

Are You Quenching the Holy Spirit?

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Tonight, and tomorrow, we will be celebrating the Feast of Pentecost, a Holy Day on which, in 31 A.D., the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples and upon many new believers in Jerusalem.

Much misunderstanding exists in the world concerning the Holy Spirit that God Our Father gives to us. Most professing Christians in the world are Trinitarians who believe that the Holy Spirit is one of the three personages or hypotheses of God.

However, we know that the Holy Spirit is not a person, but rather is the essence of our Heavenly Father and of Jesus, His Son as divine Elohim Beings or divine Mighty Ones. We know that God Our Father gives us a little portion of His Holy Spirit and puts it in us when we are baptized and have hands laid upon us.

That Holy Spirit which our Heavenly Father gives to us is incredible power that we can use in a righteous way and an incredible power that we can treat with respect and awe. Or it is an incredible power that we can begin to disregard, to ignore and to devalue in our spiritual lives.

In 1 Thessalonians 5 the Apostle Paul gives a very powerful and important exhortation in four short words. It's four short words in both Greek and in English.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 *Quench not the Spirit.* (KJV)

In verse 19, the Greek verb for *quench* is (σβέννυμι) sbénnumi - Strong's #4570 and means "to extinguish", metaphorically "to quench" or "to suppress" or "to stifle". So, the Apostle Paul is exhorting the Thessalonian congregation that they should not extinguish, or quench, or suppress, or stifle the Spirit from our Heavenly Father.

My sermon this afternoon is entitled:

Are You Quenching the Holy Spirit?

I would like to explore the possible eventuality of quenching the Spirit from our Heavenly Father if we are not careful in our spiritual lives.

To begin with, there is a hugely important concept to contemplate. It is that we ourselves determine our relationship with our Heavenly Father and with His Son, Jesus the Anointed One. The reason is that our Heavenly Father and His Son are constants in the relationship. Neither one of Them changes over time.

In Malachi 3, there is a famous verse concerning the immutability of Yehovah, our Heavenly Father.

Malachi 3:6 *For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.* (KJV)

So, our Heavenly Father does not change. He is a constant in an ever-changing world and society. James, the Apostle James amplifies this concept to show how God Our Father never changes.

James 1:17 *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* (KJV)

The Greek word for *variableness* is (παραλλαγή) parallagé - Strong's #3883 a compound Greek word composed of two words together meaning "transmutation" or "change". The New Living Translation states *He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.*

Just like our Heavenly Father, Jesus the Anointed One also does not change. The writer of Hebrews states this concept in a very simple, short verse.

Hebrews 13:8 *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.* (KJV)

So, both our Heavenly Father and His Son do not change. They are constants in our relationship with them. In Psalm 102. David wrote about this constancy of our Heavenly Father.

Psalm 102:24-27 *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.*

25) *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.*

26) *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:*

27) *But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.* (KJV)

When Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, His disciples fell asleep while they were waiting with Him.

Matthew 26:40-41 *And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?*

41) *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* (KJV)

So, the Spirit is always willing but the flesh is weak. God Our Father is always there, drawing us, leading us, and guiding us toward Him and toward His Son and toward perfection. In our relationship with our Heavenly Father, He is the constant. He does not change in our relationship. We are the ones who change, and therefore, we are the

ones who determine our relationship with Him. You can push someone against their will. But you cannot lead and guide someone against their will. The fact is, for one to lead another, the one being led has to be willing to follow. Our Heavenly Father will not lead us against our will.

There is a host of reasons why we don't follow Jesus and follow our Father. There is always an excuse that we can put in the way. Jesus addressed this in talking with new disciples in Luke 9, and that there is a cost associated with following Jesus and God Our Father.

Luke 9:23 *And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 59) ...

59) And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60) Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61) And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62) And Jesus said unto him, no man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. (KJV)

Again, if the Father draws us toward Him, and we fight Him and refuse to go toward Him, He will not force us to obey and follow Him. Are we drawing closer to our Heavenly Father with each passing day? The Apostle James talks about a reciprocal relationship with God Our Father.

James 4:7 *Submit yourselves therefore to God [ο θεος – ho theos – the God – God Our Father]. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

8) Draw nigh to God [the God – God Our Father], and he will draw nigh to you. (NKJV)

Brethren, are we drawing near to our God Most High? How is our relationship with our Heavenly Father? How deep is it? How close is it? How much time do we spend with Him? How much time do we talk with Him? How much time do we meditate on issues with Him? How is our prayer life? Do we pray? What do we pray about each day? No one else but you, determines your relationship with Your Heavenly Father and with Jesus the Anointed One. No one else determines your salvation but you.

Philippians 2:12 *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*

13) For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (KJV)

The Greek verb for *work out* is (κατεργάζομαι) katergázomai - Strong's #2716 which means "to effect by labor, to achieve, to work out, to bring about, to do that from which something results."

So, we are to labor and to work out to bring about our own salvation. Our salvation is a personal and individual work which we work out and bring about with our personal and individual relationship with God our Father and Jesus the Anointed One. We cannot earn our salvation. Salvation is a gift from our Heavenly Father. But we must do our part, and we must respond to our Father's will and do our Father's will.

We have been called by our Heavenly Father to Jesus the Anointed One. Jesus is always ready to be with us and commune with us. But it is our choice.

Revelation 3:20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* (KJV)

Do we continually open the door for our Lord and Savior Jesus the Anointed One to be part of our lives? God Our Father earnestly desires to give us His Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:9-13 *And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*

10) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11) If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12) Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? (KJV)

So, God Our Father is a constant in our relationship with Him. He does not change. He does not waiver. He desires to give us His Holy Spirit. He wants us to use it. He wants us to let it flow through us. He wants us to exercise it and develop it and increase the quantity of it in our spiritual lives to the point where we become closer and closer to living lives commensurate with His Son, Jesus, who had the Holy Spirit without measure. We set the pace of our spiritual growth. We set the pace for increasing the Spirit flowing through us. We set the pace for exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit and being an example and a light to the world.

But on the other hand, we can also set the pace for slowly but surely, quenching the very Holy Spirit that God Our Father has given to us. So, for the rest of the sermon, I would like to explore four causes in quenching the Holy Spirit within us.

The first cause in quenching the Holy Spirit within us is:

1) Neglect

The writer of Hebrews discusses the importance of not neglecting the opportunity for salvation put before us by our Heavenly Father.

Hebrews 2:3-4 *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*

4) God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? (KJV)

In verse 3, the Greek verb for *to neglect* is (ἀμελέω) *ameléo* - Strong's #272 with the meaning of "to neglect, to be unconcerned, treating something without care".

On the day of Pentecost, after Peter stood up and preached his sermon to the Jews in Jerusalem, the Jews were pricked in their hearts and humbly asked what they needed to do.

Acts 2:38 *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (KJV)*

So, the Holy Spirit is a gift which is given by our Heavenly Father. In Acts 10 the Holy Spirit was also given to the Gentiles and not to just the Jews.

Acts 10:44-45 *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*

45) And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. (KJV)

Again, the Holy Spirit is equated to a gift from our Heavenly Father. The apostle Paul exhorted and warned Timothy to be careful not to neglect the gift within him.

1 Timothy 4:14 *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery (elders). (KJV)*

Again, in verse 14, the verb *neglect* in Greek is the verb *ameleo*. So, when the Apostle Paul was instructing us not to *neglect* the gift that is in us, that gift that is in us, is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Paul was instructing us not to neglect the Holy Spirit.

There are four tried and true ways to avoid neglecting the Holy Spirit.

a) Prayer

We began the sermon with 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 19. But The Apostle Paul gave us a crucial exhortation and instruction in verse 17.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 *Pray without ceasing.* (NKJV)

Are we diligently praying and communicating with our Heavenly Father? Is prayer a priority in our spiritual lives like it used to be? Or are we beginning to neglect the very means by which we communicate with the greatest Being in the universe?

b) Bible study

The Apostle Paul gave an exhortation to study deeply into the Bible so that we rightly divide our Father's Word.

2 Timothy 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God [ho theos – the God], a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* (KJV)

Are we studying each and every day, searching the scriptures to deepen our understanding of our Heavenly Father's Word? Or are we letting all the other activities of life crowd out this important aspect of our spiritual lives?

c) Meditation

In Psalm 77 David wrote that he meditated on His Heavenly Father. It was important to him.

Psalm 77:12 *I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.* (KJV)

Do we slowdown from our fast-paced life enough to stop and preserve time during the day to just think and focus our attention on our Heavenly Father and on spiritual principles?

d) Fasting

The prophet Joel wrote about turning to our Heavenly Father with fasting.

Joel 2:12 *Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:* (KJV)

How often do we fast? Is the Day of Atonement, the Day of Coverings, the only day of the year in which we fast?

If we are not praying, studying, meditating, and fasting sufficiently in our daily lives, our spiritual lives are suffering, and we are starting on our journey in neglecting and quenching the Holy Spirit within us. This neglect of the Holy Spirit and of the high calling in our lives leads to the second cause.

The second cause in quenching the Holy Spirit within us is:

2) Supplanting Our Heavenly Father with Anything

In the first part of the commandments which Yehovah gave on Mount Sinai to the Israelites. We have historically believed that these commandments were given to the Israelites on the Feast of Pentecost.

Exodus 20:1-3 *And God spake all these words, saying,*

2) I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3) Thou shalt have no other gods [Elohim] before me. (KJV)

So, the first commandment said that we were to put nothing ahead of, or of more importance, than God Our Father in our lives.

As a side note, the Ten Commandments in Hebrew are “עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים” (aserét hadəbarím - the ten words). In the Jewish community, the first word is actually verse 2

“I am Yehovah your Mighty One, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

Now that Yehovah has been established as their Elohim or Mighty One, the next word to the Jewish community (which is our First Commandment) is “*You shall have no other Elohim or Mighty Ones before Me or above Me in importance.*”

This commandment or word does not just mean other pagan gods and not worshipping them. It also includes anything in our lives on which we place a higher value than the value we place on our Heavenly Father and on obeying Him. Are we guilty of placing other things in our lives ahead of our relationship with our Heavenly Father and making those things (whatever they may be) more important than our Heavenly Father? Neglecting the Holy Spirit and placing other things in our lives ahead of our Heavenly Father is most often a slow but continual process that incrementally lowers the value that we place on our relationship with Him.

Luke 8:4-15 *And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:*

A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6) And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7) And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8) And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9) And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10) And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11) Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12) *Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

13) *They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*

14) *And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*

15) *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. (KJV)*

In verse 14, the “called-out ones” who allowed the cares and riches and pleasures of this life to choke their high calling. They actually placed a higher value and a greater importance on those things than the value that they placed on their relationship with God Our Father. That slow but sure shift away from our Heavenly Father ultimately leads to the quenching of the Holy Spirit and yielding no fruit to perfection. Are we slowly but persistently replacing the prime importance of God Our Father in our lives with something else? If so, we are on our way of supplanting our Heavenly Father with another idol in our spiritual lives.

The third cause in quenching the Holy Spirit within us is:

3) Continual unrepentant sin

In Isaiah 59, we will read another very well-known warning from our Heavenly Father.

Isaiah 59:1-2 *Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:*

2) *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (KJV)*

Are we striving to stop sinning? Are we striving to become more and more like our Heavenly Father? Or are our hearts becoming callous toward sin? The apostle Paul was exhorting the Ephesian congregations to quit sinning. Apparently, there were members in the Church in Ephesus who still had severe problems and issues.

Ephesians 4:17-32 *With the Lord's authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused.*

18) *Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him.*

19) *They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity*

20) *But that isn't what you learned about Christ.*

21) *Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him,*

22) *Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.*

- 23) *Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.*
- 24) *Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy*
- 25) *So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body:*
- 26) *And "don't sin by letting anger control you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry,*
- 27) *For anger gives a foothold to the devil.*
- 28) *If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need.*
- 29) *Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*
- 30) *And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, He has identified you as His own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.*
- 31) *Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior.*
- 32) *Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. (NLT)*

These were “called-out ones” in the Church of God who lived in Ephesus. Although they were baptized, they were still having difficulty overcoming their sins. Some apparently were lying. Some apparently were stealing. Some had anger issues. These were sins in their lives that they had not overcome. Are we overcoming our sins, or are we continuing to continue in our sins? Do we find ourselves with some of the same character flaws, weaknesses and sins in our lives that the Ephesians had? The Church in Rome also had many problems. Paul also exhorted them to overcome their sins and to not continue in them.

Romans 6:1-2 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

2) *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? (KJV)*

Continuing in verse 11) ...

11) *Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

12) *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

13) *Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

14) *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.*

15) *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

16) *Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

17) *But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

18) *Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness. (KJV)*

Prolonged continual sin hardens us and changes the way that we think and feel. We read about this in an exhortation to the Church in Hebrews 3.

Hebrews 3:7-13 *Wherefore (as the Holy Spirit says, Today, if ye will hear his voice,*

8) *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness*

9) *When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.*

10) *Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*

11) *So I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)*

12) *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

13) *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. (KJV)*

In verse 7, the writer of the Book of Hebrews quoted word for word Psalm 95:8 from the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament). The words are exactly the same. These verses are a warning for us not to allow our hearts and minds to be hardened against our Heavenly Father through continual sin.

Jesus scolded the Pharisees of His day because they had hardened their hearts against His Father. In attempting to keep Yehovah's Law to the extreme, they themselves became tyrants and actually made non-sin into sin by and through their own rituals, customs and beliefs that they had added to Yehovah's Law. Their added customs and laws became more important than the intent of His Law. Without having the love that is resident in His Law, they turned more and more away from God Our Father and hardened their hearts against Him.

After speaking with the multitudes including the Pharisees, the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables. Part of His answer to them was:

Matthew 13:14-15 *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:*

15) *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and*

hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart and should be converted, and I should heal them. (KJV)

Prolonged sin keeps us from our Heavenly Father and hardens our heart against Him. The apostle Paul was warning the Roman congregation about members who were engaging in prolonged sin.

Romans 2:1-5 *You may think you can condemn such people, but you are just as bad, and you have no excuse! When you say they are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge others do these very same things.*

2) And we know that God, in his justice, will punish anyone who does such things.

3) Since you judge others for doing these things, why do you think you can avoid God's judgment when you do the same things?

4) Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?

5) But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. (NLT)

Continual unrepentant sin leads to a terrible condition in our spiritual lives. The apostle Paul discusses this terrible condition in 1 Timothy 4.

1 Timothy 4:1-2 *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

2) Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; (KJV)

The Greek verb for *seared* is (καυτηρίζω) kauteriázo - #2743 which is the word from which we get the English verb to "cauterize".

When I read this verse, I always picture cows being branded with a red-hot iron, leaving a permanent mark or brand on the backside of the cows, because the branding iron sears the hairs and the flesh, leaving behind a permanent scar. The intense heat from the cauterization kills the cells of the flesh and of the hairs. Hair will never grow back on the cauterized part. That portion of skin will never be the same again. This is what sin can ultimately do to our conscience.

If we quench God Our Father's Spirit, as the embers of His Spirit begin to cool, if we continually sin and further cauterize our consciences against Him, we can begin to return to the world and to the life we had before our Heavenly Father called us.

Continual unrepentant sin leads to a cauterization and searing of our minds and our hearts against God Our Father and against Jesus the Anointed One unto the point that we can abandon completely our relationship with Them. Obedience to Them and having a relationship with Them just isn't that important anymore.

The Apostle Peter gives a very stern warning about continual sin leading to a rejection of God Our Father and of His Son, Jesus.

2 Peter 2:20-22 *And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before.*

21) *It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life.*

22) *They prove the truth of this proverb: A dog returns to its vomit. And another says: A washed pig returns to the mud. (KJV)*

Continuous unrepentant sin will lead us to abandon our Heavenly Father and His way of life and instead, it will make us desire to return to the lifestyle we came out of with our high calling. Continuous unrepentant sin will make us desire to return to the very spiritual mud and filth that we came out of.

In doing so, continuous unrepentant sin will quench the Holy Spirit within us.

The fourth cause in quenching the Holy Spirit within us is:

4) Rebellious Self-Will

Brethren, there is a point where God Our Father will reject us if we quench the Spirit. In Luke 13, there is a dire warning given to us in a parable that Jesus gave to His disciples. Our Heavenly Father is patient with us. He earnestly wants us to succeed and enter His Kingdom. Again, He is the constant in our relationship. But when we are not fruitful, when we are neglecting His Spirit, when we put anything and everything ahead of Him, when we continually sin against Him without the desire to repent, there is a point where God Our Father sees that we will not change and turn to Him and be fruitful using His Spirit. We read about this point of no return in Luke 13.

Luke 13:6-9 *He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.*

7) *Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumber it the ground?*

8) *And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:*

9) *And if it bears fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. (KJV)*

The owner of the fig tree in this parable is God Our Father. The dresser of the fig tree is Jesus the Anointed One. The point of the parable is that there is a time limit that our Heavenly Father places on working with us before He is certain that we will not follow Him and that we will not replace our will with His will. We do not know what that time limit is in each of our spiritual lives. The important point is that we should not ever try to find out. We cannot, by actions and by our attitudes and by our self-will, crucify our Lord and Savior a second time in our lives.

Hebrews 6:4-6 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5) And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6) If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (NKJ)*

In verse 5, the verb to *fall away* in Greek is (παράπιπτο) *parapípto* - Strong's #3895 which is formed by the combination of two words which together literally mean "to fall from being beside or close to". So, brethren, if we willingly fall from *being close* to our Heavenly Father to the point that our conscience is permanently and irrevocably scarred to where we abandon our relationship with God Our Father, there remains no more sacrifice for us.

There is a difference between sinning out of weakness and sinning against our Heavenly Father out of a total rebellion of self-will.

Hebrews 10:26-31 *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28) He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29) Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30) For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (KJV)*

In verse 26, the Greek word for *wilfully* is (ἐκούσιως) *hekousíos* - Strong's #1596 meaning "of our own free will". Again, we all sin, and we are all weak. The Apostle Paul discusses that daily struggle with our weaknesses in Roman 7. But, if our deep down true will is to continue to sin and not obey God Our Father and not to give up our own will for His will, then there truly is no more sacrifice for our sins. The reason is that if our deep-down, true will is to continue to sin and not turn back to our Heavenly Father, then there is no repentance and without repentance and change, there is no forgiveness of sin. We then lose our hope of our resurrection into our Heavenly Father's Kingdom.

Continuing in Hebrews 10) ...

Hebrews 10:38-39 *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39) But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. (KJV)*

The Greek verb to *draw back* in verse 38 is (ὑποστέλλω) hupostéllō - Strong's #5288 and means "to draw back, to let down, to keep back". In verse 39, the noun form of this Greek verb (Strong's #5289) is used and has the literal meaning of "the ones who draw back". So, the writer of Hebrews is stating that if any man backslides from his faith, then God Our Father will not be well-pleased, and that we are not to be the ones who backslide, but we are to be the ones who believe in our Heavenly Father to the salvation of our spiritual lives.

Nurturing and growing a rebellious self-will within us is the direct opposite of humbling ourselves before our Heavenly Father and nurturing and growing His Spirit within us. Either we are increasing the will of our Father in our lives, or we are increasing our own rebellious self-will in our lives. The latter will quench our Heavenly Father's Spirit within us.

In the sermon today, we have explored that God Our Father and Jesus the Anointed One are the constants in our relationship with them. They are rock solid. They do not change. We are the ones who change, either for the better or for the worse.

We've explored four ways of quenching the Holy Spirit that God Our Father has given us.

- 1) *Neglect* – Are we neglecting the very gift of the Holy Spirit that our Heavenly Father has given to us at our baptism? Are we praying enough? Are we studying enough? Are we meditating enough? Are we fasting enough? Without these crucial tools to strengthen our dedication to God Our Father in our spiritual lives, we will be quenching the Holy Spirit that He has given to us.
- 2) *Supplanting our Heavenly Father with anything* – Are we slowly but surely setting up other idols in our lives which take the place of and supplant God Our Father from His rightful place as the most important Being in our lives? Does the busyness of life crowd out our Heavenly Father to a secondary or third or fourth position in our lives? If we are lowering the importance of our Heavenly Father in our lives, we will be quenching the Holy Spirit.
- 3) *Continual unrepentant sin* – Are we repenting and changing from our sins? Are we continuing to sin the sins that we've been sinning for years, maybe even decades? Are we overcoming our sins? Are we winning the battle for our mind, our thoughts, our actions, our speech, and our attitudes? Continual unrepentant sin *cauterizes* our conscience which in turn will make us even more unrepentant. We must stop that downward spiral in our spiritual lives, or we will be quenching the Holy Spirit.
- 4) *Rebellious self-will* – Like Jesus the Anointed One did on His last night in His physical life, are we asking our Heavenly Father that His will, not our will, be done? In all things? In all circumstances? In all situations? Even if His will is not what we want? If we rebel against our Heavenly Father after knowing the truth, if we choose to permanently demand our will instead of His will, if we reject His will in our lives, there is

no more sacrifice for us. Our Heavenly Father simply cannot use us for His purpose anymore. This rebellious self-will against Him will quench the Holy Spirit within us.

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost starting at sundown tonight and into tomorrow, let us ask ourselves these questions:

- Are we striving to never neglect the great salvation that our Heavenly Father has set before us?
- Are we striving to never allow anything in our physical or spiritual lives to become more important than our relationship with our Heavenly Father?
- Are we striving to overcome the sins that we have not yet overcome and to not live in a state of continual unrepentant sin?
- Are we striving to break our own will, and to completely surrender to our Heavenly Father and to earnestly search for and accept His will in our lives?

Brethren, our very spiritual lives depend on the answers to those questions. Whether or not we enter into our Heavenly Father's spiritual Kingdom depends on the answers to those questions. Where are we in our relationship with God Our Father, the most wonderful, powerful, perfect, and majestic Being in all the universe?

Are you quenching the Holy Spirit?