***Functioning Under the Divine Power System
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Please turn to Romans 8:1-4 in your Bibles. And I hope you do bring your Bibles with you. One of the telltale signs of the nature of any ministry is to walk into a church and see whether people have their Bibles. You can tell immediately what goes on in that place. No Bibles means little teaching so that you don't need your Bibles. Here, if you do not have a Bible, you will be at a great disadvantage in profiting from your time together with us in the Lord's Word. So, be sure that that is a practice that you make a habit in your life – to come with your Bibles. And teach your children to do that. Give them a Bible that they can handle.

The Mosaic Law, we have found, is an expression of God's character – His character, which is one of absolute righteousness. This character of absolute righteousness is also the standard for our human conduct here on earth as believers. This conduct, which is compatible with God's righteousness, however, does not come naturally to man because of his nature.

A few years ago, there was a song by the title of "Doing What Comes Naturally," and that is easy enough for human beings to do. But that which comes naturally is not to the glory and the praise and the honor of God, because that which comes naturally to us is from our sin nature, which is in contradiction of God's standard of righteous conduct.

So, man has to learn from the Bible what conduct is acceptable to God, including his mental attitude conduct. Furthermore, it's even more complex than that, because when a person knows the Bible, he knows what his conduct should be. He still must override the resistance of his sin nature to that divine standard. We are, by nature, rebels against what God wants us to do. We are resisters of God's righteous ways. It does not come naturally to us. And when we learn what they are, we still dig in our heels, and are not inclined to pursue it willingly.

The unbeliever, of course, is totally helpless in resisting the sin nature. But the born again believer is no longer under the sovereign authority of the sin nature. He does have a divine power system which enables him to obey God. And every believer, sooner or later, discovers, as we have found in the case of the apostle Paul, that you need that kind of a power system, because Christians find themselves in the position, as Paul did, where they are quite willing to be obedient to God's standard of righteousness. They want to know it, and they want to follow it. Yet, strangely enough, they find themselves not doing that. They find themselves compromising with God's righteousness, until they find themselves in such a frustrated, helpless position that they throw up their hands, and almost ready to give up.

So, the apostle Paul has taught us that not only does God have standards; not only are these not natural to us; and not only do we actually resist them, but even when we are believers and desire to do them, we find that there is something that is undermining our good intentions. We all are so acclimated to evil that we easily feel no guilt of conscience when we actually are sinning. Until we have refined our personal Christian character, we are not sensitive to that which is evil. We just take it in stride because people all around us are doing it.

Recently, we had a few kids who helped themselves to a Berean Academy teacher's supply of candy, which she uses in her classroom as awards. These kids were guilty of outright stealing – outright stealing while they were in church, while they were actually gathered in a youth session. They were gathering for a youth session to learn how to apply Christian principles to daily life. But it obviously made no connection to them that this candy on this desk, that this teacher had paid for with part of her own life which she had used earning the money to buy, belonged to her and not to them. When they walked in, they just help themselves, and removed it all, and never for one moment thought to themselves, "I'm a thief. I'm a downright ornery thief, and I'm even stealing part of somebody's life in the process," which is what you always do when you steal other people's belongings.

People easily do such evil. They do not recall in horror from it. They act as if God is not observing, and in fact, that He doesn't even exist. Now human viewpoint hastens to justify our evil actions such as that by saying that the teacher should have locked up the candy jar and prevented the temptation. You hear this on television: "Don't leave the keys in your car, so that some good, innocent boy will be tempted to steal your car." Well, the reason the little rat steals your car is because he is not a good, innocent, little boy, but that he has a sin nature that wants to violate God's standard of righteousness. And he has been reared with the attitude that if he wants it, and it is available, take it. It is irrelevant whose it is, and just use a euphemism for your stealing and thievery: call it borrowing or something else, so that it doesn't sound bad.

It is amazing how many Christian families actually rear their children in a context of viewpoint where the kids don't mind helping themselves to things that do not belong to them, and to which they have not received the permission of the owner to take. And the reason the kids learn that is because they've seen their parents do that, in one sneaky, justifying way or another.

Our little candy thieves would not dream of equating themselves to the thieves who have periodically broken into our campus properties and stolen from others what they have purchased with parts of their lives. And yet they are in exactly the same loathsome category.

So, holiness is not a trait that comes naturally to us. And even when we are surrounded by Christian influences and viewpoints, the fact that we do not live in a society where holiness is esteemed, it is easy for us to become acclimated to a lower standard of conduct that is unbecoming a member of the royal family of God. It behooves us all, indeed, to be aware of the fact that our readiness to violate God's laws, and to justify our evil-doing, because it's what everyone else is doing, is condemned by the Word of God. We are to rise to a higher standard now.

Romans 8:4, therefore, is good news indeed to the sincere Christian who wants to enjoy God's blessing on earth and His rewards in eternity. Blessings on earth and rewards in eternity are the other products of godly living on this earth. Romans 8:4 says that: "The righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The divine standard of God's right conduct, such as expressed in the moral code of the Mosaic Law, can indeed be attained by a Christian in the church age, and can be observed in all of its distinct, refined details. God has provided us with a power system which consists first of Bible doctrine, and secondly of the indwelling Holy Spirit, whereby a believer may achieve holiness. The humanity of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, first used this divine power system: the combination of doctrine and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. He tested it on earth, and He demonstrated very clearly the effectiveness of this system in godly living.

**The Love Power System**

The system that God has provided for us functions as an expression of love – love which is produced by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. So, we've said that we can call this the love system. This is the *real* love power system. You hear a lot of talk about that sort of thing among Christians, but most of them are comparatively ignorant of the real love power system. This Holy Spirit love, when expressed toward God and man fulfills, the Scripture says, God's standard of righteousness in our experience. It fulfills all the moral requirements of the Law of God.

**Personal Integrity**

The love of the divine power system, furthermore, produces spiritual maturity in the believer that takes them to the mountain peak of super grace living. This love of God produced in the Christian is expressed as his personal integrity in a variety of ways. If the kids who stole the candy from the academy teacher, really had the quality of love built in by the Holy Spirit through their positive volition to the Word of God functioning in their soul, they would have had personal integrity. Their personal integrity would have precluded putting their hand into that jar, and helping themselves. Furthermore, their personal integrity, were it at the proper level, having been alerted to what they have done, would now say, "I must now follow the scriptural order of restoring what I took. And, indeed, I could use the Old Testament pattern as my example, for they did not put people in prison. Instead they put them into indentured service, and you worked and paid back what you stole, plus 20%, or sometimes either other percentages. You accounted for what you did.

So, if you have love that is built-in, not by this emotional jag that the sin nature can spew up, but a real quality of Christian love, that only God the Holy Spirit can develop in your soul through the Word of God, then you will have personal integrity. It just be second nature to you. And the result will be the kind of holiness of living that pleases you, man, and God.

**God the Holy Spirit**

So, today, let's take a look at functioning in the divine power system. We do have to remind ourselves of a few things about the person of God the Holy Spirit, since He is the key personality in this power system.

**He Indwells Every Church-Age Believer**

First of all, we want to remind ourselves that God the Holy Spirit permanently indwells every church believer from the point of salvation. When you receive Christ as your personal Savior, God the Holy Spirit moves into your body as His temple. In John 14:16-17, therefore, we read, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter (that is, God the Holy Spirit), that He may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth (that is, God the Holy Spirit), whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him, but you know Him, for He dwells with you, and shall be in you."

This truth is further reinforced concerning the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 3:16, where Paul explains it a little further. He says, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you. God does not grow in buildings of stone and brick and wood and mortar. He dwells in the bodies of believers."

In 1 Corinthians 6:19, furthermore, Paul says, "What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have of God, and you are not your own?"

Then, in verse 20, he says, "Therefore, you should live accordingly, in a way that glorifies God." And that's what we're talking about – a power system that enables us to glorify God – we who are His living temple.

We do want to also remind ourselves, concerning the Holy Spirit, that He specifically indwells the members of the royal family of God in order to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. In John 16:12, this is pointed out to us. The Lord Jesus says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them (speaking to His disciples on the eve of His departure from them). Nevertheless, when He, the Spirit of Truth (that is, God the Holy Spirit) is come, He will guide you into all truth, for He shall not speak from Himself. But whatever He shall He hear, that shall He speak. And He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you."

Now that verse tells us that God the Holy Spirit, who indwells us, is our line of communication with the living God. If you're ever going to know anything from God, you're only going to know it through God the Holy Spirit. You are not going to know it through any other means or any other way. You will know it only through what God the Holy Spirit teaches you. And what He teaches you will be that which he receives from the Lord Jesus Christ. And what He teaches you, and leads you to do, will be that which glorifies Christ.

So, when you stick your hand into somebody else's candy jar, and steal from them, because they are not there to keep you from doing it, you may be sure that you are not glorifying Christ, and, therefore, you may be sure that God the Holy Spirit did not lead you into that room and say, "Here, help yourself. Walk off with it." Glorifying Christ is the point of the lifestyle that we have been called to.

**The Fruit of the Spirit**

The Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ, actually, by producing, then, the character of Christ in the believer, and leading that believer into divine good production in his service. In Galatians 5:22-23, we have that specific character of Christ described. It is called "the Fruit of the Spirit," and only He can produce it in the believer. That fruit has nine segments. It is not "the Fruits (plural) of the Spirit." It is "the Fruit, and it has nine segments to it: Love, which is a codeword that covers all the rest, really, because it's part of this love system that produces this fruit of the spirit: love; joy; peace; longsuffering; gentleness; goodness; faith; meekness; and, self-control. Now we could spend quite a bit of time on analyzing each of these, and they are astounding contributions to human personal conduct.

We also may add John 15:8, where the Lord says, "In this is My Father glorified – that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples." So, God the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ through us, first by creating the character of Christ in us; and, secondly, by enabling us to serve with divine good production. So, we're not cranking out the refuse of human good, but we are producing that which God the Holy Spirit produces through us, and for which then we can be rewarded.

**Eternal Fellowship and Temporal Fellowship**

At any point in time, a believer in the church age lives under the control of his sin nature or under the control of the indwelling Holy Spirit. A Christian may be carnal, or he may be spiritual. I don't want to take too much time on this. You've seen this many times, but we'll have a quick review. Here is the point of salvation, and we can think of this as two concentric circles. The outer circle represents eternal fellowship. The inner circle represents fellowship in time – temporal fellowship. When you saved, you enter into the inner circle and you are not only saved, but you are also a spiritual Christian, because in this inner circle, God the Holy Spirit is the dominant personality who is controlling your life. When you sin, you step out of that inner circle. You, of course, do not step out of the eternal fellowship. You do not lose your salvation. But you have now entered the area where the Bible calls you a carnal Christian, and the dominant feature controlling there is the old sin nature. It's just as simple as that. Nothing happens out there. Everything is disaster when you're out in the old sin nature-dominated condition.

When you violate the moral code of God (when you sin), and when you are willfully rebellious in one way or another against the leadings to the Lord, that's what you do. You step out of the inner circle. You step out of maximum blessing, and so on. Now, to get back in takes the confession of the sin that took you out, and you return to the status of fellowship. The Bible also Paul that being "filled with the Holy Spirit."

Now, the Christians, at any point in time, is either in this inner circle or he is out of that inner circle. He does not pop in and out of his salvation, but he does pop in and out of his status of spirituality or carnality. 1 Corinthians 3:1 points out this contrast, where the apostle Paul says, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual (that is, as people who are in the inner circle), but as unto carnal (people who are in the outer circle), even as unto babes in Christ." That is because when you hang around in the outer circle, you are an immature Christian. You don't go anyplace. You don't mature. Furthermore, even if you have developed spiritual maturity while residing in the inner circle, and you step out, and the more time you spend outside, the more time you have to start degenerating spiritually to backsliding – to reverting back to what you once were before God's divine viewpoint replaced your human viewpoint. So, reversionism brings you back down from spiritual maturity.

These two conditions are absolute; that is, either God the Holy Spirit is running your life; or, the sin nature is running your life. It is not a coalition government. The two do that cooperate. It is either one or the other. And as we have been reading in the book of Romans, we have found it very clear that it is either the sin nature or it is God the Holy Spirit – one or the other, and each of them have distinct consequences.

Now this is what we've precisely been saying in Romans 8:2-4, which have indicated to us that there is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, controlled by the Holy Spirit. There is also the law of sin and death controlled by the sin nature, and the two are totally distinct. This same contrast of the mutually exclusive controls is stated in Romans 8:5-6, where Paul says, "Or they that are after the flesh (the sin nature) do mind the things of the sin nature. But they are after the Spirit (the Holy Spirit), the things of the Spirit" – one or the other. You don't do partially both: "For to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life and peace."

A spiritual Christian is in temporal fellowship with his Heavenly Father. A carnal Christian is not. . . . He is in effect, while being born again, in a position of being dead.

**The Secular Humanism of the World**

A believer actually faces a threefold enticement to sin. There are three directions from which sin hits us to take it out of the inner circle. One is the world system that Satan has created, with all of its glamor, and with all of its elitism, and with all of its sophistication, as it's expressed in social matters; in politics; in education; in business; in religion; and, in every aspect of life. There is a system that Satan has put together which excludes God. That's the key. There is no God; no biblical controls; and, no divine viewpoint principles to guide, and man is at the center. We call that secular humanism. This system is very attractive.

In 1 Timothy 4:10, you can read about a man named Demas who was once on Paul's evangelistic team, who got entrapped by the world system, and he stepped out of the inner circle, into the sin of that system.

**Our Sin Natures**

The second area of enticement is from our sin natures themselves. In 2 Samuel 11:1-27, you can read about King David, and how the lust patterns of the sin nature eventuated in the act of adultery with Bathsheba.

**The Devil**

The third enticement to step out of the inner circle is from the devil. And in Job 1:6 through Job 2:10, you can read how the godly man Job was put under the pressure of the devil to sin.

Now the Christian who yields to these enticements becomes a carnal believer, and we say that he has, therefore, broken his walk with the Heavenly Father, and he is out of fellowship. This is what 1 John 1:6-7 tell us: "If we say that we have fellowship with Him (with God, our Heavenly Father), and we walk in darkness (that is, we walk in sin or human good), we lie, and we do not the truth. But if we walk in the light (that is, in divine viewpoint) as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." So, when we do sin, it has already been paid for. And when we walk in the Word of God (in the light of the Word of God), then we are in fellowship with God our Father. And then we are in a position where we can be blessed and prospered.

In this condition of carnality, all Christian service is done by human good (by mere human capacities), and it's guided by the old sin nature. No eternal rewards are earned when you function in carnality. The principle of 1 Corinthians 3:15 is at that point, in effect, where relative to rewards, you suffer loss.

Make no mistake about it. All of the things that you do under the control of God the Holy Spirit, in terms of Christian service, you can do in form, under the control of the sin nature. Huge amounts of so-called Christian service within the Christian community are nothing but human efforts; human production; human capacity; and, the sin nature in operation. The carnal Christian has no Holy Spirit guidance; his prayer is ineffective; and, his understanding of doctrine is inhibited. If a person dies as a carnal Christian, he does go to heaven, though it has a very grave impact on his personal rewards.

**Confession of Sins**

Now the return to fellowship with the Heavenly Father is by means of repentance and of confession to the Father of the specific sin. And all of you are well acquainted with the key verse that explains that concept to us, which every Christian should learn immediately upon the point of his salvation. It is 1 John 1:9, which says that: "If we confess our sins (and the Greek word 'confess' means that if you name them – you admit them), He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." The word "faithful" means that God will forgive you every time you confess the sin, even if you confess it 3,000 times, because you've been guilty of the same thing: "And He is just to forgive it," because He is not just brushing it aside and forgetting it. Every time you sin, it has cost Him. It was covered by the death of His Son. So, He has a just ground upon which to restore you to His fellowship: "And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" is a phrase of great importance, because it covers the ground of all those things you and I may not even be aware of, or that we have forgotten. If you take care of the sins you know about, God says, "I'll include those that you are unaware of, or that you have permitted to slip from your memory."

So, confession of our evil is the way to get back into the inner circle, and thus to once more restore yourself to the guiding authority of God the Holy Spirit.

This is exactly the system that the Lord Jesus used in His humanity. The only difference was that He began in the inner circle of fellowship with God the Holy Spirit. The Bible, as we have read, tells us that the Spirit was given to Him without measure. He was completely under the control of the Holy Spirit, and He never stepped out of it. He always stayed in it. He was always obedient to the Word of God. He was always in positive response to God the Holy Spirit. Therefore, His conduct; His walk; and, His lifestyle was always compatible with the mind of His Heavenly Father.

So, He could say, "I do always the things that please My Father." Now that is a great thing for Him to be able to say, but remember that He said that as a human being – not as God. And He could only say it as a human being because He had a power system that He functioned under that enabled Him to do it. That is the same power system that has been provided for you and me.

**David's Confession**

Now, the reason we make our confession to our Heavenly Father is because basically all sin is against Him. This is very clearly pointed out to us in Psalm 51:4, where David is reviewing his year of resistance against admitting that what he did with Bathsheba was evil; was wrong; and, was counter to the moral code of God. And finally, he has had enough of his personal misery, and finally enough of the discipline that God is bringing upon him. And the discipline in his case did not stop. Unfortunately, there were subsequent disciplines which included the death of his son Absalom, and several other things that then happened that were further consequences of the divine discipline for the act and for his resistance to admitting the evil. Finally, when he comes to saying, "I've had enough, and I'm going to make my confession, in Psalm 51:4, we read, "Against You, and You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight:" "Against You, and you only, have I sinned."

Well, you could say, "Well, that certainly doesn't seem to be true. Certainly, he sinned against Bathsheba. He sinned against her husband Uriah. And he sinned against the nation of Israel. He sinned against all the people that were under his influence and his esteem. There was a widespread circle of effect. But when it came to confession, and getting squared away, ultimately and basically, it was against God that the sin was perpetrated. Therefore, the confession had to be made to God.

**Abraham and Abimelech**

You have another example of that principle is in Genesis 20:1-7. In this passage, you have Abraham, who comes to a place called Gerar, which has as its king, a man named Abimelech. Now Abraham was married to Sarah, and Sarah was one of the all-time great beauties of the ancient world. And when he got to this place, Abraham was a nobody. He was just a comparative, common, ordinary man without any particular force or power. But Abimelech, as a king, had great power. One of the powers that the king had was to take beautiful women into his harem upon his choice, and upon his desire.

So, Abraham, thinking this over, said to Sarah, "Oh, we might be in trouble. If I say you're my wife, if Abimelech wants you in his harem, he'll kill me." So, he decides to say that Sarah was his sister. Of course, he was playing a little sneaky, wicked stuff here because she was his half-sister. So, he was compromising in his mind, and rationalizing: "I'm not really telling a lie." But he didn't say specifically that she's my half-sister and my wife. So, he was lying.

So, we read, beginning at verse 2: "Abraham said of Sarah, his wife: 'She is my sister. And Abimelech, King of Gerar, . . . sure enough, took Sarah. He said, "This is the girl I've been waiting for all my life. She is what I need to finish off my harem." But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, 'Behold, you are a dead man, for the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife.'"

Now that's a kind of a shocking dream – to wake up, and God is standing there and pointing His finger at you and saying, "Fells, you're a dead man." And then to say, "Why?"

Verse 4 says, "But Abimelech had not come near." There had been no sexual relations: "And he said, 'Lord, will you slay also a righteous nation? Did he (that is, Abraham) not say unto me, 'She is my sister? And she herself even said, 'He is my brother.''" Sarah was part of the collusion. She told him, "This is my brother. This is my brother Abraham. I love him. He's a great fellow: "In the integrity of my heart and the innocency of my hands I have done this." Abimelech rightly argued: "I was acting in ignorance. I did not deliberately sin."

"And God said unto him in the dream, 'Yea, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld your from sinning against Me. Therefore, I did not allow you to touch her.'"

Now, Abimelech would have been guilty of sin, even not meaning to sin, even doing this innocently – even doing this as a result of false information which has been given to him. But it would have been sin nevertheless. But God said, "Because I knew you were acting in integrity, I overrode the circumstances, and I did not permit you to consummate the sin *against Me*. Those are critical words. Who is sin against? Sarah? Abraham? No, it is against God. And that is a very important concept for you to understand. There are some people who want you to run around seeing how many people you can confess your sins to, and ask for their forgiveness, when you think you have offended them. And, indeed, the Bible does call upon us, when people have an issue with us, where perhaps we have injured them in some way, that we make things right. But if you want your restoration of fellowship with God your Heavenly Father, then your confession is to Him. That's what counts – not what you do to people. Confession made to the Heavenly Father of an evil immediately restores you to temporal fellowship, and thus to a status of spirituality, and thus into the inner circle of blessing. The spiritual Christian is then able to produce divine good in his Christian service; to pray effectively; to learn doctrine; and, thus to be storing treasures in heaven.

**Functioning under the Divine Power System**

Now that brings us to the critical question. What are the requirements for functioning under the divine power system that God the Father provided for the humanity of His Son, and which is now available to us? The Bible gives us three specific directions to put this system into operation, and for us to be able to function under it. Two of them are negative prohibitions, and one is a positive direction.

1. **Do not Quench the Spirit**

We begin with the first negative, which is found in 1 Thessalonians 5:19, which says simply: "Do not quench Spirit." The word "quench" looks like this in Greek: "sbennumi." "Sbennumi" means "to neutralize something." It is, in the Greek language, in the present tense, and it has a negative with it, so that we are constantly to avoid doing this. We are constantly to avoid neutralizing the Holy Spirit. This is in the active voice, which indicates that you yourself as a Christian have it at your disposal, at the effect of your own will, to neutralize Him. Furthermore, it is in the imperative mood, which tells us that it is a divine command. You and I are absolutely commanded by God: "Don't neutralize the Holy Spirit in your life."

Now specifically, the meaning of this word "sbennumi" (the meaning of this word "quench" can be illustrated from a few Scriptures where it is used. Turn to Matthew 12:20: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall be not quench:" "A smoking wick shall he not quench, till he sent for justice unto victory. So, there you have the picture of a smoldering wick snuffed out. That is the same word.

In Matthew 25:8 uses the word "sbennumi:" "And the foolish (that is, the foolish virgin) said onto the wise, 'Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out:" "Our lamps are 'sbennumi.'" Then are extinguished. The effects of the light are going to be removed.

In Mark 9:48, this word is used again: "Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. Here is a reference to hell: "Where the worm does not die (that is, physically you are not destroyed), and the fire is not put out." So, here you have this word used in the terms of putting out a fire.

In the epistle of Ephesians 6:16, this word is used. We read, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." Here are the flaming arrows that Satan shoots against the believer, and we will be able to extinguish those flaming arrows.

We have one more in Hebrews 11:34. We read about the suffering of believers: "Who quenched the violence of fire;" that is, they put out the flames of torture. And you have examples of that, of course, in the book of Daniel. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into the flaming furnace, and, in effect, the fire did not touch them. They, in effect, neutralized the fire that was around them, so that it didn't even put the smell of smoke upon their clothing.

So, the command not to quench the Holy Spirit is a command not to put aside His guidance by negative volition to the Word of God; that is, not to neutralize the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your life. This does not involve moral issues. It is not telling you not to steal; not to lie; and, so on. It is not moral issues. It is telling you not to reject divine viewpoint enlightenment. The sin nature tells you, "Don't study the Bible. You don't have to go to church morning and evening on Sunday to learn the contents of Scripture. That's not important. What God wants is something out of you, entirely different. He wants this and this and this. You don't need the Word of God. As a matter of fact, the Bible isn't all that clear and specific, such that you can understand it, and say, 'This is how it applies' in terms of this situation of life and that situation, and this political matter, and this national matter. The Bible is not that specific." Now that's sin nature telling you to quench the divine viewpoint enlightenment that could be yours.

From the strong side of the sin nature also comes something, when you quench the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and go it on your own – you then fall into human good production instead of divine good production of the Holy Spirit. So, when you quench the Holy Spirit, you also ensure that you will no longer be producing the works of God. The Christian out of temporal fellowship, and he's in the status of carnality. Now the human good that you will be producing under that status of carnality can be very, very impressive. So, the carnal Christian actually compliments himself on how God is using him. So, he remains in his carnality. He doesn't even have the sensitiveness to know that he has neutralized the Spirit of God in his life.

Vast numbers of church people are going around, complimenting each other, like a mutual admiration society – smiling at each other, and telling each other how much they love each other, and they're all excited over one another. And they are producing human good garbage up to their eyeballs. And they are oblivious that they have resisted the knowledge of the doctrines of Scripture, so that they do not have the power system working in their lives, producing the love of God that produces the moral, personal, mature character that enables them to have the maturity of integrity, and to be able really to love God with that mental attitude capacity that only God the Holy Spirit can give you.

Quenching, in short, means saying, "No" to the guidance of the Spirit of God in your life, and consequently, to the use of your spiritual gifts. Instead of your spiritual gifts being used for divine good, they are used for human good production, and everything is lost.

1. **Do not Grieve the Holy Spirit**

The second negative is found in Ephesians 4:30: "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you are sealed until the day of redemption." The word "grieve" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "lupeo." This word means "to cause distress or pain." It is in the present tense, and it has a negative, so you are never to do this. It is active. You as a Christian are to take the steps to avoid doing this. Furthermore, it's another divine command. God is not asking you. He's telling you not to grieve the Holy Spirit.

Again, looking at a few verses in the Bible, not to cause the Holy Spirit distress and pain is illustrated in other places where this word is used. Matthew 14:9: "And the king was sorry, nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them who sat at the dining with him, he commanded it to be given to her." Here, (the daughter of Herodias) danced, and she wanted the head of John the Baptist. We find that Herod was "lupeo." He was sorry. He was grieved. He was distressed over the promise he had made.

In Mark 10:22, this word is used again in relation to the rich young ruler: "And he (the rich young ruler) was said at that saying." Jesus had told him to get rid of his money, and to store his treasures in heaven by investing that money in divine good production: "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." It broke him up to think of giving up all of his great wealth in order to serve the Lord. He just couldn't get himself to do that, and it caused him great pain to think of doing that.

In John 21:17, Peter was hurt by the Lord's question: "And He said unto him the third time, 'Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?' Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, 'Do you love me?'" Here Peter is "lupeo." He was hurt. He was wounded.

In Romans 14:15, this word is used: "But if your brother be grieved with your food, you do not walk in love. Do not destroy him with your food, for whom Christ died." Here is someone distressing a fellow believer by eating foods like pig meat that may offend him. So, the Bible says, "He's weak in the faith. Don't do it. Forget the ham and cheese sandwich. Go to hamburger."

In 2 Corinthians 2:2, we have this word used again: "For if I make you sorry, who is he then that makes me glad, but the same who is made sorry by me." Here is someone causing pain to carnal Christians.

In 2 Corinthians 2:5: "But if any has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but in part that I may not burden you all." Here someone has caused grief by pain.

So, grieving the Holy Spirit is living in sin, and refusing to repent. That's how you grieve the Holy Spirit. You refuse to confess. This involves moral issues like stealing; lying; murder; illicit sex; coveting; and, foul language. Here you are doing what is specifically forbidden in the Word of God, and you are producing sins from the weak side of your sin nature, and you are refusing to repent and confess. Now that grieves the Holy Spirit. The Christian chooses to do the evil of the sin nature instead of the righteousness of the Holy Spirit. So, then he is out of temporal fellowship, and in carnality.

Now here you have two great negative prohibitions – two great negative statements in Scripture for you to execute the power system. Do not quench the Holy Spirit by saying "No" to His enlightenment and guidance. Do not grieve Him by living in willful sin.

Then we come to the dramatic, positive declaration that nails it all down. And that one we shall begin with next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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