

1 Peter 4:10

1Pe 4:10 (NKJV) As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Ro 12:8 (NKJV) he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

As I have been trying to do each week, I want to talk about spiritual gifts from multiple and general levels and then get into the detail of each specific spiritual gift. I want to begin tonight by looking at a verse in [2 Timothy 1:6](#) which says,

2Ti 1:6 (NKJV) Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

The word for “**stir up**” comes from a compound Greek word “*anazopureo*”. “*Ana*” means again, and “*zopureo*” means to rekindle a fire that has almost gone out.¹ This is the only time this word is actually used in the New Testament, but in this context it does not necessarily imply that Timothy had lost his zeal for the things of God. The reason for that is because it is an infinitive that is in the present tense which speaks of a progressive, continuous action, something Timothy was to always be doing. This was simply serving as a reminder that he, as well as us, should always be working at stirring up and exercising the spiritual gifts that God had given to us. The last thing that a Christian wants to do is to suppress, to ignore, or even to bury the spiritual gifts that God has placed in them, so the encouragement is to stir up those gifts.² Week after week I have been trying to encourage each of us that we actually have spiritual gifts and that those gifts are one of the primary means that God uses in our life so that we can be a benefit to others. If we as Christians ignore the spiritual gifts that God has given to us, then in actuality we are ignoring God, ignoring God’s deeper work in our life. A good way for a Christian to remain spiritually unfulfilled is to just ignore, overlook, disregard, and just pay no attention to what God has done and wants to do in them. As believers, we cannot just casually turn our backs on what God has placed in us. When we do that, it robs God of His glory, and greatly hinders our usefulness. The negative side of this is expressed in [1 Thessalonians 5:19](#) which simply says,

1Th 5:19 (NKJV) Do not quench the Spirit.

I want to spend the majority of our time this evening on this verse for a number of reasons – even though it may not at first appear to even be related to spiritual gifts. In reality, it may be one of the most important subjects that we can deal with related to spiritual gifts simply because if we ignore and suppress and stifle the work of the Holy Spirit in our life, then in all likelihood we will not have much, if any, of an impact in our Christian life. The enemy is always trying to make us useless, and one way he tries to do that is by getting us to ignore the work of the Holy Spirit within us. It is very possible to reach a place in the Christian life where we are no longer even able to hear the Holy Spirit. It is the idea that we have become so comfortable in ignoring Him and His promptings that we no longer actually hear Him speaking to us.

¹ Zodhiates, 148.

² Harris, *anazopureo*, #327, ep.

Without any question, the Holy Spirit wants to produce within each believer the very highest level of Christian experience possible. However, in order for that to actually happen, believers are required to maintain an attitude of complete dependence on and trust in the Holy Spirit to produce His spiritual life within them. SPIRITUAL LIFE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT'S LIFE BEING WORKED IN US. However, what generally counteracts and negates that process is a lack of understanding what it means to “**quench the Spirit**”. If what a Christian genuinely wants to experience is the full blessing of God's work within their life, then they must come to a settled place in their life where they are willing to constantly yield their life to the will of God as revealed to them by the Holy Spirit and by the Word of God.

At this point, it is important to clarify a prevalent misunderstanding about the will of God. Our overall yieldedness to the will of God is not demonstrated by some particular issue in our life to which we yield ourselves to what we know is the will of God. For instance, a believer may not believe that it is God's will for them to curse, so they do not curse. However, being yielded in that one area does not mean that they are actually yielded to the Holy Spirit or to the will of God. As an example, there are many people who may attend church on a regular basis, and certainly we would all agree that attending a local church is part of God's known will for the believer's life. However, just doing that one thing does not in any way mean that an individual is yielded to the Holy Spirit or is willing to do the will of God in their life. In many cases, going to church may simply be a person's way of soothing their conscience for **NOT** being willing to be yielded to the Holy Spirit. They attend church and for some reason believe that by so doing that they have successfully addressed the will of God for their life.

What being yielded to the will of God means is that **His will has become the rule of the believer's life in every area of their life.** It is not a matter of being willing to do one thing or to do something, but a willingness to do anything if the believer knows that it is the will of God for their life. It is recognizing that the Holy Spirit has the divine right to rule the believer's life. If the believer says that they have given their life to Christ and surrendered their life to Him, then it should be reflected in their not resisting His will for their life in any area. At a practical level, the following is what often happens. We read something in the Word of God, and we struggle with its implications for us personally – so we just ignore it, read something else, and/or do something else. However, in this subtle process that happens almost without effort, we are refusing to submit our life to the Word of God, and in so doing, we simply “**quench the Spirit**”. So, if for whatever reason, we neglect the Word of God in our life or simply disregard or ignore what it has said to us, then in essence we are **quenching** the Holy Spirit's work within us. In all likelihood, this is much more the norm than not – hearing and knowing, but not doing.

Now, there are three primary negative things that a believer can do regarding the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We can “**quench**” the Holy Spirit, we can “**grieve**” the Holy Spirit, and we can “**resist**” the Holy Spirit. Obviously, the Holy Spirit can be quenched or Paul would not have given this command. In **Ephesians 4:30** Paul states that the Holy Spirit can be **grieved**. So, what is the difference between “quenching” the Holy Spirit and “grieving” the Holy Spirit? Well, “quenching” is what the believer does to the Holy Spirit when they disobey and ignore Him, and “grieving” is how the Holy Spirit responds to that quenching. We quench, He grieves. We have all experienced this at some time when maybe our children had good, clear, solid direction from us, and yet they disobeyed and did something that grieved us and disappointed us greatly. They disobeyed and we grieved. In its simplest meaning, the word “**quench**” means to extinguish, to stifle, or to retard. It is the opposite of “**to stir up**”. It is

actually used in [Mark 9:48](#) in referring to putting out a fire, and in [Matthew 25:8](#) for putting out a lamp. We can easily relate to the idea of putting out a fire or of extinguishing a fire. That is a very understandable analogy. So, the idea of not quenching or not stifling or not extinguishing the Holy Spirit means that the believer is not to fight against His spiritual influences, promptings, and leadings within them. His ministry is to lead, to guide, to instruct, to teach, to convict, and to reprove. So, in very simple terms, when a believer may “**quench**” the Spirit, it means that they refuse His will for their life, and simply do not listen to His instruction in their life. They refuse to let the Holy Spirit be their Guide and lead them, and the result is that their will becomes their guide. It is that process and continual work of conforming us to Christlikeness by the Spirit that Paul warned the Thessalonians not to quench. It is, therefore, quenching in the sense of **resisting, opposing, or challenging** His will. Quenching the Spirit may be simply defined as being **unyielded to the Holy Spirit** and simply telling Him “No.” It is the idea of resisting His promptings and neglecting His moving and working within the believer. It is a spiritual resistance and opposition to His persuading influence. There is no arm twisting here, no coercion, no forcing of His will on the believer. Rather, they sense and perceive His impulses within them, but unfortunately just ignore them. They just act as if they did not hear Him at all - but they did! That is quenching the Holy Spirit and Scripture simply says “do not do that”.

I know I have told this story before, but I remember when I was a student at Clemson University and we lived in a trailer park for students right on the other side of the railroad tracks. And every day the trains would come and go. They were noisy and loud and would come at all times of the night or day. At first the noise was really a nuisance. I could not sleep at night because of these trains roaring down the track at 70 miles/hour at 2:30am in the morning. However, the longer I lived there, the more I learned how to just ignore the noise until I no longer even noticed it. Now, that may be fine when it comes to the sound of trains, but it is very bad when it comes to the Spirit of God – just ignoring Him so much that when He does speak to our life that we do not even notice. Once again, that is what quenching the Holy Spirit means.

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