

Series: **Confident Hope**  
Today's Title: **"Spiritual Suffocation"**

May 15, 2022 – 1 Thessalonians 5:19

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**Objective:** To help Christians avoid revenge and seek to love all others and do good to others.

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I want to say thank-you to Pastor Scott for filling in last Sunday in my absence.

And for all the others - Pastor Joseph, the worship team, tech team, and all who had a part in last week's service on Mother's Day - and the Child Dedication - thank you!

The reason Kim and I weren't here was our daughter, Jessica Cajero, graduated from the College of Nursing at NAU. So, we spent last weekend in Flagstaff, celebrating all her hard work over the past 5 years - which culminated in her taking part in the graduation ceremony, walking across the stage, and receiving her diploma.

*Next*, she has to take the N-CLEX exam - the state licensing exam for nurses - and after passing that she will begin working at Banner-UMC - in the Pediatric ICU.

We are very, very proud of her!

**Turn to 1 Thessalonians 5:19 - p. 988**

***Opening prayer***

Before we can understand today's verse, we need to understand the person, ministry, and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

So, allow me to walk us through a primer on the Holy Spirit.

**The Holy Spirit is God.**

There is a great deal of confusion - or ignorance - in many churches regarding the Holy Spirit.

But it's vitally important for every follower of Christ to understand what the Bible reveals about the Holy Spirit.

He is not a lesser part of God than the Father or the Son. He is fully God...full deity.

**1. By Names we see in the Bible**

In the Bible, He is called "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts 16:7) and "the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

**2. He has divine attributes.**

He is omniscient (all-knowing) - Isaiah 40:13; 1 Cor. 2:12.

He is omnipresent (all-present) - Psalm 139:7.

He is omnipotent (all-powerful) - Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30.

**3. He did things only God can do.**

He was the cause of the Virgin Birth - Luke 1:35.

He was the Agent who gave the inspired Scriptures - 2 Peter 1:21.

He was involved in the creation of the world - Genesis 1:2.

These 3 areas - His names / divine attributes / divine acts - reveal that the Holy Spirit is God - a member of the Triune Godhead.

**The Holy Spirit is a person.**

The Holy Spirit is not an 'it'.

He is not a generic power - an impersonal force for good.

*John 14:16-18, 26 - Notice all the personal pronouns Jesus uses in referring to the H.S.*

“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees **Him** nor knows **Him**. You know **Him**, for **He** dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”

vs. 26 - “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He** will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

The Holy Spirit is a person - just like the other members of the Godhead.

The Father is a person.

The Son is a person.

The Spirit is a person.

One God - three persons.

**The Holy Spirit has multiple ministries in the world.**

The Spirit works in many ways.

This is a partial list of the Spirit's work, but these are the primary areas of His present work.

He guides believers.

**Acts 8:29**

And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot."

**Acts 10:19-20**

And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

The guidance of the Spirit can be a spiritual guidance in decisions - discernment - but He will also guide us through prompting - a sense of doing or not doing something - saying or not saying something.

He teaches believers the truth of Christ.

**John 14:26**

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."

The Holy Spirit will bring to your mind the truth of Christ that you read and study in Scripture - hear in sermons - hear in songs we sing, etc.

He convicts unbelievers of their sin.

**John 16:8**

"And when He (*the Holy Spirit*) comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me..."

The Spirit of God will use believers and the Bible to convict the world of its sin.

These are only a few areas of the Spirit's work.

Other areas are:

He was involved in the work of creation...

He inspired the human writers of Scripture...

He helps us understand the Scriptures (Illumination)...

His work of regeneration...

He works to sanctify believers in their walk...

He seals believers in Christ...

He unites believers...

He gives spiritual gifts to believers...

He works to affirm the Scriptures...

He helps us pray...

He strengthens us...

Leads us...

He gives hope...

He delivers us from sin...and from Satan...

He empowers our Gospel witness...

He glorifies Christ...

He fills believers...

He commissions believers for ministry...

He works to resolve conflict between believers...

He helps us serve God and serve one another...

He gives us courage.

It's obvious that the Holy Spirit has an extensive ministry.

The Bible is clear that...

The Holy Spirit is God...

He is a person...

He has multiple ministries in the world.

But I believe, in the Church Age, His primary ministry is:

**The Holy Spirit indwells believers.**

This may be a new concept to some of you.

The Spirit of God worked in a different way in the O.T.

In the O.T., the Spirit of God indwelt certain people - for a limited time - usually for a specific task.

**Judges 15:14**

“When he (*Samson*) came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him. Then the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him...”

**1 Chronicles 12:18**

“Then the Spirit clothed Amasai, chief of the thirty...”

But God promised He would do something different in the future.

The difference would be that His Spirit would indwell all who followed Him.

**Ezekiel 36:26**

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you.”

Jesus taught that the Spirit of God would indwell those who came to Him - those who believe in Him.

**John 7:37-39**

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of His heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

Now this He said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

**John 14:16-17** - *Jesus is speaking*

"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

The idea of the Spirit of God - the Holy Spirit indwelling each Christian is a clear teaching in the Bible.

At the moment of faith - the moment of conversion - the believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

**1 John 4:15**

"Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God."

(See also: Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 1:12; 2 Corinthians 5:5)

When you put your faith in Jesus as your Savior - to be forgiven of your sins by His sacrifice on the cross - at that very moment, the Spirit of God indwells you.

In describing this amazing reality, the Apostle Paul said *'we are in Christ - and Christ is in us...'*

**There is no such thing as a Christian who does not have the Spirit of God in them.**

If you are a Christian - then you have the Spirit of God indwelling your person.

**Romans 8:9**

"You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him."

"belong to Him" is a N.T. phrase that refers to someone who is a Christian - a believer - a follower of Jesus.

**On the flip side**, this verse makes it clear - if a person does not have the Spirit of Christ (God) in them, then they are not a Christian - they do "not belong to Him".

The Apostle Paul wrote the Corinthian church on this topic:

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?

You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.

So glorify God in your body."

Every believer - every person who has put their faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins - is sacred - they are "a temple of the Holy Spirit *within you...*".



Therefore, we are God's possession - because His Spirit has taken up residence within us.

This has significant implications for the believer.

**1 Cor. 6:20** - “So glorify God in your body.”

**2 Timothy 1:14**

“By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”

Christian...be faithful with the Word of God - with the Gospel message!

**Galatians 4:6**

And because we are His children, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.”

Christian, live your life knowing that you have an intimate connection with the Father!

Because the Spirit of God indwells the believer, the believer is called to yield to the Spirit's leading.

To submit to the Spirit's guidance in their life.

This is where much of our Christian struggle - our spiritual warfare is fought - within ourselves!!!

My flesh doesn't want to follow the Spirit's leading, and my flesh wants to ignore the truth the Spirit brings to my mind. My flesh resists the Spirit because it wants to live for itself - without any competition!!

So, I have a choice...You have a choice.

Are we going to follow the Spirit's leading in our life?

**Or...**

Are we going to ignore the Spirit's leading and ministry in our life?

**The Holy Spirit can be hurt by us.**

I admit - this point is mostly hyperbole - but there is some truth to it.

This point is a paradox - a theological mystery.

When we study the Bible to find out who God is, what He is, and what He is like (Theology), one of the things we discover is that God is self-existing.

Theologically, this is also referred to as His *aseity*.

Paul told the men of Athens...

**Acts 17:24-25**

"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything."

This attribute of God tells us that God doesn't need anything outside of Himself.

He is self-existing - He was not created - He exists in Himself for all eternity - and He does not need anything or anyone outside of Himself for His existence or joy.

Another attribute of God that some theologians see in the Bible is that God is *impassable*.

This means that God does not have emotions - at least not in the same way as humans have emotions.

He is not subject to His emotions - and He does not have sinful emotions or feelings.

**But** the Bible uses a great deal of language that speaks of God's emotions and feelings.

**We call this an anthropomorphism:** Using human terms and characteristics to describe God.

If this is true - if God is *impassable* - if He doesn't have feelings or emotions, then the only way to explain certain passages is that even though God is *impassable*, He has chosen, in some cases, to have / exhibit feelings and emotions in some situations. (Sermon by Alistair Begg:

<https://www.truthforlife.org/resources/sermon/do-not-grieve-the-holy-spirit/>)

So, when Paul writes in **Ephesians 4:30**:

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

We can say that God, in some instances, has chosen to have feelings and emotions.

To be grieved is an emotion of sorrow.

***Even though God is infinite***, He has chosen to be personal in His relationship with us.

***Even though He is transcendent*** above all things - even though He is self-existing, He has chosen to be imminent among us - to be close enough to us to be grieved by our decisions - our attitudes - our actions.

***In the Incarnation***, Jesus took on flesh, and willingly took on the weaknesses of our humanity.

He was tired, thirsty, sleepy, hungry, etc.

He was sad, He laughed and cried.

In the incarnation the God-Man experienced the full range of non-sinful human emotions and feelings.

Scripture indicates that God the Spirit also experiences certain feelings based on our obedience or disobedience.

**This does not put God at our mercy.**

**He is not dependent on our actions for His existence of joy.**

But in some way our life of obedience or disobedience brings the Spirit of God joy or grief.

We can blaspheme the Spirit...

Lie to the Spirit...

Resist the Spirit...

Grieve the Spirit...

Insult the Spirit.

If / When we do these things, it 'hurts' God.

In an anthropomorphic sense, it hurts God - it hurts His feelings - stomps on His emotions.

**We can limit or ignore the Holy Spirit.**

Now that we have a basic understanding of the Holy Spirit, let's look at our verse today.

“Do not quench the Spirit.”

Synonym for ‘quench’ are suffocate - douse - blow out - extinguish. Paul says don’t do these things to the Spirit’s work in your life.

Paul has given a long list of commands - present imperative verbs in the Greek.

Starting in vs. 13, he has strung a long list of commands.

Here in vs. 19 the command is “Do not quench the Spirit.”

“quench” means do not suppress, extinguish, or suffocate.

Paul is saying, *‘Don’t do anything that will suppress the work of the Spirit -in your life - or the life of another.’*

So, the question for us is: How do we quench the Spirit?

What kind of things suffocate the Spirit’s work?

How is the Holy Spirit’s work suppressed by our attitudes or actions?

### ***Apply it...***

What are some common ways Christians will “quench” or suffocate the Spirit’s work in their life?

1. By our disinterest in God’s Word.

Do you read the Bible during the week?

Do you have a daily devotional time in God’s Word?

Are you interested in learning more about God's Word - in learning about theology / doctrine?

Learning about the history of Israel?

Learning about the beginning of the Church?

Do the things of God interest you other than on Sunday mornings - or maybe you're 'forced' or 'guilted' to be here on Sunday mornings.

One of the primary ways you can suffocate the Spirit's work in your life is by a disinterest in God's Word.

**Solution**: Cultivate / protect your interest in God's Word. Pray that He would give you a thirst for His Word.

**Psalm 19:7-8**

"The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes..."

**2 Timothy 3:16**

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness..."

2. By our disobedience to God's Word.

Sin will suffocate the Holy Spirit's work in your life.

When we sin - disobey what God says in His Word - we will create a division between us and God.

This is why when we have communion, before we take the elements, we have a time to examine ourselves - to pray and ask forgiveness for any sins that come to mind.

Like a bucket of water on a campfire, sin will extinguish the Spirit's work in our life.

**Solution**: Obey! Submit to God's plan - His Word and the teachings of Christ.

**Romans 12:1-2**

"...present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing (*your thoughts and actions to the Word of God*) you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

3. By our disinterest in worshiping with God's people.  
When I was growing up, I didn't like the music in church.

I usually liked the sermon, but my interest in the music was minimal at best.

My brother was the organist - and I enjoyed listening to him play - but not the worship.

The Apostle Paul told the Philippians (**Philippians 3:3**)  
"For we who worship by the Spirit of God are the ones who are truly circumcised. We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort..."

We quench or suffocate the Spirit's work in our life  
- His leading and the fruit of His work in our life -  
when we have no interest in worshiping the Lord  
with other believers.

**Solution**: Commit to worshiping with God's people  
on a regular basis.

Pray that God would change your heart about  
worship.

Get to bed earlier on Saturday night!!!!

Step #2 in our Growth Steps.

**Hebrews 10:25**

"And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people  
do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of  
His return is drawing near."

4. By our love of the world over the things of God.

Jesus was very clear that we can't serve 2 masters -  
we can't serve money - or the things of the world -  
and serve God.

God must sit in the throne of our heart and mind.

God must be our first/highest priority, which will  
then guide all the other obligations of our life.

If we allow something / someone other than God to  
be our highest priority, we will suffocate the  
Spirit's power and influence in our life.

**Solution**: Seek wisdom to see the futility of the  
world - the limits of wealth and material things.



Give credit to God for the good things in your life -  
for the blessings in your life.

Re-order how you see the world.

Read though the book of Proverbs for a number of  
months.

Soak in the wisdom and perspective of God so you  
begin to see the world as God sees the world.

**Matthew 6:19-21** - *Jesus is speaking*

“Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat  
them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and  
steal.

Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot  
destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.

Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will  
also be.”

**Matthew 6:24** - *Jesus is speaking*

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and  
love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the  
other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Close in prayer