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# Bringing Joy To The Holy Spirit

## EPHESIANS 4:25-32

### Introduction

1. Throughout this chapter (4) of Paul's letter to the Christians in Ephesus, he has implored them to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which [they] have been called" (4:1).
2. Each of them is to be known for their humility, gentleness, patience and loving tolerance for one another (4:2).
3. They are to work diligently to "preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (4:3).
4. When we last looked at this chapter, four weeks ago, we found Paul encouraging us to "put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth" (Ephesians 4:24).
5. Tonight, I want to begin our study of these last eight verses of chapter four by jumping into the middle of our text, verse 30.

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6. Here Paul writes, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30, NASB95).
7. Often, in our understanding of the Godhead, we think of our heavenly Father and His Son as persons, but of the Holy Spirit as an "it".
8. However, He is a person, just as the Father and Son.
9. When we read through the New Testament, we find a number of things which He does for us as Christians:

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- a. He is God's gift to us at our baptism (Acts 2:38).

“Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38, NASB95)

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- b. **He immerses us into Christ’s body, the church** (1 Corinthians 12:13).

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13, NASB95)

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- c. **Our physical body becomes His temple** (1 Corinthians 6:19).

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19, NASB95)

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- d. **His presence within us serves as God’s seal upon us, promising our future redemption** (Ephesians 1:13-14).

“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.” (Ephesians 1:13–14, NASB95)

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- e. **He aids us in our prayers** (Romans 8:26-27).

“In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to

the will of God.” (Romans 8:26–27, NASB95)

10. With all of this in mind, it is inconceivable that any of us who profess to be a Christian would want to grieve the Holy Spirit.
11. The question I would like for us to consider tonight is this: “How do we live our lives in such a way that we bring joy to the Holy Spirit and not grief?”
12. I believe we find our answer in these verses here at the end of chapter four.  
[It begins with our living . . .]

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## **A. A LIFE FREE FROM FALSEHOOD (25)**

“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another” (25)

1. Lying was a practice that had been brought into the Church.
2. In a parallel passage to the Christians in Colosse, Paul wrote, “Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self” (Colossians 3:9-10a).
3. Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives because of a lie they told (Acts 5:1-11).
4. Today, we live in a culture in which there is a constant disregard for the truth and a disposition to lie —for some it has become an unconscious survival technique.
5. Why is lying forbidden?
  - a. Paul doesn’t say that it is a sin against God, which it is.
  - b. Instead, he says it is a sin against the Body of Christ, the church —  
“for we are members of one another”
6. When we lie to one another we cause the Body [church} to become dysfunctional.
7. The purpose of a lie is to deceive or mislead.
8. Bold-faced lies aren’t the only thing which brings this about.
9. Little white lies and half-truths, even silence will accomplish such deception.

10. The bottom line is that the Holy Spirit cannot take joy in such a life because it divides the church which He seeks to unite.

**Slide 9****B. A LIFE FREE FROM ANGER (26-27)**

“Be angry, and yet do not sin; let not the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity” (26-27)

1. The opening phrase, “be angry, and yet do not sin” is drawn from Psalm 4:4 and indicates there is a proper anger — a good anger.
2. God Himself is sometimes angered — Jesus was angry when He cleansed the Temple (Mark 11:15)
3. If we are imitators of God (5:1), we will sometimes be angry.
  - a. We need to be angry at personal or societal sins.
  - b. Anger is a proper response to the twisting of God’s Word.
4. However, it is possible in our anger to “give the devil an opportunity” (v. 27).
5. Proper anger becomes sinful if we hold onto it or nurse so as to the point that it becomes highly personal.
6. If you or I find ourselves licking our wounds or cultivating an unforgiving spirit toward someone then we have unresolved anger.
7. If our lives become filled with anger we grieve the Holy Spirit of God.
8. He will not work in such a life or such a church.
9. We must deal with our anger for the sake of our own souls and the life of the Church.

**Slide 10****C. A LIFE FREE FROM THEFT (28)**

“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need” (28)

1. Apparently there were those in the first century Church who had a problem

with stealing — why else would Paul address it?

2. Theft has become a major problem in many of our retail stores:
  - a. Walmart has recently removed self-checkouts entirely from at least five stores.
  - b. Dollar General is removing self-checkout from 300 of their stores.
  - c. Target, in all 2,000 of its stores, is now limiting customers to ten items in self-checkout.
  - d. Costco has added more staff to their self-checkout areas.
  - e. Kroger recently added traditional lanes in a store which had been self-checkout exclusively.
3. Theft occurs in more subtle ways:
  - a. Padded expense accounts
  - b. Inadequate income tax reporting
  - c. “Borrowing” and forgetting to return
4. We bring joy to the Holy Spirit when we work hard so that we can generously share with others.
5. Paul praised the Christians in Corinth for doing this very thing (2 Corinthians 8:3-5).

“For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.” (2 Corinthians 8:3–5, NASB95)

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### **D. A LIFE FREE FROM ROT (29)**

“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (29)

1. “Unwholesome word” — rotten, putrid, filthy.

- a. Obscene language
- b. Conversation which runs others down and delights in the weaknesses and shortcomings of others.
2. Instead, we should speak in such a way that our words become a demonstration of the grace of God.
3. Our talk should be constructive, building others up.
5. Eliphaz, one of Job's friends, said of him, "Your words have helped the tottering to stand, and you have strengthened feeble knees" (Job 4:4).
6. Our speech should "always be with grace, seasoned with salt" (Colossians 4:6) — salt preserves, it slows down decay.
7. Solomon once said, "the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Proverbs 12:18b).

## **Conclusion**

1. Is the Holy Spirit grieved with us or is He joyful over us?

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2. Look at the last three verses of this chapter:

"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:30–32, NASB95)

3. Does this describe you?
4. If so, the Holy Spirit is pleased to dwell with you.
5. If not, you need to repent.