GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." —EPHESIANS 4:30

It is possible to be sealed by the Holy Spirit, but to have allowed things in our lives to grieve Him and continue to grieve Him. To grieve is to experience a deep, intense sorrow or mourning. Grief is a unique combination of both positive and negative emotions. Anger and disappointment are involved, but also love and gratitude. Love mingled with anger is grief. We read in Genesis 6:6, "The LORD was grieved that he had made man on earth, and his heart was filled with pain." God is not above emotions. This is a revelation of Himself. He grieves and His heart is pained.

What causes God to be grieved? In Ephesians 4:26-27, Paul says, "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." Anger leads us into sin because it becomes bitterness, and bitterness is anger that has been pushed down and poisoned our hearts. When it comes to the things that anger God, it may also grieve the Holy Spirit if they do not anger us. All things in God are a virtue, including anger. That does not mean there is something wrong with God, but there is something wrong with us if we do not have that righteous anger over the things that anger God, such as injustice, oppression, greed and dishonesty.

Paul also lists rage, slander, brawling and malice as grieving the Holy Spirit (4:31). There is also a falsehood where Paul tells us to put off our old self, which is being corrupted by deceitful desires. If we are not honest with others, we are not honest with ourselves. When we hide behind falsehood, it is because we lack the humility and/or courage to be honest. Isaiah 28:15 says, "We have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place." In this chapter, Isaiah reveals it is the coming of God Himself, washing like a flood in our lives that will wash out the falsehood and lies.

If we grieve the Holy Spirit His presence in us becomes clouded, His power diminished and His blessing absent. Consequently, our Christian lives are not experiential, but dull and dry. Are we grieving the Holy Spirit? Is there a barrier that prevents Him from working to the fullest measure in us? If our Christian lives are not moving forward and exciting us, then we need to confess what we know in our hearts is grieving the Holy Spirit. Let us pray that in the strength of Christ, we can banish the barriers, allowing the Holy Spirit complete liberty to do all that He would do in our lives.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I pray for your strength to overcome the barriers that may be grieving the Holy Spirit in my life. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: In what way(s) could I be grieving the Holy Spirit?