

Grieving the Holy Spirit

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 4:17-32

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. — Ephesians 4:30

Most of us dislike disappointing someone or making them sad. But if we don't like to disappoint or sadden others, we should really hate to disappoint God.

Disappoint God? Yes, we can disappoint, grieve, or sadden God the Holy Spirit.

That we can sadden the Holy Spirit teaches us something important about him. Although the Bible uses some impersonal images of the Holy Spirit (such as wind, or a dove), the fact that the Spirit can be grieved reminds us that he is a person and not some impersonal force.

How do we grieve the Holy Spirit? We do this by failing to live holy and righteous lives.

Paul reminds his readers—and that includes us—that they should no longer live like unbelievers in the darkness and “futility of their thinking.” All who believe have been purchased with the precious blood of Jesus, and now they are called to live in his light. Living in Jesus' light means following him in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

That we can grieve the Holy Spirit implies that we have a certain power over him. This is not power to manipulate, but to cooperate—or not.

Do you want to work with the Holy Spirit in the world today? Don't grieve him. Instead, work with him by living in holiness and righteousness as a witness for God's glory.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, please forgive us when we grieve you. Help us to follow Jesus today in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Amen.

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Printed on September 23, 2018

