

## LIFE CHANGING STORIES FROM THE BIBLE

### “GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT”

Ephesians 4:30. “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

You can only grieve a person, the Holy Spirit is a person, a divine person, the Holy Spirit is God living in you if you have accepted Christ as your own personal saviour. To grieve is to have emotional pain, sorrow and sadness. So we can grieve the Holy Spirit, the one who has sealed us for the day of redemption. The day of redemption is the day when we receive the fullness of our wonderful salvation, the day when we receive resurrection bodies at Christ's second coming.

A seal was a sign of ownership, security and destination. A king could have a signet ring on his finger with a special sign or image on the signet which could be transferred to soft clay before it hardened. This gave authentication to a document; this was the king's signature on it. When you came to Christ your heart was softened to receive the seal of the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Great Creator God of the universe to show that you belong to him, that your heavenly destiny is secure despite the fact that at times you grieve him. This seal is that the Holy Spirit lives in you.

When we look at this verse in Ephesians 4:30 we find it is surrounded by verses that tell us many of the things that grieve the Holy Spirit.

V 25) “Each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour.”

Lying grieves the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 6:18 tells us that it is impossible for God to lie. That's why we can fully trust him. In the same way it is impossible to trust a person who frequently lies. As Christians we need to be able to trust one another, be honest with one another and not take advantage of one another. Our old nature is dedicated to lying to get what it wants and if we give into it we grieve the Holy Spirit.

V 26) “In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.”

There are two kinds of anger, righteous anger like when we see a great injustice done and sinful anger when we want to pay someone back who has done something to us that makes us mad. God has righteous anger, so that kind of anger is not sin. With us, righteous anger can quickly descend into sinful anger if we are not careful. Let me illustrate. Suppose you saw an old lady come out of the bank when suddenly a young man pushed her onto the pavement and ran off with her purse. You would be filled with a righteous anger.

Two of you with righteous indignation run after and catch the youth and hold him on the ground, another person rings the police. Some more people come to help hold him down someone else returns the purse to the old lady while you stand up thinking to yourself that this rotten young man deserves to be kicked in the ribs, so while the others are holding him down you kick, kick, kick, him in the ribs. You have descended from righteous anger to sinful anger. Get right with God and with the person you have been angry with, before you go to bed that night. If we don't the devil can get in and take advantage of us.

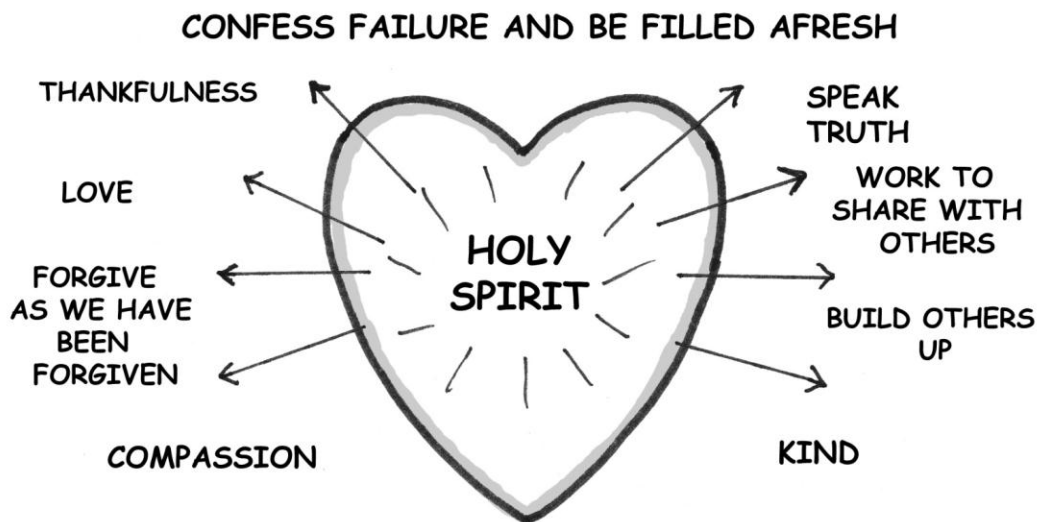
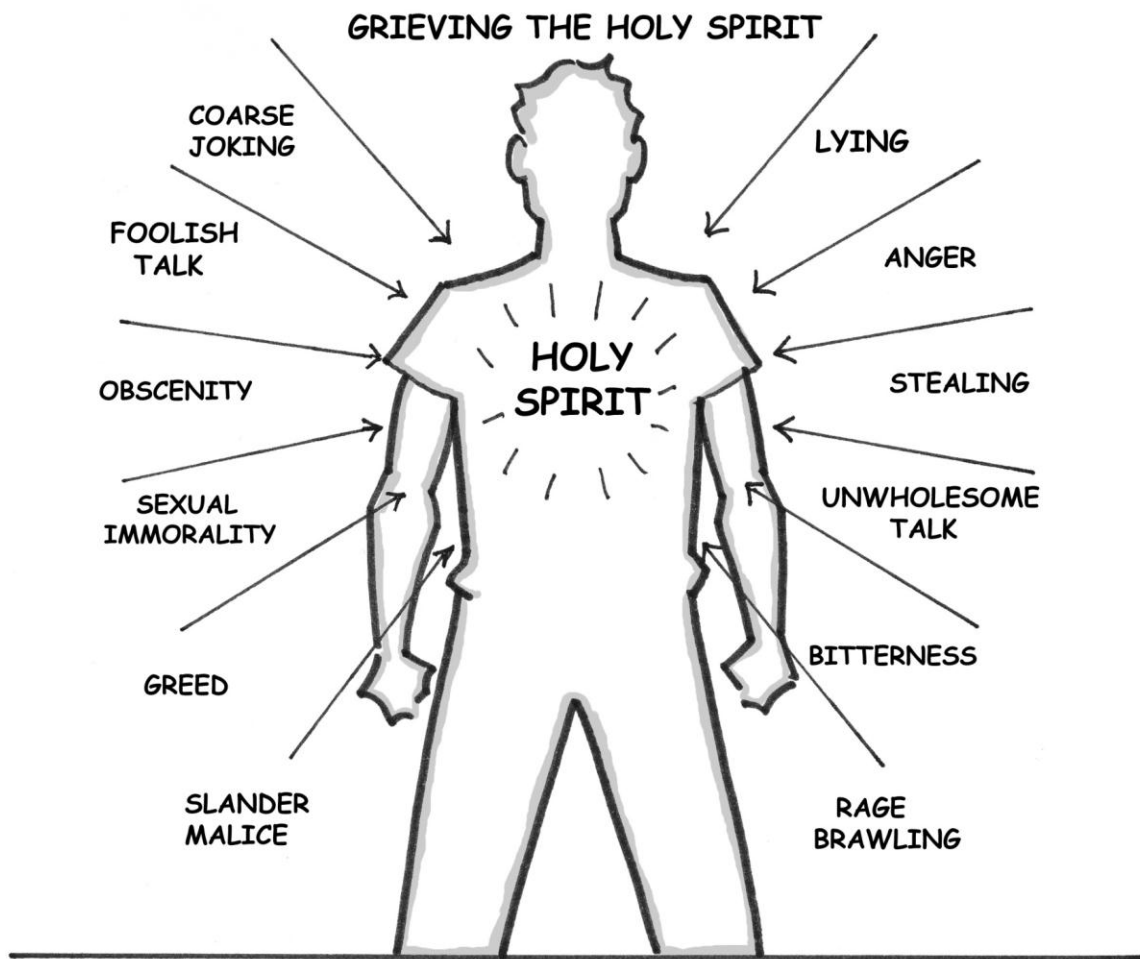
V 28) "Steal no longer." Lying and stealing usually go together. A visitor had their bike stolen from our property recently. When the suspects were confronted they said they hadn't seen it. But someone had seen them do it. The matter is now in the hands of the police. Surely when someone has come to Christ they won't steal. But we have to remember thieves can get converted and they have to be reminded they are to give up their old ways.

So the list of things that grieve the Holy Spirit goes on. V. 29) unwholesome talk, v. 31) bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander and malice. Then in chapter 5:3, 4. Sexual immorality, impurity, greed, obscenity, foolish talk and coarse joking.

I want you to imagine a mother who has one son who she loves very dearly, but her boy gets in with the wrong people and starts to commit some terrible and even some disgusting crimes and ends up murdering someone in a horrible way. Think of the grief, the deep grief, in that good mother's heart. She still loves her son but he is breaking her heart. That's a faint picture of the grief of the Holy Spirit in truly converted Christians who give in to the temptations of their old nature.

But Praise God, we can be forgiven and filled afresh with the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit we can have victory over our sinful nature and do things for the glory of God. Some of those things are listed in these verses. Chapter 4:28. Work, doing something useful with our own hands, that we may have something to share with those in need. V. 29. Speaking to others to build them up in their faith, meeting their spiritual needs. V. 32 ) Being kind and compassionate to one another. Forgiving each other just like Christ has forgiven us. Then in Chapter 5:1,2. Imitating God and living a life of love.

Imagine someone you know always cursing and swearing and having a filthy tongue, then one day you meet them and they are not swearing but saying words that draw your heart to God, you would say they have been truly converted. They are now living a life that honours God. As Christians, may we all live lives that honour God.



**BE IMITATORS OF GOD**

*FRANK HUTCHINSON*

