

**Date:** March 3, 2019  
**Series:** The Holy Spirit

## HOW DO WE GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD?

(Ephesians 4:25-32)

Before we read our text today, I would like to remind you that it is always important to read a **verse** or a **passage** of Scripture in light of the context in which it is found. As I reminded you last week, the book of Ephesians is a book about the body of Christ and the importance of the maturity and unity of that body. Christ is the head of His body, the church, and His desire is for His body to be spiritually mature and unified. So with that in mind, let's read our text today, Ephesians 4:25-32:

**Ephesians 4:25–32**-----<sup>25</sup> **Therefore**, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. <sup>26</sup> **“Be angry, and do not sin”**: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, <sup>27</sup> nor give place to the devil. <sup>28</sup> **Let him who stole** steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. <sup>29</sup> **Let no corrupt** word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. <sup>30</sup> **And do not** grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> **Let all bitterness**, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

**In his book**, *First Son: George W. Bush and the Bush Family Dynasty*, author Bill Minutaglio tells a story of current Presidential contender George W. Bush's encounter with his father, George Bush. **The elder Bush** wanted his college-aged son to get a taste for the same type of ground-level work in the oil kingdom that he had been exposed to in the 40s. Every summer, Circle Drilling would hire a crew of college boys, and George W. was committed to work from June through August.

With aspirations of being a stockbroker or a Wall Street mogul like other prosperous family members, George W. walked off the barge seven days before his commitment was scheduled to end and never returned. Word was relayed to his father, and when the younger Bush returned to Houston, he was summoned to his father's office in the Houston Club building downtown.

Minutaglio relates:

The successful oilman stared at his son, the prodigal roustabout.... He showed his disappointment; he made George W. feel guilty. "You agreed to work a certain amount of time, and you didn't." George W. heard his father intone, "I just want you to know that you have disappointed me."

The first son fled the office. He had failed his father in some way. His mother was always more precise, more operatic [quoting Mrs. Bush]: "I would scream and carry on. The way George scolded was by silence or by saying, 'I'm disappointed in you.' And they would almost faint."

Two hours later George W.'s phone rang. It was his father. Enough time had passed. He wanted to know if George W. wanted to catch a Houston Astros game. But George W.'s father's disappointment that day in the Houston Club was something he remembered for years. "Those were the sternest words to me, even though he said them in a very calm way."

George W. later told a close friend. "He wasn't screaming and he wasn't angry, but he was disappointed. When you love a person and he loves you, those are the harshest words someone can utter."

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I can very much relate to this story. When I was growing up, if I failed my dad in some way, he wouldn't yell at me. If I didn't trim the bushes the way he expected me to trim them, he wouldn't lose his temper, he would simply look at them and say something like, "I guess I'll have to do them myself." To know that I grieved my dad who loved me was enough. I hated it whenever I failed him like that.

We are continuing our series on the Holy Spirit of God this morning and in the text we read earlier in Ephesians 4:25-32, we saw that a person who loves you and I very much, the Holy Spirit of God, is someone who can be grieved by what we do and what we don't do.

**Title:** How Do We Grieve the Holy Spirit of God?

(Prayer)

In our passage in Ephesians 4:25-32, Dr. John Niemela has pointed out that there is a pattern here.

**First**, Paul gives believers a **negative** (he tells them what **not** to do).

**Then**, he gives them a **positive** (he tells them what they **should** do).

**Finally**, he gives them a "why"—a **reason** for the positive and the negative.

**Example:**

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**Prohibition**  
(Negative)

**Command**  
(Positive)

**Motivation**  
(Reason)

Do not steal

Work hard

To have something to give

Do not speak  
corruptly

Speak what gives  
needed edification

To give grace to those  
you are speaking to

Those are just two of the six examples that I could give from this passage. So, what we have is a pattern here. Now, let's look at all of these verses in more detail.

Just prior to v. 25, Paul has told the Ephesians that they need to have minds that are renewed with the truth. Then, in v. 25, Paul proceeds to do just that. Look at v. 25:

**Ephesians 4:25**-----Therefore, putting away lying, “Let *each one* of you *speak truth with his neighbor*,” for we are members of one another.

A better paraphrase of the Greek here would be this:

Therefore, **having put away** the lie [= our old position in Adam], “Let *each one* of you *speak truth with his neighbor*,” for we are members of one another.

Since we put on [or, “were clothed with”] Christ the moment we got saved, should we live our lives as if we are still in Adam (unsaved)? No. We are to speak truth.

Notice Eph 4:14:

**Ephesians 4:14–15**-----...we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,<sup>15</sup> but, speaking the truth in love [that we are all members of the same body], may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ...

So Eph 4:25 isn't talking about being honest people (though we should be), it is talking about the fact that we are now in Christ, members of His body, and that we need to remind each other of that in good times and in bad.

Since you are **in** Christ, you have **put off** Adam, and you should lovingly remind each other of your unity in the body, because you are all members of the same body—the body of Christ!

So again, we have a negative, a positive, and a motivation.

Now look at vv. 26-27:

**Ephesians 4:26-27**-----<sup>26</sup> “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath,<sup>27</sup> nor give place to the devil.

<b>Prohibition</b> (Negative)	<b>Command</b> (Positive)	<b>Motivation</b> (Reason)
Do not sin by holding on to anger	Be angry temporarily (= righteous indignation)	Otherwise, you will give Satan an opportunity to ruin the unity of the body

Someone may anger you (and rightfully so), but if you **hang onto** that anger, and don't deal with it quickly, you might be used of Satan to damage the unity of the church.

Next is verse 28:

**Ephesians 4:28**-----<sup>28</sup> Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

<b>Prohibition</b> (Negative)	<b>Command</b> (Positive)	<b>Motivation</b> (Reason)
Do not steal	Work hard	To have something to give

This is clear. Don't steal, but work hard so you can bless others.

Verse 29:

**Ephesians 4:29**-----<sup>29</sup> Let no corrupt [rotten] word proceed out of your mouth, (When do we typically speak rotten words? When someone has wronged us.) but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

<b>Prohibition</b> (Negative)	<b>Command</b> (Positive)	<b>Motivation</b> (Reason)
Do not speak corruptly	Speak what gives needed edification	To give grace to those you are speaking to
(If someone has hurt you...	(Build up...don't tear down...)	(They need grace from you, not rotten words.)

Speaking the truth **in love**...

[We will come back to v. 30, jump down to v. 31...]

**Ephesians 4:31-32**-----<sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you

**Prohibition**

(Negative)

Do not vent destructively

**Command**

(Positive)

Be kind to and forgive one another

**Motivation**

(Reason)

God forgave us

How much does wrath, evil speaking and malice build up others?

We need to be kind and forgive because that is how God is towards us!

He is “kind to the unthankful and the evil”!

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**Ephesians 4:30**-----<sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Ok. So in light of all we just looked at, do you think you get an idea of how we grieve God the Holy Spirit?

We do it by mistreating rather than loving our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We grieve the Spirit by holding on to anger, stealing, speaking harshly, and venting destructively.

We **please** the Spirit by being angry temporarily, working hard so we can give to others, speaking what edifies, and being kind and forgiving.

In His prayer the night before He died, our Lord Jesus said:

**John 17:20-21, 23**-----I ... pray ... that they all may be **one** ... that they may be made perfect in **one**, and **that the world may know that You have sent Me**, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

When we are not one as Jesus prayed, this grieves the Holy Spirit.

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The great professor of preaching, Haddon Robinson told the following story:

**A man went** to an asylum for the criminally insane. He was a bit surprised to find that there were [only] three guards to take care of a hundred inmates. He said to one of the guards, "**Aren't you afraid that the inmates will unite, overcome you, and escape?**" The guard said, "**Lunatics never unite.**"

And Robinson closed by saying: “Christians **should** [unite]. If we don’t, we don’t know where our power is.” (Closing comments)