

**1 Thessalonians 5: 19; “Quench not the Spirit”, Sermon # 29 in the series –
“A Persevering Faith”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
November 29th, 2015, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

The Holy Spirit is that 3rd person of the Divine Holy Trinity who is sent into our hearts to dwell with us forever when we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is sent to every believer by the Father and the Son. In John chapter 14, verse 15, Jesus says, “If you love Me, keep My commandments, and I will pray the Father and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him for He dwells with you and will be in you.” His being given to us forever is saying to the one trusting in Jesus, “I myself will come to you, to teach you, to comfort you, to give you the assurance that this great work of your redemption and the application of it to your heart and life will most certainly begin, continue on, and be completed. There will be no failure on God’s part to complete what He has started. The Holy Spirit is given to every believer as the down payment or the earnest of our receiving our inheritance; that is, the complete and finished work of the application of Christ’s redemption to our hearts and bodies in our spirits being made perfect, and our bodies being glorified.

If we are to have a good relationship with the Blessed Holy Spirit, there are three things that we must study to avoid in our relationship with Him. One is to grieve Him. Ephesians 4: 30 says, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” The second is to resist Him. In Acts 7: 51, when Stephen was preaching to the Jews who did not like his preaching of Jesus and the great wonders and signs that he was doing among the people, he said to them: “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears!” “You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.” And then the 3rd thing that we must avoid is what we read of in our text here in 1st Thessalonians 5: 19; that is, the quenching of the Holy Spirit. What does it mean to quench the Holy Spirit? Well, I want to see if I can open up the meaning of this by looking first of all at the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of burning”. Then we will look at some of the things that you and I as believers may do to quench that burning. And then finally, we will make application as to what we might do to show the Holy Spirit that we are receiving His good ministry into our hearts and working it out in our lives.

1st of all – Let’s think about the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of burning.

I want you to turn with me to Isaiah 4, verse 1. Before this, in chapter 3, the prophet has been speaking of the sinfulness of the daughters of Zion, the influence of false Babylon upon those who professed to know the Lord, but they knew Him not. He describes them in verse 16 as, “haughty, wanton, and sensual”. It was, I believe, meant to be a prophetic picture of the false doctrine and sensual practice of many of the Jews of that day. No doubt, it was that. But I believe that we can also legitimately apply it to many people in the present Church age who claim to be Christians and yet they fit this same description. As we look at the details of this prophecy in chapter 4, I hope you will be able to see that these verses especially apply to that generation which is living just before the Millennium, the “day” which is spoken of in so many places in prophetic Scripture; that “day” which is yet to come within this present Church age. Because we read in verse 1 of Chapter 4, “In that day (that is - a specific historic time period within this present Church age) seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, ‘We will eat our own food and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by your name, to take away our reproach.’” “In that day the Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing for those of Israel who have escaped.”

If I am not mistaken, I believe that this is referring to those among the nations who, beholding the conversion of the Jews, would also have the reproach of their many sins taken away. They would apply to a Jew who had been converted, and he would refer them to the one Man, Christ

Jesus, to have it done. They would be called by the name which this man was called; they would be called Christians. They would eat their own food and wear their own apparel of their culture, but they wanted the reproach of their own sins to be taken away. The Jewish “man” will point these lost and desolate women from among the surrounding nations who needed salvation, to Christ. Lest you think this interpretation far-fetched, let me give you another passage to compare with it. Zechariah 8: 23 – “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’”

But we should also note: “The Branch of the Lord” which we read about in Isaiah 4: 2, not only refers to the Lord Jesus here in this place, but we also find Him referred to in this way also in Zechariah 6: 12, where it says: “Behold the Man whose name is the Branch!” “From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord.” The temple of the Lord referred to here is the New Testament Church of our Lord Christ. Zion is the City of our God, and the daughters of Zion are the individual churches which compose that City. The fruit of these newly established churches, in true doctrine and holiness, would be “excellent and appealing” to all of those who come to this time period when the church, both Jew and Gentile shall come to see eye to eye in spiritual things. But it will be especially appealing to all of those Jews who will have lived through the time of Jacob’s trouble which is yet to come, and are converted to Christ in the latter day. Because it says in verse 3: “And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy – everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.” “When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, then the Lord will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.” “For over all the glory there will be a covering.” “And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.”

This is most certainly speaking of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church at the beginning of the Millennium and all through that blessed time. For us, who are not yet come to that time, we should understand that we can still apply it to the way in which the Lord washes away the filth of the daughters of Zion. It will be by “the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning”. At that time, by the Spirit’s being poured out upon Christ’s Church, both Jews and Gentiles will be purged; the blood-guiltiness of Jerusalem will be purged from the midst of the Church of that day, as it says in verse 3. The filth is the filth of self-righteous pride and unbelief in the Jews, they whose fathers had crucified Christ. And “the filth” mentioned here is also the sinful sensual ways of some of the Gentile Christians in the Church of those days. It will all be purged away through the blood of Christ. The “spirit of burning” will be the Holy Spirit of God working like fire in the hearts of many sinners; first in the nation of the Jews, and then among the nations of the world. As all men are sinners, apart from Christ, they need to be purged by the spirit of burning. Even so these people in that day will need to be brought to a sense of their great sinfulness, and then to have the guilt and shame of sin purged out of their lives.

The Holy Spirit is the only One who can do this. He works on the conscience, and He creates the burning sense of shame when we have done something wrong. He is the One who works within the heart of a person to reveal the utter sinfulness of sin; the dishonor that it does to God’s name; the hurt that it causes to other people, and the awful sense of God’s disfavor and judgment coming upon the person who does not repent of their sins. It is when God the Holy Spirit is working powerfully like this, that people are wonderfully converted. If sinful people never feel the burning work of the Holy Spirit, how will they ever come to be holy, even as God is holy? How will they ever come to the place where they will take sides with God against their sin and put it away and forsake it? It is by His burning work, John Calvin says, “that He restores His Church to purity”. After this great work is accomplished, Christ’s Church will be brought to a place where the glory of God will

be seen in every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies. The glory of God and of Christ will be seen in way that is described for us here in these verses like the glory of God which was with ancient Israel when they came out of Egyptian bondage; the shining cloud to lead them by day, and the flaming pillar of fire by night. These were the tokens of the Divine Presence, and this is how it will be with Christ's churches in the latter day.

John Gill says on Isaiah 4: 5 – “The glory of the churches in the latter day will greatly consist in the presence of God and Christ; in the pouring forth of the Spirit upon them; in the purity of Gospel doctrine, worship, and discipline among them; in the holiness of their lives and conversation; and in the peace, harmony, and unity, that shall subsist with them; and the defense of this glory will be partly the ministers of the Gospel, in the pure administration of the word and ordinances, as means, but principally the Lord himself, who will be a wall of fire about them, and will appoint salvation as walls and bulwarks to them.” (End of Quote)

The Holy Spirit is also a spirit of fire and burning in relation to the zeal of Christian ministers in their ministry of the Word and evangelism; in the spread of the gospel and the truth of the Word of God. Turn with me to Jeremiah Chapter 20. Jeremiah was a man who loved the Lord and His Word, but he was tired of being mocked and persecuted in his ministry. He was ready to give up. But God had called him, and so he says in verse 7, “O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed.” “I am in derision daily; everyone mocks me.” “For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, ‘Violence and plunder!’” “Because the word of the Lord was made to me a reproach and a derision daily.” “Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.’” “But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not.” “For I heard many mocking: fear on every side!” Then in verse 11 he says, “But the Lord is with me as a mighty awesome One.” It was the Holy Spirit who was with Him, and the Holy Spirit was the One who was creating this burning fire in the bones of the prophet. This was the reason that Jeremiah could not give up preaching. This was what gave him zeal for the ministry of the word and the power to continue to proclaim the truth. And it is the same today.

I know that it is the same today because of what took place in Acts chapter 2, verse 1. “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.” “Then there appeared to them tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.” “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” This was the Church's baptism with the Holy Spirit and Fire as was predicted by John the Baptist in his preaching in Matthew 3: 11 when he said, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.” “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” You see, there is a fire that needs to be quenched, and that is the fire of the passions of our sinful hearts. And that is quenched by repentance, and what the water of baptism represents; the cleansing which we receive by faith in Jesus Christ, in receiving Him, and the work that He did for us at the cross. But there is a fire that should not be quenched, and that is the fire of the Holy Spirit's good work in the preaching of the word to us. That fire is not to be quenched, but to be felt, and received, and acted upon. It leads us to repentance and greater faith and zeal to lead a holy life, and to spread the truth of the gospel and the word of God to others around us.

Now 2ndly- Let's think together about some of the ways that you and I may quench the Spirit of God.

To quench is to throw water on the fire so that the fire is in danger of going out. It is, as John Owen says in his treatise on Communion with the Holy Ghost: “The opposition made to the actings of the Holy Ghost which are the “quenching of the Spirit”, as some kind of wet wood will do, when it is cast into the fire.” Owen is saying that you and I are like this wet wood when we quench the Spirit's good motions in our heart and life. We are like wet wood placed on the fire. Let me give

you a Biblical example of the Spirit's work in this regard and how He views us when we quench His holy motions. Turn with me to James Chapter 4. Here in James Chapter 4, James is making a case for a believer's receiving the ministry of the Holy Spirit to his heart so that it changes the way that he lives. We can see from these words what it is that quenches the Spirit. "Where do wars and fights come from among you?" "Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?" "You lust and you cannot have ." "You murder and covet and cannot obtain." "You fight and war." "Yet you do not have because you do not ask." "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." "Adulterers and adulteresses!" "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?" "Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

This is the verse I want you to think about from this passage. Verse 5 - "Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, 'The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously'?" "But He gives more grace." "Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'" What is the Holy Spirit described as doing in this passage? He is described as yearning jealously. Jealousy is the reaction of a spouse who has been faithful in marriage to their mate who either has been unfaithful, or they suspect might their spouse may have been unfaithful to them by having an affair with someone else. That is why the terms, "Adulterers and Adulteresses" are used here. James is accusing the believers that he is writing to of spiritual adultery in that they had become friends of the world. And they had become friends of the world by going about to live their lives, not to God and what He would have them to do, and how He would have them to act, but they had pursued the world's pleasures and used the world's methods to try to get what they wanted out of life. Their pride, their covetousness, and their fighting to get what they wanted; their lust and their willingness to hurt others to get what they wanted, is here called murder. Let us understand that God is a jealous God, and His jealousy of our hearts affections, and His jealousy toward our use of sinful and worldly methods of obtaining what we want in life, is really much greater than we think. The holy thoughts of the Holy Spirit are a fire which will burn against us if we do not heed the motions of the Spirit working in our hearts.

Now 3rdly – Let's make application as to what we might do to show the Spirit that we are receiving His blessed influences of fire to our hearts.

Turn with me to Mark Chapter 9, verse 45. Jesus tells us here what we need to do so that we will not quench the Holy Spirit's motions in our heart and life. "And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off." "It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched – where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched." "And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out." "It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire – where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched." "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt." "Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it?" "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another." Salt in these words represents the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ being infused into our thoughts, words, and actions by the Holy Spirit. Every offering which we make to God of our obedience unto Him is a sacrifice which is seasoned with His grace. Everyone who is seasoned with the fire of the Holy Spirit's striving with them, will make progress in righteousness and holiness. If you are resisting the Spirit and quenching the holy motions of His fire, He will search your thoughts. He will probe your motives and He will seek to bring you to greater understanding of how you should live. He will convince you, where you need it, of the danger of compromising with sin. If you have salt in yourself and have peace towards other Christians, then you will have every reason to rejoice when you come to understand that God is pleased with the way that you are living. And He will give you peace in your conscience, and joy in your service to Him. You will not be quenching the Spirit. Instead you will be thankful, most of all, for the constant communion and fellowship that you will have with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.