

# Resist Not, Grieve Not, Quench Not

by G. Campbell Morgan

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*The sermon warns against resisting, grieving, and quenching the Holy Spirit, emphasizing the importance of obedience, self-examination, and loyalty to Christ.*

**Scripture:** John 3:7, John 4:14, John 7:38, Acts 7:51, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, 1 Peter 4:10

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

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## Description

G. Campbell Morgan emphasizes the new responsibilities that come with the privileges of the current age, which also bring significant perils, particularly the dangers of resisting, grieving, and quenching the Holy Spirit. He explains that resisting the Spirit is a peril for those not born again, grieving the Spirit pertains to those indwelt by Him, and quenching the Spirit relates to those equipped for service. Morgan urges believers to self-examine their faith and warns against actions that may cause sorrow to the Holy Spirit, ultimately hindering God's purposes. He concludes with a call to loyalty and obedience to the Spirit's leading, highlighting the importance of waiting on God for guidance in service.

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## Transcript

NEW privileges always bring new responsibilities; and it follows, necessarily and naturally, that these new responsibilities create new perils. If this age is the most favoured in the history of men, it has therefore to face greatest and gravest perils. They are the perils of resisting, grieving, and quenching the Spirit. The terms do not refer to the same danger. There are those who have not resisted the Spirit who yet are grieving Him; there are also those who have not resisted and have not grieved Him in the sense in which the apostles used the word, who are nevertheless in perpetual danger of quenching Him. The peril of resisting the Spirit is that of those who are not born again; the peril of grieving the Spirit is that of those who, born of the Spirit, are indwelt by Him; the peril of quenching the Spirit is that of those upon whom He has bestowed some gift for service. To Nicodemus Jesus said: Ye must be born anew.

That refers to the first act of the Spirit in man. To the woman of Samaria He said: Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. That refers to the second aspect of the Spirit's work in the believer, as a perennial and perpetual spring. To the crowds at the feast He said: He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water That refers to the work of the Spirit, in its outflow through the believer, for the refreshment and renewal of other lives.

The three aspects of the Spirit's work, regeneration, indwelling, and equipment, reveal the perils of the dispensation.

In reference to regeneration the peril is marked by the word resist. In reference to indwelling the peril is marked by the word grieve. In reference to equipment for service the peril is marked by the word quench.

The first of these words occurs in the defence of Stephen. After having enumerated the acts of rebellion which had characterized the history of his people, he exclaimed: Ye stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit.& Resisting the Holy Spirit consisted in a determined hostility to His purposes and work. At the moment it was not always apparently wilful; the sin lay in the fact that they did not perceive their opportunity when it came. When his brethren sold Joseph, they did not understand that they were selling their deliverer into slavery. It was a sin of blindness. When the people failed to understand Moses, and refused him, and murmured against him, they did not comprehend all the Divine mission for which he was raised. They were hostile to the work of the Holy Spirit of God, and their hostility was the result of blindness. Resisting the Holy Spirit, therefore, is not necessarily wilful--it may be the result of blindness; but when God deals with men, He takes into account that which causes the blindness, and where the cause is of their own creation, He holds them responsible. Jealousy and hatred blinded the brethren of Joseph to his true position; and the same spirit of malice lay at the root of the opposition to Moses. They were blinded, and out of the blindness grew the hostility. The reason for the blindness was disobedience to the heavenly vision at some earlier point in their history; and for that disobedience they were guilty.

Men need perpetually to examine themselves as to whether they are in the faith. There are many who would vehemently deny the charge of being hostile to Divine purposes, whose lives are out of all harmony with the movements of the Spirit. He Who has come to set up in the heart of man the kingdom of God, He Who has come to bring righteousness and love into human lives as forces that transform and transfigure, has not yet been able to accomplish these purposes in them. By so much as that is a fact the Holy Spirit is being resisted. To the Corinthians the apostle wrote: Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith. It is a solemn warning, occurring as it does after the expression of a fear on his part: / fear, lest by any means, when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as ye would not; lest by any means there should be strife, jealousy, wraths, factions, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults The whole unholy brood may be summed up in the one thought of lack of love. Among the things of which the apostle was afraid, there were none which were deeds of open impurity. It was the spirit of faction, schism, and division that he feared; and his fear gave rise to his warning. Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith. That was a word spoken, not to the outside world, but to professing Christians. The question as to whether men are resisting the Spirit, as to whether they are a part of the force that is hostile to the Spirit in the world, is to be settled, not by the judgment that neighbours pass, but by the judgment that falls clear as the light and searching as fire, when in the place of loneliness with God the prayer is sincerely offered:

Search me, O God, and know my heart: Try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any way of wickedness in me.

There is perpetual need for rigorous self-examination as to whether those professing loyalty are still in the faith; for it may be that, by disloyalty to God, the mind has been blinded to the correct perception of the work of the Spirit; and without intending it, there may be hostility to His work, there may even be resistance to the Holy Spirit.

The second peril is that of grieving the Holy Spirit. There is no word in the New Testament that more clearly and beautifully reveals the tenderness of the heart of God. The word means literally, to cause sorrow to. Dr. Beet has said that the word grieve is one of the most striking instances of anthropomorphism in the whole Book. It certainly is a remarkable instance of the way in which God graciously uses the being of man for the illustration of His own activity of affection and thought. There is a sense in which it is difficult to think of God as sorrowing; and yet He stoops to this great word, to teach that it is possible for a child of His, indwelt by the Spirit, to cause sorrow to His heart. Let no one minimize the value of the word. Grieve not, do not cause sorrow to, do not make sad the heart of God.

The words occur in the midst of a most magnificent argument concerning the high calling of God for His people, and are connected with the statement: In Whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation,--in Whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of His glory. The Holy Spirit seals the believer unto the day of redemption. When He takes up His abode in the heart of the trusting soul, it is not only for present blessing, it is also for a consummation. When the Holy Spirit takes possession of a soul and imparts life, that life is the prophecy and the promise of an eventuality. For those who are children of God, the full meaning of the fact is not yet: Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him What the glory of the coming One will be, none can imagine; nor can they yet know what will be the glory of the children of God, when the work of God is finished in their lives. The Holy Spirit within, seals unto that glorious issue. The sealing consists not merely in setting a possession mark upon the property, but in the outworking in the life of all the beauty and all the grace of Christ Himself. As when our blessed Lord was transfigured upon the mountain it was not the transfiguring of a glory that fell upon Him, but that of a glory that was already resident within Him, outshining through the veil of His flesh,--so, when the Spirit seals, He does so by the gift of life, which is able to transform the character.

Out of that second aspect of the work of the Spirit grows the second peril. Whenever He is thwarted whenever He is disobeyed, whenever He gives some new revelation of the Christ which brings no response, He is grieved. The heart of God is sad when, by the disobedience of His children, His purpose of grace in them is hindered. Alas! how often has the Holy Spirit been grieved; how often has He brought some vision of the Master that has made demands upon devotion, that has claimed new consecration; and because the way of devotion and the way of consecration are always the way of the Altar and the Cross, the children of His love have drawn back. The Spirit has been grieved, because hindered in His purposes; the day of the saints' perfecting has been postponed, and the coming of the kingdom of God has been delayed. It is a very terrible thought that the grieving of the Spirit within the Church postpones the coming of the kingdom of God in the world. In proportion as men are obedient to the indwelling Spirit, and allow Him in the whole territory of their own lives to have His way, in that proportion are they hastening the coming of the day of God, and bringing in the Kingdom of Peace.

The things which grieve the Spirit of God are spoken of by the apostle in the section of the Epistle from which this warning is taken, and should be pondered in solemn loneliness.

The third and last peril is that described in the words: Quench not the Spirit. The word quench has no reference to the indwelling of the Spirit for life and development in the believer. It refers wholly to His presence as a power in service. The word itself is suggestive. To resist presupposes the coming of the Holy Spirit to storm the citadel of the soul. To grieve presupposes the residence of the Spirit as the Comforter within. The word quench presupposes the presence of the Spirit as a fire. This suggestion of

fire carries thought back to the words: There appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. Fire was the symbol of power to praise, to pray, and to prophesy. Moreover, the context of this injunction clearly indicates its meaning. In the argument of the apostle two things are linked: Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings. Here, then, is the third peril. The Spirit, Who comes upon the believer for praise, prayer, and prophecy, may be quenched. It is possible that the gift of the Holy Spirit, bestowed for service, may be lost; it is possible that those upon whom there has fallen, unseen by mortal eye, the Tongue of Fire, who have been called by God to the place of actual service in the Church, may quench the Spirit, and thus lose their power of testimony.

This is done by reversing the conditions upon which the Spirit was received. The apostles first received the Spirit of Fire upon the condition of loyalty to Jesus Christ. The glorifying of Christ in the life, and the obedience of the soul to the word of the Master, were the first conditions for the falling of the Fire. That included within itself the second condition of human helplessness, confessed by their waiting until the Holy Spirit came.

There has been much quenching of the Holy Spirit by service that does not wait but rushes, and by the burning of false fires upon the altars of God. The attempt to carry on the work of the kingdom of God by worldly means, the perpetual desecration of holy things by alliance with things that are unholy, the pressing of Mammon into the service of God, have meant the quenching of the Spirit; for God will never allow the Fire of the Holy Spirit to be mingled with strange fires upon His altars. What is true of the Churches is true of the individual. God has equipped His people for service with spiritual gifts. To each one some Fire-gift of speech or of influence has been given; but it has been lost, when it has ceased to be used in loyalty to Christ. Very many men have lost their gift of power in service, and have become barren of results in their work for God, because they have prostituted a heavenly gift to sordid, selfish service, to the glorification of their own lives, instead of exercising the gift only for its true end. Men have perpetually quenched the Spirit by attempting to work in their own strength, hoping that God would step in and make up what they lacked. God will not come and help men to do their work. He asks that they should give themselves to Him, for the doing of His work. This is no mere idle play upon words; the difference is radical. If men make their plan of service and then ask God to help them, they may, by that very assertion of self, quench the Holy Spirit. If, on the other hand, they await the Divine vision and the Divine voice and the Divinely marked out path; if they wait until they hear God saying, I am going there, I would have you go with Me,--then the Holy Spirit can exercise His gift in their lives. The Spirit is quenched by disloyalty to Christ, or when His gift is used for any other purposes than that upon which the heart of God is set. Resist not, grieve not, quench not the Spirit!

The deep meaning of these solemn warnings may the Spirit Himself reveal to all the Spirit-born children of the Father.

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