

- malice toward one another (4:31),
- shouting at each other (4:31), and
- slandering each other (4:31).

If we do them, the Spirit is grieved—sad and angry. The sins in this passage are mental (bitterness, wrath, anger), verbal (lying, rotten words, shouting, slander), and overt (stealing, malice). All three grieve Him.

The following do not grieve Him:

- speaking the truth to each other (4:25),
- being angry without sinning (4:26),
- not letting the sun go down on your anger (4:26),
- not giving the devil an opportunity to cause you to sin (4:27),
- not stealing any longer (4:28),
- working for a living and sharing your surplus with those who have needs (4:28),
- speaking edifying words that give grace to those who hear them (4:29),
- being kind to one another and tender-hearted (4:32), and
- forgiving one another as God has forgiven you (4:32).

They make Him happy, not sad or angry. They're all things He desires and has commanded us to do.

#### 8. Grief is the Holy Spirit's emotional response to human sin.

The greater the love the greater the pain, so infinite love is deeply hurt. Grief is an immediate response to our sins because its fountainhead is omniscience. As soon as you sin, every time you sin, He's grieved. The point of Ephesians 4:30 is this: Why would you want to grieve the Holy Spirit? He has done so much for you. He's your seal, your security, your guarantee of eternal life! By Him "you were sealed for the day of redemption" (4:30b).

#### 9. You can't grieve the Spirit and be filled with the Spirit.

If you walk in the flesh, you won't be filled with the Spirit very often—or for very long. The fact is,

if you want to be filled for long stretches of time, you must resist temptations to sin—especially the sins you enjoy. It stands to reason that the less you sin the more time you'll spend Spirit-filled.

#### 10. You can grieve the Spirit of God, but He will never leave you.

Sin grieves Him, but you won't lose your salvation. His indwelling is permanent: You are "sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30b).



Perhaps you're wondering, "What should I do when I sin and grieve the Spirit of the Living God?" Let's take one final look at our opening remarks and then learn the answer to this vitally important question.

Sin grieves the Holy Spirit. It makes Him sad, hurts Him deeply, and arouses His anger. Grieving the Spirit results in carnality, loss of fellowship, and divine discipline. It blocks your prayers and quenches the Spirit's ministry in your life. What can you do if you grieve Him? Use 1 John 1:9. Confess your sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In turning the control of your life back to Him, your fellowship with God is restored and your prayer life is revived. The Spirit is happy once again!



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# GRIEVING THE SPIRIT



And do not grieve  
the Holy Spirit of God,  
by whom you were sealed  
for the day of redemption.  
~Ephesians 4:30~

**S**in grieves the Holy Spirit.  
It makes Him sad,  
hurts Him deeply,  
and arouses His anger.

Grieving the Spirit results in  
carnality, loss of fellowship,  
and divine discipline.

It blocks your prayers and quenches  
the Spirit's ministry in your life.  
What can you do if you grieve Him?

### 1. Sin produces grief.

Sin produces grief in our relationships with others. Feelings get hurt; sadness, emotional pain, and anger result. Sin also produces grief in our relationship with God. He is saddened by the sinful things we say and do. This is the teaching of Ephesians 4:30: "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." The first half of this verse speaks of grieving the Holy Spirit; the second half of the sealing ministry of the Spirit.

### 2. The word "grieve" implies the Holy Spirit is a divine person who has feelings and can be hurt emotionally.

The Holy Spirit has a mind (Rom. 8:27), emotions (love, in Rom. 15:30; grief, in Eph. 4:30), and a will (1 Cor. 12:11). He teaches (John 14:26), testifies (John 15:26; Rom. 8:16), guides (Rom. 8:14), convicts (John 16:7–8), restrains (Gen. 6:3), commands (Acts 8:29), does miracles (Acts 8:39), calls men for special service (Acts 13:2), sends them forth into Christian service (Acts 13:4), and intercedes (Rom. 8:26). He can be obeyed (Acts 10:19–21a), lied to (Acts 5:3), and blasphemed (Matt. 12:31). These things can only be said of a person; they're all meaningless if the Holy Spirit is just a force or influence.

### 3. "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God!" is a command.

The imperative mood of the verb "grieve" (*lupeō*) indicates this is a command. The plural number of this verb shows it is a command addressed to all Christians. The present tense envisions a repeated grieving; with the negative, "Don't make a practice of grieving Me!"

### 4. To grieve the Spirit is to make Him sad, sorrowful, unhappy, to cause Him mental and emotional pain, to hurt Him deep down inside, to irritate and make Him mad.

In Greek, *lupeō* is a common word for mental and physical pain. It may connote grief, sadness, unhappiness, hurt feelings, emotional pain,

irritation, and anger. The disciples, for instance, were very sad when Jesus told them: "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised again on the third day" (Matt. 17:22–23). Of their attitude Matthew continues, "And they were deeply grieved" (17:23). *Lupeō* also denotes irritation and anger. When, for instance, the slave who was forgiven a huge debt refused to forgive another slave a small debt, but threw him into prison, his fellow-slaves "were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened" (Matt. 18:31). They were both sad and angry. The king himself was also "moved with anger" (18:34). It's possible to be unhappy, sad, grieved, hurt, irritated, and angry all at the same time.

The opposite of *lupeō* is *euphrainō*, "to cheer, gladden." In other words, the opposite of grieving the Spirit is making Him happy.

### 5. The term "grieve the Holy Spirit" occurs only once in the New Testament.

An understanding of grieving the Spirit comes, not from multiple references, but from a word study of *lupeō*, the immediate context of Ephesians 4:30, and comparisons with other portions of Scripture.

### 6. Sin grieves the Holy Spirit.

Since it's possible to grieve the Holy Spirit, as Ephesians 4:30 indicates, let's ask a further question: "What grieves Him?"

For sure, disobedience grieves Him. In Acts 16:6 the Spirit of God forbade Paul "to speak the word in Asia." Do you think the Spirit would have been grieved if Paul spoke the word of God in Asia? Of course.

Lying grieves the Holy Spirit. After selling a piece of property, Ananias and Sapphira gave a portion of the proceeds to the church but deceitfully kept back some for themselves.

Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?" (Acts 5:3). Was the Spirit

grieved by their sin? Of course. He's grieved when people lie to Him.

Ignoring the Bible grieves the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things" (John 14:26). Is He grieved when people spurn His teaching ministry? Of course. He desires all men "to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

Rejecting His leading grieves Him. Paul says, "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). Is He grieved when Christians refuse to let Him lead and guide them? Of course.

Is He grieved when unbelievers resist His convicting ministry? When He's insulted? Blasphemed? Of course. It's possible for both believers and unbelievers to grieve the Holy Spirit.

These are just a few things that grieve the Spirit. Now, let's press the point a bit further and ask, "Is disobedience a sin? Is lying a sin? Is resisting His teaching sin? Rejecting His leading? Blasphemy? Yes, they are all sins committed against Him—which leads to the conclusion that personal sins grieve the Holy Spirit.

### 7. In context, the command not to grieve the Spirit occurs near the end of a list of sins that may be committed against one another.

Ephesians 4:25–32 lists nine things that make the Holy Spirit happy and eleven things that grieve Him. The eleven sins mentioned in the immediate context of Ephesians 4:30 are, in general, balanced with an alternative—something we should do for each other. These grieve Him:

- lying to each other (4:25),
- letting your anger cause you to sin (4:26),
- giving the Devil an opportunity to cause you to sin (4:27),
- stealing from one another (4:28),
- speaking rotten words to each other (4:29),
- expressing bitterness, wrath, anger, and