

# Quenching the Spirit

by Charles Finney

---

*The Holy Spirit influences the human mind by means of truth, and can be quenched by resisting the truth, endeavoring to support error, and other forms of sin.*

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19

**Topics:** "The Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Sensitivity"

---

## Description

Charles Finney emphasizes the critical importance of not quenching the Holy Spirit, explaining how the Spirit influences the mind through truth and moral persuasion rather than physical force. He outlines the various ways individuals can resist the Spirit, such as through uncharitable judgments, indulging in sin, and neglecting prayer, leading to dire consequences like spiritual darkness and hardness of heart. Finney warns that quenching the Spirit can result in a deluded state where individuals may believe they are enlightened while actually being far from the truth. He urges listeners to remain open to the Spirit's guidance and to heed the warnings of their conscience to avoid falling into despair and eternal separation from God.

---

## Transcript

"Quench not the Spirit." -- 1 Thess. v. 19.

IN discussing the subject presented in this text, I shall aim,

- I. To show how the Holy Spirit influences the mind;
  - II. To deduce some inferences from the known mode of the Spirit's operations;
  - III. Show what it is to quench the Spirit;
  - IV. Show how this may be done; and,
  - V. The consequences of quenching the Spirit.
- I. How does the Holy Spirit influence the human mind?

I answer, not by physical agency -- not by the interposition of direct physical power. The action of the will is not influenced thus, and can not be. The very supposition is absurd. That physical agency should produce voluntary mental phenomena just as it does physical, is both absurd and at war with the very idea of free

agency. That the same physical agency which moves a planet should move the human will is absurd.

But further: the Bible informs us that the Spirit influences the human mind by means of truth. The Spirit persuades men to act in view of truth, as we ourselves influence our fellow-men by truth presented to their minds. I do not mean that God presents truth to the mind in the same manner as we do. Of course His mode of doing it must differ from ours. We use the pen, the lips, the gesture; we use the language of words and the language of nature. God does not employ these means now; yet still He reaches the mind with truth. Sometimes His providence suggests it; and then His Spirit gives it efficiency, setting it home upon the heart with great power.

Sometimes the Lord makes use of preaching; indeed, His ways are various.

But, whatever the mode, the object is always the same; namely, to produce voluntary action in conformity to His law.

Now, if the Bible were entirely silent on this subject, we should still know from the nature of mind, and from the nature of those influences which only can move the human mind, that the Spirit must exert not physical, but moral influences on the mind. Yet we are not now left to a merely metaphysical inference; we have the plain testimony of the Bible to the fact that the Spirit employs truth in converting and sanctifying men.

II. We next inquire what is implied in this fact and what must be inferred from it?

God is physically omnipotent, and yet His moral influences exerted by the Spirit may be resisted. You will readily see that if the Spirit moved men by physical omnipotence, no mortal could possibly resist His influence. The Spirit's power would, of course, be irresistible -- for who could withstand omnipotence?

But now we know it to be a fact that men can resist the Holy Ghost; for the nature of moral agency implies this and the Bible asserts it.

The nature of moral agency implies the voluntary action of one who can yield to motive and follow light or not as he pleases. Where this power does not exist, moral agency can not exist; and at whatever point this power ceases, there moral agency ceases also.

Hence, if our action is that of moral agents, our moral freedom to do or not do must remain. It can not be set aside or in any way overruled. If God should in any way set aside our voluntary agency, he would of necessity terminate at once, our moral and responsible action. Suppose God should seize hold of a man's arm with physical omnipotence and forcibly use it in deeds of murder or of arson; who does not see that the moral, responsible agency of that man would be entirely superseded? Yet not more so than if, in an equally irresistible manner, God should seize the man's will and compel it to act as Himself listed.

The very idea that moral influence can ever be irresistible originates in an entire mistake as to the nature of the will and of moral action. The will of man never can act otherwise than freely in view of truth and of the motives it presents for action. Increasing the amount of such influence has no sort of tendency to impair the freedom of the will. Under any possible vividness of truth perceived, or amount of motive present to the mind, the will has still the same changeless power to yield or not yield -- to act or refuse to act in accordance with this perceived truth.

Force and moral agency are terms of opposite meaning, They can not both co-exist. The one effectually precludes the other. Hence, to say that if God is physically omnipotent, He can and will force a moral agent in his moral action, is to talk stark nonsense.

This fact shows that any work of God carried on by moral and not by physical power not only can be resisted by man, but that man may be in very special danger of resisting it. If the Lord carries the work forward by means of revealed truth, there may be most imminent danger lest men will neglect to study and understand this truth, or lest, knowing, they shall refuse to obey it. Surely it is fearfully within the power of every man to shut out this truth from his consideration, and bar his heart against its influence.

III. We next inquire what it is to quench the Spirit.

We all readily understand this when we come to see distinctly what the work of the Spirit is. We have already seen that it is to enlighten the mind into truth respecting God, ourselves, and our duty. For example, the Spirit enlightens the mind into the meaning and self-application of the Bible. It takes the things of Christ and shows them to us.

Now there is such a thing as refusing to receive this light You can shut your eyes against it. You have the power to turn your eye entirely away and scarcely see it at all. You can utterly refuse to follow it when seen; and in this case God ceases to hold up the truth before your mind.

Almost every one knows by personal experience that the Spirit has the power of shedding a marvelous light upon revealed truth, so that this truth shall stand before the mind in a new and most impressive form, and shall operate upon it with astonishing energy. But this light of the Spirit may be quenched.

Again: there is, so to speak, a sort of heat, a warmth and vitality attending the truth when enforced by the Spirit. Thus we say if one has the Spirit of God his soul is warm; if he has not the Spirit, his heart is cold.

This vital heat produced by the Divine Spirit may be quenched. Let a man resist the Spirit, and he will certainly quench this vital energy which it exerts upon the heart.

IV. We are next to notice some of the ways in which the Spirit may be quenched.

1. Men often quench the Spirit by directly resisting the truth He presents to their minds. Sometimes men set themselves deliberately to resist the truth, determined they will not yield to its power, at least for the present. In such cases it is wonderful to see how great the influence of the will is in resisting the truth. Indeed, the will can always resist any moral considerations; for, as we have seen, there is no such thing as forcing the will to yield to truth.

In those cases wherein the truth presses strongly on the mind, there is presumptive evidence that the Spirit is present by His power. And it is in precisely these cases that men are especially prone to set themselves against the truth, and thus are in the utmost peril of quenching the Spirit. They hate the truth presented -- it crosses their chosen path, of indulgence -- they feel vexed and harassed by its claims; they resist and quench the Spirit of the Lord.

You have doubtless often seen such cases, and if so, you have doubtless noticed this other remarkable fact of usual occurrence -- that after a short struggle in resisting truth, the conflict is over, and that particular truth almost utterly ceases to affect the mind. The individual becomes hardened to its power -- he seems quite able to overlook it and thrust it from his thoughts; or if this fails and the truth is thrown

before his mind, yet he finds it comparatively easy to resist its claims. He felt greatly annoyed by that truth until he had quenched the Spirit; now he is annoyed by it no longer.

If you have seen cases of this sort you have doubtless seen how as the truth pressed upon their minds they became restive, sensitive -- then perhaps angry -- but still stubborn in resisting -- until at length the conflict subsides; the truth makes no more impression, and is henceforth quite dead as to them; they apprehend it only with the greatest dimness, and care nothing about it.

And here let me ask -- Have not some of you had this very experience? Have you not resisted some truth until it has ceased to affect your minds? If so, then you may conclude that you in that case quenched the Spirit of God.

2. The Spirit is often quenched by endeavoring to support error.

Men are sometimes foolish enough to attempt by argument to support a position which they have good reason to know is a false one. They argue it till they get committed; they indulge in a dishonest state of mind; thus they quench the Spirit, and are usually left to believe the very lie which they so unwisely attempted to advocate. Many such cases have I seen where men began to defend and maintain a position known to be false, and kept on till they quenched the Spirit of God -- believed their own lie, and, it is to be feared, will die under its delusions.

3. By uncharitable judgments. Perhaps nothing more certainly quenches the Spirit than to impeach the motives of others and judge them uncharitably. It is so unlike God, and so hostile to the law of love, no wonder the Spirit of God is utterly averse to it, and turns away from those who indulge in it.

4. The Spirit is grieved by harsh and vituperative language. How often do persons grieve the Spirit of God by using such language toward those who differ from them. It is always safe to presume that persons who indulge such a temper have already grieved the Spirit of God utterly away.

5. The Spirit of God is quenched by a bad temper. When a bad temper and spirit are stirred up in individuals or in a community, who has not seen how suddenly a revival of religion ceases -- the Spirit of God is put down and quenched; there is no more prevailing prayer and no more sinners are converted.

6. Often the Spirit is quenched by diverting the attention from the truth. Since the Spirit operates through the truth, it is most obvious that we must attend to this truth which the Spirit would keep before our minds. If we refuse to attend, as we always can if we choose to do so, we shall almost certainly quench the Holy Spirit.

7. We often quench the Spirit by indulging intemperate excitement on any subject. If the subject is foreign from practical, divine truth, strong excitement diverts attention from such truth and renders it almost impossible to feel its power. While the mind sees and feels keenly on the subject in which it is excited, it sees dimly and feels but coldly on the vital things of salvation. Hence the Spirit is quenched. But the intemperate excitement may be on some topic really religious. Sometimes I have seen a burst -- a real tornado of feeling in a revival; but in such cases, truth loses its hold on the minds of the people; they are too much excited to take sober views of the truth and of the moral duties it inculcates. Not all religious excitement, however, is to be condemned. By no means. There must be excitement enough to arouse the mind to serious thought -- enough to give the truth edge and power; but it is always well to avoid that measure of excitement which throws the mind from its balance and renders its perceptions of truth

obscure or fitful.

8. The Spirit is quenched by indulging prejudice. Whenever the mind is made up on any subject before it is thoroughly canvassed, that mind is shut against the truth and the Spirit is quenched. When there is great prejudice it seems impossible for the Spirit to act, and of course His influence is quenched. The mind is so committed that it resists the first efforts of the Spirit.

Thus have thousands done. Thus thousands ruin their souls for eternity.

Therefore let every man keep his mind open to conviction and be sure to examine carefully all important questions, and especially all such as involve great questions of duty to God and man.

I am saying nothing now against being firm in maintaining your position after you thoroughly understand it and are sure it is the truth. But while pursuing your investigations, be sure you are really candid and yield your mind to all the reasonable evidence you can find.

9. The Spirit is often quenched by violating conscience. There are circumstances under which to violate conscience seems to quench the light of God in the soul forever. Perhaps you have seen cases of this sort -- where persons have had a very tender conscience on some subject, but all at once they come to have no conscience at all on that subject. I am aware that change of conduct sometimes results from change of views without any violation of conscience; but the case I speak of is where the conscience seems to be killed. All that remains of it seems hard as a stone.

I have sometimes thought the Spirit of God had much more to do with conscience than we usually suppose. The fact is undeniable that men sometimes experience very great and sudden changes in the amount of sensibility of conscience which they feel on some subjects. How is this to be accounted for? Only by the supposition that the Spirit has power to arouse the conscience and make it pierce like an arrow; and then when men, notwithstanding the reproaches of conscience, will sin, the Spirit is quenched; the conscience loses all its sensibility; an entire change takes place, and the man goes on to sin as if he never had any conscience to forbid it.

It sometimes happens that the mind is awakened just on the eve of committing some particular sin. Perhaps something seems to say to him -- If you do this you will be forsaken of God. A strange presentiment forewarns him to desist. Now if he goes on the whole mind receives a dreadful shock; the very eyes of the mind seem to be almost put out: the moral perceptions are strangely deranged and beclouded; a fatal violence is done to the conscience on that particular subject at least, and indeed the injury to the conscience seems to affect all departments of moral action. In such circumstances the Spirit of God seems to turn away and say "I can do no more for you; I have warned you faithfully and can warn you no more."

All these results sometimes accrue from neglect of plainly revealed duty. Men shrink from known duty through fear of the opinions of others, or through dislike of some self-denial. In this crisis of trial the Spirit does not leave them in a state of doubt or inattention as to duty, but keeps the truth and the claims of God vividly before the mind. Then if men go on and commit the sin despite of the Spirit's warnings, the soul is left in awful darkness -- the light of the Spirit of God is quenched perhaps forever.

I know not in how many cases I have seen persons in great agony and even despair who had evidently quenched the Spirit in the manner just described. Many of you may know the case of a young man who

has been here. He had a long trial on the question of preparing himself for the ministry. He balanced the question for a long time, the claims of God being clearly set before him; but at last resisting the convictions of duty, he went off and got married, and turned away from the work to which God seemed to call him. Then the Spirit left him. For some few years he remained entirely hardened as to what he had done and as to any claims of God upon him, but finally his wife sickened and died. Then his eyes were opened; he saw what he had done. He sought the Lord, but sought in vain. No light returned to his darkened, desolate soul. It no longer seemed his duty to prepare for the ministry; that call of God had ceased. His cup of wretchedness seemed to be filled to the brim. Often he spent whole nights in most intense agony, groaning, crying for mercy, or musing in anguish upon the dire despair that spread its universe of desolation all around him. I have often feared he would take his own life, so perfectly wretched was he under these reproaches of a guilty conscience and these thoughts of deep despair.

I might mention many other similar cases. Men refuse to do known duty, and this refusal does fatal violence to their own moral sense and to the Spirit of the Lord, and consequently there remains for them only a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation."

10. Persons often quench the Spirit by indulging their appetites and passions. You would be astonished if you were to know how often the Spirit is grieved by this means until a crisis is formed of such a nature that they seem to quench the light of God at once from their souls. Some persons indulge their appetite for food to the injury of their health, and though they know they are injuring themselves, and the Spirit of God remonstrates and presses them hard to desist from ruinous self-indulgence, yet they persist in their course -- are given up of God, and henceforth their appetites lord it over them to the ruin of their spirituality and of their souls. The same may be true of any form of sensual indulgence.

11. The Spirit is often quenched by indulging in dishonesty. Men engaged in business will take little advantages in buying and selling. Sometimes they are powerfully convinced of the great selfishness of this, and see that this is by no means loving their neighbor as themselves. It may happen that a man about to drive a good bargain will raise the question -- Is this right? Will balance it long in his mind will say, "Now this neighbor of mine needs this article very much, and will suffer if he does not get it; this will give me a grand chance to put on a price; but then, would this be doing as I would be done by?" He looks and thinks -- he sees duty, but finally decides in favor of his selfishness. Eternity alone will disclose the consequences of such a decision. When the Spirit of God has followed such persons a long time -- has made them see their danger -- has kept the truth before them, and finally seizing the favorable moment, makes a last effort and this proves unavailing -- the die is cast; thereafter all restraints are gone, and the selfish man abandoned of God, goes on worse and worse, to State's prison perhaps, and certainly to hell!

12. Often men quench the Spirit by casting off fear and restraining prayer. Indeed, restraining prayer must always quench the Spirit. It is wonderful to see how naturally and earnestly the Spirit leads us to pray. If we were really led by the Spirit, we should be drawn many times a day to secret prayer, and should be continually lifting up our hearts in silent ejaculations whenever the mind unbends itself from other pressing occupations. The Spirit in the hearts of saints is pre-eminently a spirit of prayer, and of course to restrain prayer must always quench the Spirit.

Some of you, perhaps, have been in this very case. You have once had the spirit of prayer -- now you have none of it; you had access to God -- now you have it no longer; you have no more enjoyment in prayer -- have no groaning and agonizing over the state of the church and of sinners. And if this spirit of prayer is gone, where are you now? Alas, you have quenched the Spirit of God -- you have put out His

light and repelled His influences from your soul.

13. The Spirit is quenched by idle conversation. Few seem to be aware how wicked this is and how certainly it quenches the Holy Spirit. Christ said "that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

14. Men quench the Holy Ghost by a spirit of levity and trifling.

Again by indulging a peevish and fretful spirit.

Also by a spirit of indolence. Many indulge in this to such an extent as altogether to drive away the Holy Spirit.

Again by a spirit of procrastination, and by indulging themselves in making excuses for neglect of duty. This is a sure way to quench the Spirit of God in the soul.

15. It is to be feared that many have quenched the Spirit by resisting the doctrine and duty of sanctification.

This subject has been for a few years past extensively discussed; and the doctrine has also been extensively opposed. Several ecclesiastical bodies have taken ground against it, and sometimes it is to be feared that members have said and done what they would not by any means have said or done in their own closets or pulpits. Is it not also probable that many ministers and some laymen have been influenced by this very ecclesiastical action to oppose the doctrine -- the fear of man thus becoming a snare to their souls? May it not also be the case that some have opposed the doctrine really because it raises a higher standard of personal holiness than they like -- too high, perhaps, to permit them to hope as Christians, too high for their experience, and too high to suit their tastes and habits for future life? Now who does not see that opposition to the doctrine and duty of sanctification on any such grounds must certainly and fatally quench the Holy Spirit? No work can lie more near the heart of Jesus than the sanctification of His people. Hence nothing can so greatly grieve Him as to see this work impeded -- much more to see it opposed and frustrated.

A solemn and awful emphasis is given to these considerations when you contemplate the facts respecting the prevalent state of piety in very many churches throughout the land. You need not ask -- Are revivals enjoyed -- are Christians prayerful, self-denying, alive in faith and in love to God and to man? You need not ask if the work of sanctifying the Church is moving on apace, and manifesting itself by abounding fruits of righteousness; the answer meets you before you can well frame the question.

Alas, that the Spirit should be quenched under the diffusion of the very truth which ought to sanctify the Church! What can save if Gospel promise in all its fullness is so perverted or resisted as to quench the Spirit and thus serve only to harden the heart?

V. I am lastly to speak of the consequences of quenching the Holy Spirit.

1. Great darkness of mind. Abandoned of God, the mind sees truth so dimly that it makes no useful impression. Such persons read the Bible without interest or profit. It becomes to them a dead-letter, and they generally lay it aside unless some controversy leads them to search it. They take no such spiritual interest in it as makes its perusal delightful.

Have not some of you been in this very state of mind? This is that darkness of nature which is common to men, when the Spirit of God is withdrawn.

2. There usually results great coldness and stupidity in regard to religion generally. It leaves to the mind no such interest in spiritual things as men take in worldly things.

Persons often get into such a state that they are greatly interested in some worldly matters, but not in spiritual religion. Their souls are all awake while worldly things are the subject; but suggest some spiritual subject, and their interest is gone at once. You can scarcely get them to attend a prayer-meeting. They are in a worldly state of mind you may know, for if the Spirit of the Lord was with them, they would be more deeply interested in religious services than in anything else.

But now, mark them. Get up a political meeting or a theatrical exhibition and their souls are all on fire; but go and appoint a prayer-meeting or a meeting to promote a revival, and they are not there; or if there, they feel no interest in the object.

Such persons often seem not to know themselves. They perhaps think they attend to these worldly things, only for the glory of God; I will believe this when I see them interested in spiritual things as much.

When a man has quenched the Spirit of God his religion is all outside. His vital, heart-affecting interest in spiritual things is gone.

It is indeed true that a spiritual man will take some interest in worldly things because he regards them as a part of his duty to God, and to him they are spiritual things.

3. The mind falls very naturally into diverse errors in religion. The heart wanders from God, loses its hold on the truth, and perhaps the man insists that he now takes a much more liberal and enlightened view of the subject than before.

A short time since, I had a conversation with a man who had given up the idea that the Old Testament was inspired -- had given up the doctrine of the atonement, and indeed every distinctive doctrine of the Bible. He remarked to me, "I used to think as you do; but I have now come to take a more liberal and enlightened view of the subject." Indeed! this a more liberal and enlightened view! So blinded as not to see that Christ sanctioned the Old Testament as the oracles of God, and yet he flatters himself that he now takes a more liberal and enlightened view! There can be nothing stronger than Christ's affirmations respecting the inspiration of the Old Testament; and yet this man admits these affirmations to be true and yet denies the very thing they affirm! Most liberal and enlightened view, truly!

How can you possibly account for such views except on the ground that for some reason the man has fallen into a strange, unnatural state of mind -- a sort of mental fatuity in which moral truths are beclouded or distorted?

Everybody knows that there can not be a greater absurdity than to admit the divine authority of the teachings of Christ and yet reject the Old Testament. The language of Christ affirms and implies the authority of the Old Testament in all those ways in which, on the supposition that the Old Testament is inspired, He might be expected to affirm and imply this fact.

The Old Testament does not indeed exhaust divine revelation; it left more things to be revealed. Christ taught much, but nothing more clearly than the divine authority of the Old Testament.

4. Quenching the Spirit often results in infidelity. What can account for such a case as that I have just mentioned, unless this -- that God has left the mind to fall into very great darkness?

5. Another result is great hardness of heart. The mind becomes callous to all that class of truths which make it yielding and tender. The mobility of the heart under truth depends entirely upon its moral hardness. If very hard, truth makes no impression; if soft, then it is yielding as air, and moves quick to the touch of truth in any direction.

6. Another result is deep delusion in regard to their spiritual state. How remarkable that persons will claim to be Christians when they have rejected every distinctive doctrine of Christianity. Indeed, such persons do sometimes claim that by thus rejecting almost the whole of the Bible, and all its great scheme of salvation by an atonement, they have become real Christians. Now they have got the true light. Indeed!

How can such a delusion be accounted for except on the ground that the Spirit of God has abandoned the man to his own ways and left him to utter and perfect delusion?

7. Persons in this state often justify themselves in most manifest wrong, because they put darkness for light and light for darkness. They intrench themselves in perfectly false principles, as if those principles were true and could amply justify their misdeeds.

#### REMARKS.

1. Persons often are not aware what is going on in their minds when they are quenching the Spirit of God. Duty is presented and pressed upon them, but they do not realize that this is really the work of the Spirit of God. They are not aware of the present voice of the Lord to their hearts, nor do they see that this solemn impression of the truth is nothing other than the effect of the Holy Ghost on their minds.

2. So when they come to take different views and to abandon their former opinions, they seem not conscious of the fact that God has departed from them. They flatter themselves that they have become very liberal and very much enlightened withal, and have only given up their former errors. Alas, they do not see that the light they now walk in is darkness -- all sheer darkness! "Woe to them who put light for darkness and darkness for light!"

You see how to account for the spiritual state of some persons. Without the clue which this subject affords, you might be much misled. In the case just described, suppose that I had taken it for granted that this man was in truth taking a more rational and liberal view; I should have been misguided entirely.

3. I have good reason to know how persons become Unitarians and Universalists, having seen at least some hundreds of instances. It is not by becoming more and more men of prayer and real spirituality -- not by getting nearer and nearer to God; they do not go on progressing in holiness, prayer, communion with God, until in their high attainments they reach a point where they deny the inspiration of the Bible, give up public prayer, the ordinances of the Gospel, and probably secret prayer along with the rest. Those who give up these things are not led away while wrestling in prayer and while walking humbly and closely with God; no man ever got away from orthodox views while in this state of mind. But men first get away from God and quench His Spirit; then embrace one error after another; truth falls out of the mind and we might almost say truthfulness itself, or those qualities or moral attributes which capacitate the mind to discern and apprehend the truth; and then darkness becomes so universal and so deceptive, that men suppose themselves to be wholly in the light.

4. Such a state of mind is most deplorable and often hopeless. What can be done when a man has grieved the Spirit of God away?

5. When an individual or a people have quenched the Spirit, they are in the utmost danger of being given up to some delusion that will bring them by a short route to destruction.

6. They take entirely false ground who maintain that if a religious movement is the work of God, it can not be resisted. For example, I have often seen cases where persons would stop a revival, and then say, "It was not a real revival, for if it had been it would not have stopped."

Let a man adopt the opinion that he can not stop the work of God in his own soul; nothing can be more perilous. Let a people adopt the notion that revivals come and go without our agency and by the agency of God only, and it will bring perfect ruin on them. There never was a revival that could exist three days under such a delusion. The solemn truth is that the Spirit is most easily quenched. There is no moral work of His that can not be resisted.

7. An immense responsibility pertains to revivals. There is always fearful danger lest the Spirit should be resisted.

So when the Spirit is with an individual, there is the greatest danger lest something be said, ruinous to the soul.

Many persons here are in the greatest danger. The Spirit often labors with sinners here, and many have grieved away...

8. Many seem not to realize the nature of the Spirit's operations, the possibility always of resisting, and the great danger of quenching that light of God in the soul.

How many young men could I name here, once thoughtful, now stupid. Where are those young men who were so serious, and who attended the inquiry meeting so long in our last revival? Alas, have they quenched the Holy Spirit?

Is not this the case with you, young man? with you, young woman? Have not you quenched the Spirit until now your mind is darkened and your heart woefully hardened? How long ere the death-knell shall toll over you and your soul go down to hell? How long before you will lose your hold on all truth and the Spirit will have left you utterly?

But let me bring this appeal home to the hearts of those who have not yet utterly quenched the light of God in the soul. Do you find that truth still takes hold of your conscience -- that God's word flashes on your mind -- that heaven's light is not yet utterly extinguished, and there is still a quivering of conscience? You hear of a sudden death, like that of the young man the other day, and trembling seizes your soul, for you know that another blow may single out you. Then by all the mercies of God I beseech you take care what you do. Quench not the Holy Ghost, lest your sun go down in everlasting darkness. Just as you may have seen the sun set when it dipped into a dark, terrific, portentous thunder-cloud. So a benighted sinner dies! Have you ever seen such a death? Dying, he seemed to sink into an awful cloud of fire and storm and darkness. The scene was fearful, like a sun-setting of storms, and gathering clouds, and rolling thunders, and forked lightnings. The clouds gather low in the west; the spirit of storm rides on the blast; belching thunders seem as if they would cleave the solid earth; behind such a fearful cloud the sun drops, and all is darkness! So have I seen a sinner give up the ghost and drop into a world of storms, and howling

tempests, and flashing fire.

O, how unlike the setting sun of a mild summer evening. All nature seems to put on her sweetest smile as she bids the king of day adieu.

So dies the saint of God. There may be paleness on his lip and cold sweat on his brow, but there is beauty in that eye and glory in the soul. I think of a woman just converted, when she was taken sick -- brought down to the gates of death -- yet was her soul full of heaven. Her voice was the music of angels; her countenance shone, her eye sparkled as if the forms of heavenly glory were embodied in her dying features.

Nature at last sinks -- the moment of death has come; she stretches out her dying hands and hails the waiting spirit-throng. "Glory to God!" she cries; "I am coming! I am coming!" Not going -- observe -- she did not say, "I am going," but, "I am coming!"

But right over against this, look at the sinner dying. A frightful glare is on his countenance as if he saw ten thousand demons! As if the setting sun should go down into an ocean of storms -- to be lost in a world charged with tornadoes, storms, and death!

Young man, you will die just so if you quench the Spirit of God. Jesus Himself has said, "If ye will not believe, ye shall die in your sins." Beyond such a death, there is an awful hell.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/charles-finney/quenching-the-spirit/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**