

Four Attitudes to the Holy Spirit

by Roy Hession

The Holy Spirit is grieved, resisted, or quenched when we sin and refuse to repent, but He can fill us with His power and presence when we trust in Jesus' blood and repent of our sins.

Scripture: Matthew 25:41, Luke 6:28, Romans 12:14, Galatians 3:10, Galatians 3:13, James 3:9

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Power Of Words"

Description

The preacher delves into the concept of cursing, explaining that it involves invoking evil on someone through prayers or wishes, calling down harm or ruin upon them. While it is natural for fallen men to curse, it is supernatural for them to bless, requiring a transformation through being born again. The sermon emphasizes the power of words, highlighting the importance of speaking blessings instead of curses, as seen in the radical teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

Transcript

HAVING seen the place and function of the Holy Spirit among the people of God, we are in a position to ask ourselves what is our attitude to Him; are we allowing Him to do His work of conviction and revealing Jesus to us as all we need?

The New Testament tells us that there are four possible attitudes that we may take up towards Him. The first is to grieve Him. 'Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice' (Eph. 4. 30, 31). Sin is that which grieves Him, especially those sins which are mentioned here in the context; bitterness, anger, evil speaking of others, malice and unforgiveness. When we understand that the One whom He has come to reveal to us is called by that precious name of the Lamb, meek and lowly in heart, and that He Himself is likened to the gentle dove, we can see the sort of things that do grieve Him. Whenever we manifest a disposition other than that of the Lamb (sometimes it is far more like that of the lion!) especially in our relationships with others, we cause Him grief. Although we have been forgiven so much ourselves, we sometimes stand on our rights and refuse to forgive another. He cannot go further with us in His work of blessing, until we see these sins and repent of them. For that reason, He proceeds to convict us of them, and strive with us. But it is ever the work of love; our sins do not anger Him, but rather grieve Him.

The second possible attitude that we can adopt towards Him is to resist Him. Stephen said to the Jews of his day, 'Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your

fathers did, so do ye' (Acts 7. 51). When He convicts us of sin, we can resist Him. We can refuse to call something sin which He calls sin. We sometimes work out a complete alibi for ourselves, which proves us guiltless. We do so because we know that to say 'yes' to the Spirit's conviction would humble us, for we should have to repent and put the thing right. This is what the scriptures call being 'stiff-necked', and it is indeed a serious condition to be in, and may lead to solemn judgments upon us, if persisted in. 'He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy' (Prov. 29:1). Our resistance to the Holy Spirit's conviction is seen so often in our refusal to accept the challenge of some brother or sister in Christ. We would not mind if His conviction were direct from Himself to our hearts, but very often He uses somebody else's penetrating words to show us our sin. And that makes it doubly hard to receive, because of our pride. But we must receive it none the less, if we are to be blessed.

The third possible attitude is that of quenching Him. Says Paul, 'Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings' (1 Thess. 5:19, 20).

This is the word concerning the more corporate activities of the Holy Spirit in our midst, as is seen by the phrase that follows, that we are not to despise prophesyings. We quench a fire when we pour water upon it, and we can quench the fire of the Holy Spirit's working in another, in a fellowship, or in a meeting, by 'pouring cold water upon it', by way of discouraging or actually forbidding it. The Holy Spirit demands to have right of way in the assemblies of God's people and in their fellowship. But so often we have a mental picture of the way in which He must work and we forbid all forms of His working which do not conform exactly to our ideas--especially those forms that would seem to by-pass our own pet methods and would seem to make nothing of our own special position. How prone we are to think that, if revival is to come, it must come through the Minister or the Missionary or only through those who have a special training. The Spirit, however, often brings revival through the back door, through someone of no account at all and of little official position. How often has not the Lord Jesus come knocking at the door of a situation, a Church or a Mission Station but the door has been bolted against Him because He did not come through the proper channels or along normal lines, and thus He had sadly to turn away from a situation that needed Him so desperately.

The fourth attitude that we can take to the Spirit's working is to be filled with Him. The Epistle of the Ephesians tells us, 'Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit' (Eph. 5. 18). The One whom we were grieving, resisting and quenching is now filling us and possessing us. What a capitulation and what a reversal this implies on our part! We have at last consented to bow to His conviction and call sin, sin. He is now able without hindrance to give us continual sight of Jesus as all we need to our immense joy, release and empowering.

When thinking of this matter of being filled with the Holy Spirit, it is important always to do so in the context of these three other attitudes to the Spirit. If we do not do so, we shall always be regarding the fullness of the Holy Spirit as a special blessing, extra to our inheritance in Christ, and that attitude will lead us only to striving and frustration. If we are not filled with the Spirit at any given moment, it is only because of one thing--sin. Through sin we have grieved Him, and are resisting Him where He has convicted us. Maybe we have been in a dry, unsatisfied condition for years, but it is all due to an accumulation of this same one thing, sin. But we have only to humble ourselves in repentance under the Holy Spirit's conviction, and He will witness in our hearts to Jesus and His Blood, and enable us to believe that His Blood cleanses what we have confessed. Then where the Blood cleanses, the Holy Spirit fills, and that without further waiting on our part.

This is clearly illustrated in the ceremonial cleansing of the leper in the book of Leviticus (Lev. 14). First of all, the blood of a sacrificial victim, a lamb, was placed upon his right ear, his right thumb and his right big toe. Then the holy anointing oil, picture to us of the Holy Spirit, was placed upon the blood in those same three places. First the blood, then the oil. And so it is in the experience of the believer. The Holy Spirit does not fill and empower the flesh, that is, unjudged self. He only comes where there has been repentance and where the Blood of Christ has been applied to sin by faith. Such is the value of the precious Blood to God, that, be a man never such a failure, if he has truly repented, that Blood gives him the title to expect the Holy Spirit immediately to fill his heart and life. He need go no further than the foot of the Cross. Right there, where sin is washed away, if his faith will receive it, the Holy Spirit will fill him and his cup will be running over.

I remember when a fellow-worker and myself were taking part in a ministers' conference in Brazil, a young American missionary flew in from his station in the mission aircraft. A great hunger of heart had brought him. In conversation he told us of the barrenness on their station and the defeat in his own life. There had been only one professed conversion in their area in the whole year. The missionaries had got so cold that if one of them would seek to talk seriously about the Lord, the others would jokingly say, 'He's talking like a missionary!' He told us how recently the Lord had begun to work in his heart again and had shown him things of which he must repent to get right with God. In some matters it meant putting things right with his fellow missionaries. He told us how as a result a new fellowship had begun to grow up between the missionaries and there was a new touch of blessing on the work. We suggested he might give his testimony in the meeting that day. He did so, and as he concluded what was an impressive story of the Lord humbling him and bringing him back to the Cross, he said, 'However I cannot say that I am filled with the Spirit yet, but I am seeking'.

Afterwards I drew him aside and said, 'While I praise God for your testimony I was disappointed to hear you say that you are not yet filled with the Spirit.' As we talked further, he began to see that he did not need to go any further than the Cross to be filled with the Spirit. In that place of brokenness where the Blood was applied to his heart, Jesus was made to him all he needed. And in as much as he had come to the Cross, God did indeed fill him with the Spirit because of the Blood of Christ-if his faith would receive it. There he began to believe in the value of the Blood of Jesus on his behalf. In those days he could be seen in quiet corners under the trees and elsewhere, bowed in wonder and worship, believing it all--cleansed in the Blood, therefore filled with the Spirit, and Jesus made to him all he needed, his righteousness with God and his holiness within. He returned to his station radiant, emancipated. As he humbly gave his testimony there, the Lord began to use his testimony to make others hungry. Christians began to repent and others began to seek Christ for the first time. He wrote back. 'It's rivers of living water again.'

How simple and how well within our reach is God's way of being filled with His Spirit.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/roy-hession/four-attitudes-to-the-holy-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