

Additional Holy Spirit Questions

April/May 2018

1. Are the Holy Spirit and wisdom the same?

Not exactly sure what is being asked here, but we might start by saying that the Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. Wisdom is not a person. You could argue that wisdom is a "person" in the Proverbs. However, in Proverbs the writer "personifies" wisdom as a person, but is not saying wisdom is a literal person.

That being said we know that the Holy Spirit is wisdom in the sense that He possesses all of the wisdom of God. So, I might suggest that the answer is "yes" and "no."

2. Is the sealing of the Holy Spirit about God "stamping His image" on me, like a seal pressed into wax?

Ephesians 1:13-14 reads..."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."

The point Paul is making here is that the gift of the Spirit, is God's "down payment" or His "pledge" that signifies we belong to Him, and that He will bring to pass what He has promised – namely, we will be saved fully and finally. We need this reminder because living in these fallen bodies on this fallen planet there are times when life can be so difficult we wonder, "is this gospel really true?"

So, by the Holy Spirit in us, God has made a "deposit," if you will, and the fullness of the payment – our complete and whole redemption - is sure to come.

Royal officials would "seal" important documents by putting their "seal" in melted wax, indicating "ownership" (this is a royal document). But that sense of "seal" (the image of the kingdom) in the wax is not the same as God "sealing" us in the Holy Spirit.

What "grieves" the Holy Spirit, and, is "grieving" the Holy Spirit something only Christians can do?

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

Remembering that the Holy Spirit is a person, we know that He has emotions. And the Spirit is grieved in the widest sense whenever we sin. In the specific context of Ephesians, it seems the Spirit is particularly "grieved" when we as believers fail to live in the unity that the Spirit brings to the body of Christ.

God says in Ezekiel 18:32..."For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares the Lord God. Therefore, repent and live."

While not saying specifically that the unrepentant unbeliever "grieves" God, it is clear that God takes "no pleasure" in people refusing to trust Him. So, can only Christian's "grieve" the Spirit? I don't know, but it seems God's great love being spurned is not without consequence on His heart, and therefore the heart of the Spirit.

3. What does it mean to "quench" the Holy Spirit and who can do this?

We find this admonition in a laundry list of commands Paul is giving the Thessalonian church in his letter to them. 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22 reads...

¹⁴We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

¹⁵See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.

¹⁶Rejoice always;

¹⁷pray without ceasing;

¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit;

²⁰do not despise prophetic utterances.

²¹But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;

²²abstain from every form of evil.”

I found this information from John Piper very helpful in answering this question...

First, quenching the Spirit is to despise the supernatural work of the Spirit and treat it with contempt. Right there in the context: “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not *despise* prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good... That would be the first way that we quench the Spirit: having an attitude of contempt towards God’s supernatural gifting.

Second, quenching the Spirit means neglecting the gift we have. Compare these two. “Do not neglect [Timothy] the gift you have, which was given you by prophesy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.” And then, “I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.” So, in Paul’s mind, neglecting the gift was virtually the opposite of fanning it into flame or quenching it. So, if you have a gift from God, you are quenching the Spirit if you don’t fan it into flame.

Third, quenching the Spirit means shutting down your emotions when joyful, spiritual expressions are called for. I get that from [Ephesians 5:18–19](#), “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.” So, the vibrant fullness of the Spirit overflows in appropriate expressions like singing and making melody from the heart to the Lord. And if you don’t like those expressions and you resist it, fold your arms — “I am not going to do that sort of thing; I am not going to sing” — you are quenching the Holy Spirit.

Fourth, and finally, quenching the Spirit means resisting the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the gracious behaviors that come from the Spirit. I get that from [Ephesians 4:30](#) where it talks about grieving the Spirit — and I think grieving the Spirit and quenching the Spirit are very close to each other. So, in front of the command not to grieve the Spirit, behind the command not to grieve the Spirit, we have these exhortations to be kind and gracious to other people. In other words, live out the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/am-i-quenching-the-holy-spirit>)

4. What does it mean to “worship in the Spirit” and is this the same as worshipping in “spirit and truth?”

To “worship in the Spirit” is simply to worship in dependence upon the enabling of the Holy Spirit. It is to worship God in the “fullness” of the Spirit – trusting the Holy Spirit who lives in us to bring to our minds the truth about God, and trusting the Holy Spirit to shape our affections and desires so that we worship with our whole being.

Here is a helpful paragraph from the *Tyndale New Testament Commentary* by Kolin G. Kruse...

Worship ‘in spirit and truth’ is easy to understand negatively: worship is no longer tied to sacred sites. It is harder to say what it means positively. Most likely it means worship through the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus would give to those who believed in Him, and in accordance with the truth of God as it has been made known through the person and teaching of Jesus. The Father seeks people who will worship Him in the Spirit and in accordance with the teaching of Jesus. This is a reminder that worship is not restricted to what we do when we come together in church, but about the way we relate to God through the Spirit and in accordance with the teaching of Jesus, and that touches the whole of life.^[1] (^[1] Kruse, C. G. (2003). [*John: an introduction and commentary*](#) (Vol. 4, p. 136). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.)

5. What does it mean to “insult the Spirit of grace” and does this mean that the person who does this was never saved?

First, let me say that the passage in which this phrase occurs is highly debated. That tells us immediately that whatever our conclusion, we need to hold it with great humility and beware of dogmatism.

I found a portion of this article by Al Baker in a *Banner of Truth* publication quite helpful...

And then you are not to insult the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29). The writer here

is putting forth a severe warning to second generation believers who have continued sinning willfully, blatantly, and consciously without the slightest desire to repent and return to the Lord. He says they have rejected the person of Christ (trampling underfoot the Son of God), rejected the work of Christ (regarding as unclean the blood of the covenant by which they are sanctified), and insulted, mocked, and ignored the Spirit (God's gracious source of power and ability to obey him).⁴ The Holy Spirit is the One who brings to us regenerating grace, who applies the fullness of Christ's redemptive work (regeneration, justification, reconciliation, adoption, expiation, propitiation, and sanctification) to every believer. To reject consistently (if we go on sinning willfully, after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain, terrifying expectation of judgment, Hebrews 10:26-27) the marvelous overtures of the Spirit's gracious work is the height of rebellion and folly. When the Spirit is prompting you to put away a specific sin, and you continue in it, unabated, unrepentant, then you are in danger of insulting the Spirit. We love to hear of the mercy and grace of God, but we also must remember the severity of His judgment and wrath upon the unrepentant. (Banner of Truth website, April 22, 2014). It would seem that in the context of Hebrews 10:26-31, that those who have "insulted the Spirit of Grace" would be people who having once professed Christ, are now rejecting Him. And in so doing, that they were never truly regenerate to begin with.

6. Is it correct to say that God calls/summons, Jesus saves, and the Spirit sanctifies? (1 Peter 1:2)

If we stick just with this text in 1 Peter, then we could say from this text that believers are those who are chosen by the Father (elect), and who experience the sanctifying work of the Spirit – that is, it is the Spirit who "sets believers apart" as God's holy possession. And, the "obedience" described here is not that of Jesus – when He died in our place to save us – but that of the believer who having trusted Christ, now lives to obey Christ by the power of the Spirit.

^[1] Kruse, C. G. (2003). *John: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 4, p. 136). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.