Just as their fathers had done in persecuting and killing God’s prophets of old. Now the Holy Spirit is said to be resisted when the preaching of the word is held in contempt, because the gift of preaching the word is from Him. The word was given to the apostles and disciples for the conviction of the world. **LK 21:15** “For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict”. So those who do not obey the word preached in today’s ministry, which the Holy Spirit has set up in the Church, resist the Spirit.

When the word of God is faithfully preached, the authority, wisdom and goodness of the Holy Spirit, in setting up this ordinance, is to be recognised and respected. That is why we need to obey the word preached, because it is the expression of the gift to men by the Holy Spirit.

This truth is to be recognised and accepted by us in order to keep us humble and obedient to the word of God. Thus, we have holy fellowship with Him in this ordinance.