

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.

In our last study, we were looking at the what it meant to “**quench the Spirit**” ([1 Thessalonians 5:19](#)). What the word “**quench**” is referring to is our willful stifling of His work in our life. We can do that. He speaks and we just ignore or disobey. He moves and we just disregard Him. He reproves and we just treat it with indifference, and so His work within us is stifled, extinguished, and put out. When someone quenches a fire, they put it out. They smother it with something like water or dirt, and in the same way, when we quench the Holy Spirit we are smothering His work within us by doing something to ignore it. In essence, this is a replacing the will of the Spirit with our personal will. This is the whole issue of the spiritual life - whether a believer will simply do what he wants to do or whether he will surrender and yield His life to the will of God. What is known for certain is that the Holy Spirit always wants to work in every believer’s life. He always wants to lead, to influence, and to work deeply in them. However, it is up to the believer to respond to that work, and if they refuse to respond, then they quench His incredible work within them and for them.

If the Holy Spirit prompts us to show love to someone or to say something gracious to them or to witness to them, then do it; do not hold back. If the Holy Spirit speaks to our heart and says “*Do not do this thing, do not say what you are about to say, and do not act in opposition to what you know is contrary to My will*” - then do not do it. If we choose to not follow those promptings – positive or negative, then we are quenching the Holy Spirit’s sanctifying work in our life, and the result is that the character of Christ being formed in us is being greatly hindered. The Christian life is always lived out through choices, through decisions. The Christian life forces the believer to choose – to choose between right and wrong, between moral and immoral, between patience and impatience, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between kindness and anger, and between Christ and the world.

As a pastor, I have counseled with many believers who have made a habit of suppressing the voice of the Holy Spirit within their life, and at this very moment they have absolutely no desire whatsoever to respond in any positive way to the grace of God working in their life. They have become numb, insensitive, dull, and deadened to Christ, to the church, to the working of the Holy Spirit, and ultimately to God. They have no desire for repentance. There is no contrition and sorrow over the sins in their life. [Hebrews 10:29](#), probably the most severe warning given to Christians in the New Testament, declares that they have “**trampled the Son of God underfoot**” and “**insulted the Spirit of grace**”.

The writer here is not giving this warning to those Hebrews who were not saved, but the warning is for the believers. It is critical to understanding the passage that we appreciate that the writer is NOT stating in this warning that a believer can lose their salvation, but he is clearly stating that something can be lost. What that loss is cannot necessarily be quantified. However, what is clear is that when a believer ignores the demands of Scripture on their life that they will suffer some kind of loss – both in this life and in the eternal state. Once again, how to specifically quantify that loss is not practically possible, so just suffice it to say that ignoring the high priestly work of Christ and the divine work of the Holy Spirit

carries with it a great spiritual loss for the believer. Please notice that the ones to whom the author is talking have been “**sanctified**” (v29).

Heb 10:29 (NKJV) Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

Lost people have never been “**sanctified**”. That privilege is strictly reserved for people who are saved. I mention this simply because there are many commentators that consistently argue that this passage here is NOT talking about believers. They do not believe that the language can refer to Christians. However, just think about that for a moment. For 9 ½ chapters, the author has given the most amazing and glorious picture of Christ anywhere in the New Testament. There is almost nothing that compares with [Hebrews 9](#) and the picture of Christ given there. There have been multiple warnings not to take the things of Christ lightly – and there is a reason for that. Is it worse for a Christian to take Christ lightly or a non-Christian? Certainly it is worse for a Christian to do so. It is much more demeaning and denigrating to the person of Christ and the work of Christ for the believer to not take Christ seriously. Well, if we truly believe that (and I hope that we do), then do not we think that there has to be some kind of consequence for that kind of flippant, nonchalant, demeaning attitude to the most amazing Being in eternity?

Please notice that this is a sin that is threefold: “**trampling the Son of God underfoot**”, “**counting the blood of the covenant...a common thing**”, and “**insulting the Spirit of grace**”. “**Trampling, counting, insulting**” are the verbs and therefore they give the most insight into the actual meaning of these phrases. The word “**trampled**” figuratively means to “reject with disdain”.¹ It means to treat with rudeness and disrespect and insulting neglect. This is not just missing your devotions one morning or being a little rude to a telemarketer on the phone one evening. There is so much depth of meaning in this word that it is somewhat frightening to me personally – the fact that somehow in my Christian life that I might reach a point where I reject the word of God and insult Christ by just neglecting and ignoring what He says to my life. Unfortunately, this often seems very normative for many professing Christians – this kind of casual disrespect and disdain for Christ and His work on their behalf.

The second word is “**counted**” and it means to have considered something, and in this case to have considered that which is sacred as being just a common thing.² That which is sacred for the believer is never just a common thing. There is nothing common about God’s work in a believer’s life. In fact, the “**blood of the covenant**” surely must be the most sacred element in the Christian life. [Hebrews 9:22](#) stated that “**without shedding of blood there is no remission** (of sins).” The last thing that a genuine believer should ever want to do is to treat those things that God has made sacred to the Christian life as just being ordinary and common. They are not common. The Word of God is sacred, the blood of Christ is sacred, the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer is sacred, and the church is a sacred institution. Prayer is sacred, commitment to Christ is sacred, and the Lord’s Supper is sacred. In reality, all of the Christian life and all that it demands is a sacred work of Christ, and too often Christians just take these things lightly and indifferently. Then thirdly, the word “**insulted**” has the idea of actually “despising” the work of the Holy Spirit.³ It is the idea of just spurning and almost snubbing His promptings and His

¹ Strong, *katapateo*, #2662, ep.

² Zodhiates, 707.

³ Zodhiates, 596.

impulses and especially His Word. To just ignore His work or to just casually disregard and discount what He is doing in our life is a very serious violation of the life that has been given to the believer. The next two verses in that passage are very disturbing and sobering and should be a wake-up call.,

³⁰For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” ³¹It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

What a statement that God “**will repay**”. Will repay what? Will repay for “**trampling the Son of God underfoot**”, for “**counting the blood of the covenant...a common thing**”, and for “**insulting the Spirit of grace**”. It is a treating of Christ as if He was unimportant, as if He was insignificant and irrelevant and trivial. It is a treating of the Holy Spirit and His work as if He does not know what He is doing, and as if He is secondary and inferior to the believer’s personal desires and ambitions. The Holy Spirit is not a dumb spirit. How very serious it is to just ignore Christ, to ignore the Word of God, and to ignore the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Someone is going to ask the obvious question of “how will God repay?” Honestly, I have no idea and I do not want to find out. So, may God help us to “**not quench the Spirit**”, but to give great honor to His supernatural work in us. May we forever be stirring up the spiritual gifts that God has placed into our lives.

Now, the next gift that we want to address is the gift of leading. The word for “**leads**” is “*proistemi*” and it simply means to stand before, to preside over, to rule.⁴ This particular word is only used eight times in the New Testament, and it is only used by Paul. Four of the eight usages are found in [1 Timothy](#) and refer specifically to the qualifications needed for leadership within the local church, all of which deal with the quality of one’s leadership. Because of its listing in [Romans 12:6-8](#), it is my opinion that this gift is not limited to just those in leadership in a local church, but is a gift that anyone in the church can have. I like to think of it as the gift of administration or the gift of organization, and the reason for that is because of [1 Corinthians 12:28](#) which says,

1Co 12:28 (NKJV) And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

The word here for “**administrations**” is a different word than “**leads**” and this is the only place that it is used in the New Testament, but it appears that the two terms have a kind of synonymous relationship to each other because of their use in the local church. In fact, the first phrase of this verse says “**And God has appointed these in the church...**” It means to govern, and because it is in the plural, it most likely represents the specific plurality of leadership within the local church. It actually comes from a word that means to steer a ship, to pilot a ship, so at the root of its meaning is someone who provides the guidance and control, the administration over various events.⁵ The one thing that the pilot of the ship does is that he plots the course, he outlines exactly where the ship is to sail. These are the people who provide clear vision related to the actual work of ministry and how it is to be accomplished.

The gift of leadership can be accurately defined as the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to set spiritual goals in alignment with God’s purposes for the future. This

⁴ Zodhiates, 1220.

⁵ Harris, *kubernesis*, #2913, ep.

individual has the ability to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish those goals for the glory of God. The individuals with this gifting have the supernatural ability to provide the leadership and the organization that is essential for achieving certain goals within the body. They have the ability to design a particular plan of action and then find ways to ensure that that plan is going to be achieved. These are the people who have that unique ability to get things done, and in that process they rarely focus on all the problems that may be confronting them, but simply begin to outline a strategy for getting something done. These people are utterly invaluable in a local church setting. Once they have clarified what needs to be done, they simply have the ability to develop a meaningful plan to get it done. They know what resources they have and they are more than able to delegate responsibility in order to achieve the desired goals. What frustrates the person with this gift the most is when leaders do not lead. What they want to do at that point is to simply jump in and do it themselves, which at times may be perceived as being pushy and even arrogant.

If they have a critical time line to meet and they do not sense that anyone else has the same urgency to complete something as they do, then in all likelihood, they are going to simply go out and do it themselves. It is very difficult for them to work on something that just keeps dragging out. I think that is one reason why Paul says in [Romans 12:8](#) that “**he who leads, with diligence**”. The word “**diligence**” is “*spoude*” and is where we get the word “speed”. So, it carries the idea of doing a task with haste, with eagerness, with earnestness.⁶ It can carry the idea of pressing, or urging, of being zealous with much earnest effort.⁷ Simply stated, the person who has this gifting is not someone who will procrastinate about getting something done. You will not find them being idle and lazy with their time.

Their ultimate satisfaction comes when they visibly see other people enjoying the fruits of their leadership and labors. Once the task is completed, they are ready to move on to another challenge. They are prone to endure criticism and may even appear to be somewhat callous at times. They are always looking at the goal of accomplishing something. So, very often it appears that they are just using people and that the project is more important to them than the people working under their leadership. Because they are so intent in reaching the goals, they often appear as being insensitive to people’s schedules, to their being tired, and to their priorities.

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⁶ Strong, *spoude*, #4710, ep.

⁷ Harris, 1307.