

“QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT”

By Mark N. Posey, Minister, Austinville c/C, Decatur AL

QUESTION: What does “quench not the Spirit” means in 1 Thessalonians 5:19?

ANSWER: Paul said, “Quench not the Spirit” (1 Thess. 5:19). He told the Ephesians “grieve not the Holy Spirit of God” (4:30). The word “quenches” (sbennumi), Gk., to extinguish, stifle.” Thayer, p, 572) is used in the same sense of extinguishing a fire (Mark 9:48; Eph. 6:16). Just as water, dirt or other things can extinguish a flame, so the influence of God’s Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) can be smothered in our lives by things such as laziness (Thess. 3:10), indifference (Revelations 3:15), worldliness (James 4:4), materialism (1 Timothy 6:10), evil companions (1 Co4r. 15:33 and false teaching (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Christians can allow the Spirit to be quenched or to not allow such to happen. We are taught to:

- Resist the devil (James 4:7).
- Be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10).
- Be not weary in well doing (Gal. 6:9).
- Keep yourself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).
- Be not conformed to the world (Rom. 12:2).

All that become Christians (John 3:3-5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:27) receive the gift of the Holy Spirit when baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Paul described the gift of the Spirit as the guarantee of our redemption in heaven (Eph. 1:13-14). The Spirit dwelling within Christians through God’s Word is like a perpetual flame of light (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:15; Eph. 5:8). As we increase in knowledge of God’s Word, the flame grows stronger (Pet. 2:2; Pet. 3:18; Gal. 5:16, 25; Rom. 8:4). However, if we drift away from that which the Spirit reveals (Eph. 3:1-5; Heb. 2:1-4), we subtly extinguish that flame (Heb. 2:1). Therefore, drifting away from God and His word quenches the Spirit. We must never quench (smother, extinguish, suppress) the influence of God’s Word by our words, deeds (Col. 3:17) or spiritual neglect (Heb. 2:3).