

First Sunday in Lent ~ February 17, 2013



Life Group & Family
Discussion Guide

“Grieving the Holy Spirit”

Ephesians 4:29 – 5:7

For the next two weeks we'll focus on our response to the things we've learned about the Holy Spirit. In his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul gave us two directives concerning the Spirit of God. The first is negative and the second positive: “Do not grieve the Spirit” and “Be filled with the Spirit.” Let's start with the negative.

It might surprise you that the Spirit can be grieved. Even though the Holy Spirit is God, we can bring him sorrow by our attitudes and actions. This is one of the many indications we have in Scripture that the Spirit of God is a divine Person – a distinct, personal being within the Trinity. Only a person can be grieved.

What are the attitudes and actions that can grieve the Spirit? Make it your aim this week to repent of those things that put out the Spirit's fire.



DISCUSS WITH YOUR LIFE GROUP:

1. **Read Ephesians 4:29-5:7.** What questions does this passage of Scripture raise for you?

2. In verse 30, notice the juxtaposition between two important, complementary truths. The Holy Spirit can be grieved by the actions of God's people, but he has sealed those same people for the day of redemption (cf. Ephesians 1:13). Why do you think Paul reminds us here that we have been sealed by the Spirit?

3. How would you categorize the kinds of things that bring sorrow to the Holy Spirit?

4. **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19.** In your life, where do you typically find yourself quenching the Spirit's activity?

5. **Read Isaiah 63.** When we grieve the Spirit, God will often chasten us as he did the Israelites. Isaiah 63:10 says that God "turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them." What was his purpose in doing so? How did the people of Israel respond to chastening, according to this chapter?

6. In Ephesians 4:29-5:2, Paul uses plural verbs and pronouns. We as a church can corporately grieve the Holy Spirit. It's not just an individual challenge. In what areas do you think UPC is "doing well" in terms of keeping in step with the Spirit? In what areas do you think we need to improve?



DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY:

1. Children understand what it means to make someone else sad. Depending on the age of your child, you may need to paraphrase Ephesians 4:30 this way: "And do not make the Holy Spirit sad" or "Do not break the Spirit's heart." Ask your child to confess areas of behavior or attitude that bring sorrow to the Spirit who loves us so much. Do the same thing yourself.
2. If God did not love us, he would not be grieved when we disobey him. This might be a good time to discuss why it is you sometimes have to discipline your child. It's not because you hate him or her; it's because you love him or her so much!
3. Has there been any "unwholesome talk" in your home lately (Eph. 4:29)? What words or actions have been hurtful to someone in your family? Paul says this is a way we grieve the Holy Spirit.
4. This week's passage details a number of other ways we can grieve the Spirit. Make a list of as many hurtful behaviors and attitudes as you can find in Ephesians 4:29-5:7.
5. Since we're talking about grieving the Spirit this week, perhaps it's time to give love to someone you know who is grieving the loss of a loved one. Think of a way you can bring joy to a sorrowful heart.

SERMON NOTES