

## ACTIONS DETRIMENTAL TO THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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Acts 7:51-53

1. Over the past few weeks we have:
  - a. Seen how the Holy Spirit worked in the life and ministry of Jesus.
  - b. Looked at the ministry of the Holy Spirit as defined by Jesus' teaching.
  - c. Examined, in the book of Acts, the work of the Holy Spirit as the Lord of the Harvest.
2. A good question to try and answer at this point is why isn't the Holy Spirit working in the church today as He did in the first century and at other times in church history?
3. We will partially answer that question by examining three texts.
  - a. "You...are always resisting the Holy Spirit." Acts 7:51
  - b. "...do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God." Ephesians 4:30
  - c. "Do not quench the Spirit." I Thessalonians 5:19

### I. "You...are always resisting the Holy Spirit."

- A. Stephen's message was delivered in the power of the Holy Spirit.
  1. When asked to choose the first deacons the church in Jerusalem "...chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit." Acts 6:5
  2. Acts 6:8 declares, "And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people."
  3. Those who were opposed to the gospel "were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking." Acts 6:10
- B. Stephen told his listeners, "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit." 51
  1. Stiff-necked: Stubborn, headstrong, and obstinate.
  2. Uncircumcised in heart and ears: Outwardly religious but inwardly unchanged.  
Note verse 57, "But they cried out with a loud voice, and **covered their ears** and rushed at him with one impulse."
- C. The word resist means:
  1. To actively resist.
  2. To strive or fight against.
  3. To work against or in opposition to.
- D. The Spirit of God is in the world to:
  1. Direct and empower the church.
  2. Glorify God.
  3. Lift up the Lord Jesus.
  4. Apply God's Word.
  5. Bring people to Christ.
  6. Conform people to Christ.
- E. Are we actively cooperating with Him?

F. To resist the Holy Spirit is detrimental to:

1. Our souls. Genesis 6:3

“My Spirit shall not strive with man forever...”

2. Our spiritual well being.

a. Nutritionally we are what we eat, and the same thing is true spiritually.

b. We cannot become spiritual giants on a worldly diet.

c. Many Christians have recognized with the Prodigal that the Father’s house is the place to be, but they are still feeding at the hog trough.

d. The Holy Spirit has clearly revealed in God’s Word that we are to be much in the Word and much in prayer, and yet we still resist and make excuses why we cannot.

e. Cooperation with the Holy Spirit is essential to our spiritual growth and usefulness.

## II. “...do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.” Ephesians 4:30

A. Note the context in which these words were written. Ephesians 4:25-32

B. Paul encouraged his readers:

1. To lay aside falsehood and speak the truth.

2. To be angry but not for selfish, self-centered reasons.

3. To not give the devil opportunities.

4. To be honest and to do our work for the welfare of others.

5. To make sure our speech is wholesome and edifying.

6. To not be ruled by negative emotions.

7. To be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving towards others.

C. We grieve (make sorrowful or offend) the Holy Spirit when we fail to manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) or to take seriously the clear teaching of God’s Word.

D. “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” Galatians 5:24

## III. “Do not quench the Spirit.” I Thessalonians 5:19

A. The word quench means to extinguish, to put out the fire, suppress or subdue.

Example: Young girl in the church at Gadsden.

1. Her mother asked me to share the gospel with her.

2. I did and she prayed to receive Christ.

3. She began to:

a. Take her Bible and tracts to her exclusive private school.

b. Pray for and witness to her Jewish stepfather.

4. Her mother:

a. Asked me to speak to her about being overly zealous.

b. Wanted to know she was saved, but did not want her to be a problem or an embarrassment.

c. Stopped bringing her to church when I would not honor her request.

B. Rather than quench the Spirit we must fan the flame and give ourselves fully to God to be filled and illuminated by His glorious presence.

**NOTE: We should be like the burning bush that Moses encountered in the wilderness; on fire but not consumed.**

C. We need to recognize the work of the Spirit in others and pray for His full manifestation in their lives.

D. Prayer is to the work of the Holy Spirit what oxygen is to fire so let us pray without ceasing and thus created a climate of faith in which the Holy Spirit can mightily manifest Himself.

### **APPLICATION**

1. In James 4:5 we read, “or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: ‘He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?’” (or, “The Spirit which He has made to dwell in us jealously desires us.”)
2. The Spirit of God wants to fully possess us for our good, for the glory of God, and for the benefit of others.
3. Are you in any way:
  - a. Resisting Him?
  - b. Grieving Him?
  - c. Quenching Him?
4. Will you yield today?
5. Sometimes there is an area of our life where we are unwilling to yield to what we know is God’s will for us related to doing something or not doing something.