



March 2017

DEVO: "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!" #1

By: Pastor Ken Faust

In Paul's writings to the Ephesian Church, he gives them this instruction in **Ephesians 4:30**, "*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*" I don't think anyone in their right mind would intentionally want to grieve the Holy Spirit, but we're not always in our right minds. Our thinking is not always lined up with God's Word and the way we think will determine the way we act.

The word "**grieved**" in this Scripture is the word that commonly describes a husband or wife who has discovered that their mate has been unfaithful to them. Because of this unfaithfulness, the spouse that has been betrayed is shocked, devastated, and grieved to the point of having his or her spirit crushed. Perhaps you have suffered such pain that accompanies unfaithfulness. This is how the Holy Spirit feels when we grieve Him.

Paul would describe the Holy Spirit *as a treasure in an earthen vessel* (**2 Corinthians 4:7**). He also tells us that *the Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirits that we are God's children* (**Romans 8:16**). Imagine, because of God's grace, we carry inside of us the presence of God. We literally become the temples of the Holy Spirit along with His power, His gifts, His fruit, and His character. God has placed something very special in each one of us.

So the question remains; "**Why would anyone of us want to grieve the Holy Spirit?**" Paul answers this question by giving us a list of 6 things that causes such grief to God's Spirit. Lying, anger, giving place to the devil, stealing, unwholesome talk, and bitterness are all listed in this fourth chapter in Ephesians. When we act like the world, talk like the world, and behave like the world we deliberately drag the Holy Spirit right into the mire of sin with us causing Him such grief.

In the next several days we will examine each one of these sins that causes the Spirit to grieve. So, before going on with your day, stop and ask, "**Holy Spirit, is there anything in my life that causes You grief?**"

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #1

Ephesians 4:25-32 "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin': Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 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."

Questions - Day #1

1. Are there specific areas in your life that the Holy Spirit has already been dealing with you on?
2. If there are areas you know you are grieving the Spirit, write them down and begin now to pray about them as you do these next six devotions. (You may consider sharing your list with someone in your group for accountability and prayer).



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DEVO: "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!" #2

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It's hard to imagine that the Apostle Paul had to tell church people to quit lying; especially to other church people. But that is exactly what he is doing in **Ephesians 4:25**. Lying is what it is. It is the intention to deceive others. It is plainly to misinform, mislead, string along, and be dishonest towards someone else. Not only did Paul have to tell the Church at Ephesus to quit lying, but he told the Colossian church the same thing in **Colossians 3:9**. Apparently, a lot of church people have problems with lying and this grieves the Holy Spirit within us.

Paul is warning the church, **and us too**, that when we deceive others by lying it will tear down the relationships we have with each other and destroy any trust, confidence, and faith that we may have in each other. Lying is totally destructive. As relationships are torn down, and disunity is created, the doors are left wide open to warfare in the church. And Satan walks away and says, "Mission accomplished." Remember, he is the father of lies and there is no truth in him (**John 8:44**).

Now imagine this destructive sin in other areas of our lives. How many marriages have been destroyed, or severely damaged by lying? How many spouses have felt betrayed by the one they loved because of deceit and dishonesty? How many relationships between children and parents have been shattered and ruined by a lying tongue? And how many times has this happened in Christian households? Is it any wonder why lying causes the Holy Spirit such grief? No wonder Paul tells us to put it away.

Solomon tells us in all his wisdom that it is better to be poor than to be a liar (Proverbs 19:22). That is because a liar cannot be trusted. Let us aim to please God (**2 Corinthians 5:9**).

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, if I have grieved You by living a life that deceives others, please forgive me. Help me to tame my tongue that it may speak forth the truth from now on. I humbly asked this in Jesus' name. Amen!

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #2

Ephesians 4:25 "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body."

Colossians 3:8-10 "But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."

John 8:44 "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

Questions - Day #2

1. Do you find yourself lying about certain things?
2. If so, what do you think drives you to lie and is there a consistency to whom or what you are lying about?
3. Is there an area of your life where you are walking and living in a lie? If so, how can you change it and with whom do you need to make it right?



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DEVO: "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!" #3

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This is day 3 as we examine our lives to see if there is anything in us that would cause the Holy Spirit to grieve. In **Ephesians 4:26**, Paul says, "*In your anger do not sin.*" All of us get angry, so what could Paul possibly mean? Paul is talking about the way we acted before we surrendered our lives to Christ, holding on to a bad temper and a lifestyle of anger. In other words, a hot head that is out of control. And if our anger is not used correctly, it can cause great damage to the relationships we have.

I had an angry man in my congregation and told him he should go to an anger management class because Christianity wasn't working for him. At least there, they could possibly teach him to keep his anger under control. However, if he desired, God was more than able to set him free. But that didn't seem to be his desire. In fact, he just became angrier with me.

In **Ecclesiastes 7:9**, it tells us that "*anger resides in the lap of a fool.*" If you link this Scripture up with **Proverbs 3:35**, it goes on to say that "*shame shall be the legacy of a fool.*" Nobody wants to be remembered as an angry, foolish person. This is a far cry from the abundant life that Christ promises to us. If we allow out of control anger to build up inside of us, when we vent without much thought it can hurt a lot of others and destroy precious relationships. If kept inside, it can

cause us to become bitter, and like poison, destroy us from within. The best place to release it is on our knees before God.

The Bible gives us more instructions on how to deal with the anger issues we may have. In **Ephesians 4:26**, it goes on to say, *"Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry."* This instruction is simple; anger must be dealt with as quickly as possible. If unchecked, and used improperly, it can burn us and everyone else around us. Marriages, families, friendships, and even churches have all been destroyed by one angry person. No wonder the Holy Spirit is grieved.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, forgive me if I am an angry person and have caused you grief. Help me to develop patience with others and self-control in my life. And help me to mend any broken relationships I have caused by my anger. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen!

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #3

Ephesians 4:26 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,"

Proverbs 15:1 "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel."

Proverbs 19:11 "A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense."

Questions - Day #3

1. Do you have unresolved anger toward someone or a situation in your life? If so, confess and ask the Lord for healing.
2. Have you hurt someone in your anger? If so, take the time to go and ask forgiveness so that you can be reconciled. (If need be, take someone with you as a mediator).
3. If you continue to have anger issues, write out what it's about and then write down some scriptures that speak to your heart and commit them to memory so you can take your anger captive.



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DEVO: "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!" #4

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Day 4 of examining our hearts to see if we are causing grief to the Holy Spirit brings us the interesting scripture of **Ephesians 4:27**. It tells us "*do not give the devil a foothold*." The enemy's plan is to run all over us and cause complete havoc in our lives. He puts his plan in motion when we allow him to slip through a crack that we may have created for him. This entry point is where he will begin his campaign of unleashing his destruction in our lives. Your choice in allowing this to happen causes the Spirit much grief.

Giving place (foothold) is a word that refers to a geographical location or territory. The devil is after every area of our lives and will not quit until he goes from region to region. However, he must have a starting place to begin and this is where you and I must resist him (**James 4:7**). The other half of James 4:7 is to "*submit ourselves to God*." This means we allow Him to have His way in our lives as Lord and Savior. Only then can we resist the devil with any success.

Satan is after our marriages, our families, our health, our friendships, our jobs, our businesses, our ministries, and especially our relationship with God. He will not quit unless you tell him to and close the place you have allowed him to enter into your affairs. But remember, Satan is cunning, and outside of Christ we are no match for him. **Ephesians 6:10** encourages us to "*be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power*."

Let us continue to develop our relationship with Christ, drawing strength from Him in our devotional life, church attendance, and obedience to God's Word. And let us live our lives as more than conquerors through Him.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, help me keep the doors to my heart and mind closed to the devil. Help me to stay free of any offense, unforgiveness, uncleanness, and bitterness. Help me identify problems and attitudes that can create entry points giving the enemy footholds. Forgive me for any grief I may have caused You by allowing this to happen. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen!

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #4

Ephesians 4:27 "and do not give the devil a foothold."

Ephesians 6:10-18 "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

Questions - Day #4

1. Is there an area in your life where you are making excuses or trying to justify an area of sin? Remember that if we give an inch Satan will take a mile?
2. Have you allowed an area to become an addiction or stronghold? If so, confess it, repent, and have one of the men in your group or your leader pray with you and hold you accountable.
3. Do you feel you are moving forward, standing still, or falling back in your relationship with Christ? If you're not moving forward, list three things you can change in your personal walk with Christ.



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DEVO: "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!" #5
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In the last several days, we have covered the things that grieve the Holy Spirit. Lying, anger, and allowing the enemy of our souls to have a foothold in our life can all cause much grief and pain to God's Spirit. Today's subject is no different. In **Ephesians 4:28**, Paul is going to tell church people to *quit stealing* and *start working*. This is tough talk but sometimes necessary. Stealing is simply taking something that doesn't belong to us.

Just as Satan is a liar, and a murderer, he is also a thief. **John 10:10** says, "*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.*" He turned the life of Judas into a thief (**John 12:6**) and he will do the same to us if he can. Before we were saved many of us had probably swiped a lot of things that did not belong to us. So let us be careful not to allow the enemy this foothold in our lives again. We need to display good Christian character to a lost and dying world instead of the character of our fallen nature. People are always watching us and so is God.

Paul is also going to encourage church people to work with an added motive. We work that we might be able *to help others in need*. If we steal we hurt others, but if we work we have the opportunity to help others. Paul was an example of hard work as a tentmaker while establishing local churches (**Acts 18:3; Acts 20:34-35**). Even in our labor we can become selfish. Paul sought to avoid this and was willing to share with others. However, there was a fundamental rule taught in the early church, "*If a man will not work, he shall not eat*" (**2 Thessalonians 3:10**). No one should take advantage of another person's generosity unless in real need. A lazy Christian robs himself, others, and God.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, I believe all my sins have been forgiven me in the past, in the present, and in the future (1 John 1:9). However, if I am stealing from others, whether material things or time, I'm grieving You. Please forgive me and help me to work to be generous towards others and You. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen!

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #5

Ephesians 4:28 “Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.”

Acts 20: 32-35 “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Questions - Day #5

1. Is there an area of your life that you are battling with integrity? Have you been dishonest in a business dealing, dishonest with your taxes, or taken things that don’t belong? If so, confess it to the Lord, repent, and take the steps to make it right.
2. Do you feel as if you are doing your best to work hard at your place of employment? Are you giving it your best, or just giving enough? Are you seen by your co-workers as a person of integrity?
3. Are you giving of yourself to the work of the Lord? Remember, as with the parable of the talents, we are all given gifts and talents and we must use them not only for our own provision, but for the blessing of others and God’s Kingdom. What are you doing to be a blessing to God and to others?



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DEVO: “Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!” #6

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If there is anything that can get us into a lot of trouble it is our big mouth. The Bible tells us that *our tongue is a restless evil and full of deadly poison* (**James 3:9**). Mature Christians should keep their tongues under control by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If not, we are in jeopardy of grieving God’s Spirit. Paul writes in **Ephesians 4:29** *not to let any unwholesome (corrupt) talk come out of our mouths*. Not only should we put away coarse (crude, rough, tasteless) language but also gossip and slander that has the potential to hurt or harm another’s reputation.

How many church people have been hurt by gossip and how many church people have hurt others by gossip? Only the Lord knows. We must determine not to allow this kind of talk to come out of us. Unwholesome talk, or corrupt words, refer to something that is dead and decaying like rotten fruit. At one time we were dead in our sins but now we are alive in Christ (**Ephesians 2:1-5**). We need to live, act, and talk like saved people.

Not only should our speech be clean and truthful, but we should also speak that which is helpful for the building up of others. Ask yourself, when it comes to the reputation of others, are you in the

construction business or in the business of demolition? Our words count. With God's help we need to commit ourselves to being the kind of person whose words will encourage and edify others.

Think back in your own life when you were young and remember words that were spoken to you. Were they positive and encouraging words that made you feel valuable and worthwhile? Or were they words that hurt you and made you feel insignificant? Most likely they were both. Our words have the same effect on those around us, especially younger people. Let us not hurt others by our words and let us not grieve the Holy Spirit with unwholesome talk.

PRAYER: Holy Spirit, I admit my words are not always wholesome. Forgive me for allowing the devil to use me in this way. Help me keep a tight rein on my tongue and to refrain from any gossip, slander, unwholesome, or unedifying talk. I pray in Jesus name. Amen!

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #6

Ephesians 4:29 "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

Ephesians 2:1-5 "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved."

Questions - Day #6

1. Do you struggle with unwholesome talk? If so, how do you think it affects your witness for Christ and what can you do to change it?
2. Have you battled with slander or gossip toward someone? If so, have you taken steps to right your wrong?
3. What can you do this week to speak encouragement into someone's life? How can you use your men's small group as a tool of encouragement?



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DEVO: "Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit!" #7

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We are rounding third and heading home with our devotion on what grieves the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures give us clear instruction to what causes the Spirit grief in the Book of Ephesians (**Ephesians 4:25-31**). We must realize that Paul is writing to church people, not the people of the world. Remember, when we act like the world, behave like the world, and talk like the world we drag the Holy Spirit into our sin causing Him much grief and pain.

We end our devotion with Paul speaking on the subject of *bitterness* in **verse 31**. This kind of bitterness is one that will produce a scowl on your face if it has taken root in your heart. If left to run its course, it can affect your mind, your emotions, and even your health. It will have nothing good to say about other people and only looks for the negative in them. It can even affect a Christian marriage because Paul writes in **Colossians 3:19**, "*Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them*" (NKJV).

If you find yourself constantly saying negative things about others who have offended you, it may be that a root of bitterness is trying take root in your heart. If so, you must grab hold of it and pull it up through the act of repentance and possibly forgive others. If not, eventually you will be filled with the bitter fruit that it produces as it embeds itself deep into your soul.

Holding on to bitterness and any other sin that grieves the Spirit of God is foolishness on our part. Lying, anger, stealing, unwholesome talk, and bitterness all give place to the devil. Our sins will not only grieve God's Spirit, but also Christ who died for us, and the Father who forgave us when we turned to Him. The one who loses is us.

So, perhaps some soul searching, a little repentance, and getting back on our feet pleasing God is all we need in our lives. The choice is yours. **Holy Spirit, have Your way!**

Scriptures (NIV) - Day #7

Ephesians 4:30-31 "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice."

Questions - Day #7

1. Is there something in your life that has caused you to become bitter instead of better?
2. Many times unforgiveness is the root of bitterness; is there someone you need to forgive in order for your heart and mind to be renewed? (Ephesians 4:32)
3. Ask the Lord to help you be quick to forgive, keep a short record of wrongs, and to remember that we must offer the same grace to others that the Lord has extended us.
4. Think back to the list you made on day 1 and apply these devotions to whatever area you are battling? Write down two things you can do to keep in step with the Spirit and not grieve the Spirit.