

Ephesians

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[0 : 00] We will speak with the Lord's help from the Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter 4 and verse 30. Chapter 4, the Epistle to the Ephesians, verse 30.

And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.
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A seal is usually reckoned by us to be the evidence of a settlement. And something that is to be preserved, something of value, something that may, if necessary, be opened.

Something which is not for ordinary eyes to pry into. We all understand the use of a seal legally, lawfully.

But seal requires two things. First, it requires the wax to be soft. Secondly, it requires the seal to be hard.

[1 : 38] So that there may be an exact impression of the seal upon the wax.

And this gives it authority. If it is not sealed in this way, anybody can imitate it or use it.

But in the scripture, especially in the Old, in the New Testament, we are given the beautiful figure of the impress of the work of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of God's people as something which is to be regarded as of great value.

And something which they seek after in faith, believing that it is to be had. So that in writing to the Ephesians, the Apostle, he speaks to them of the time when they first trusted in Christ, the first chapter, in whom he also trusted after that she heard the word of truth.

After that she heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that she believed, he was sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory.

[3 : 36] In two verses, Paul most clearly sets forth the blessed work of trusting, hearing, believing, sealing, and what it is for.

Namely, for an earnest, something to look upon, a token, token for good.

And that not for this life only, but for the life to come. For redemption is the redemption of our body from all sin, the curse of sin.

Redemption is a complete deliverance from a body of sin and death and it is this which is so clearly impressed in the word of truth which is by the gospel preached and you can add as a people here unto you.

It is. And it is this word of truth that leaves an impression you will know and you cannot be without knowing whether the word of God has made a mark upon you.

[5 : 13] First then, softness. The gracious beginning. The opening of the ear.

The bending of the knee. Time of the first love, first prayers, first hearings, time when you first entered that noble, humble rank of seekers.

In what state were you? Soft or hard? Carnal or spiritual? Were you the old self spoken of in this chapter that we have read?

Was your understanding darkened? Were you then alienated from the life of God through ignorance and blindness of heart?

You once were. how hard you were there. How indifferent. Nothing impressed you.

[6 : 32] The most searching sober sermon or conversation or questioning by some godly person had no effect upon you whatever.

And indeed the reverse. and your nature was hardened instead of softened. So that the wonderful beginning of regeneration is always a softening.

A breaking down, a breaking in. Likened to the wax of the seal. Hard indeed before it is softened.

Brittle. But when the rays of the sun of righteousness according to the promise in Malachi shine upon the heart and these rays are gentle rays like the dawning of the day, very gentle.

so there is a sacred change. Change from darkness to light.

[8 : 01] Imperceptible at first and yet gradually shining more and more as some of you older ones can say to the perfect day.

And it is this that affects the chain. The ear is attuned to what it once hated.

Yes, hated. The footstool of mercy is approached whereas before it was hated.

And not as it approached only negatively but positively. That is with a living desire in the heart.

And we could go on to explain and unfold this change but one would hope that most of you know it well enough.

[9 : 15] And this readiness to be sealed. You may have very different thoughts about the sealing of the spirit.

you may have thoughts somewhat similar to those you have about the spirit of adoption.

Forgetting that these exercises and these thoughts are growing thoughts, maturing thoughts.

that you know what you want. You are in the road to getting it. You haven't got it. But you are quite positive that there is such a thing and your eyes are set to that great blessing.

at the same time who is it that has made this distinctive mark upon your heart? Why should you not go with the company of others against whom Paul warns the Ephesians?

[10 : 44] Why should you be so particular as to the impress of the Holy Spirit's teaching?

Why should you abide fast by God's handmaidens in the field where these things are to be gleaned if you are not secretly bound to heavenly bowers?

Why I ask? Is it not because it is later on in God's due time his purpose to more deeply impress and seal upon your heart through his good spirit those things which will be just what will be for your good?

Has not time past proved this to some of you? Look at the softness of your spirit in times of affliction temptation trial of one sort or another providential spiritual or both how beautifully soft hearted you were your eye could not refuse a tear could it?

Your spirit was mellowed you was a little child you had no high thoughts of yourself you could well read the hundred and thirty first psalm and say Lord my heart is not haughty not proudly but humbly you know what this is and the Lord has softened your spirit has he left you there has he not come with his word look in the early stages of your life at the different impresses of a scripture here and a scripture there that you carry about with you they're always with you when you think on what we call better things even from childhood perhaps never varies there is the impress whatever others say whatever they do

[13 : 48] I'm thinking of spiritual things you still have your own little shall we call it impress sealed upon your heart that can never be erased never has been and it is yours and you feel it to be a mark of certainty if there's one thing you can say like the blind man one thing I know whereas I was blind now I see turn which way you will endure what trials you may you find that this word mysteriously abides and even the arch enemy himself cannot take it away what is this to whom are you going to give the acknowledgement of the impressed you cannot possibly say that you studied that you picked it out that you chose it selected it much less can you say that you stamped it upon the soft wax of your heart that time look at some of your trials in later years and how the word of

God has been so blessedly suitable to you that you could not of yourself have found a word that would meet your need and abide with you so definitely and positively as this that has been impressed but the spirit of the impression first your sinnership what an impress that is what it must have been to these idol worshippers at Ephesus and they parted with their books and their great Diana and left it all to follow

Christ when their idolatry sinfulness the evil of it was impressed see the mark of the impression upon your heart is every impression as deep as another have you met anyone that has seemed to be much more deeply impressed as a sinner than you has it worried you have you thought that there's been some miscarriage in the heavenly work and that you ought to have been made a greater sinner than your sister your brother or anyone else

I believe the answer to this question is yes I have how far are you right if he that begun a good work in you is going to carry it on are you going to criticize him and say he's not doing it properly and if you find would entertain a hope of a beginning surely you must allow that the carrying on must be still in his hand the impress remains and that is the point and it will remain until the end of the journey but not only of sinnership but on the ground of your hope not in works good works into which pathway many have been left to go in order that they may know more fully that it is by grace not seeking merit but to feel at last whichever way you come through the more gentle dealings of the

Lord with you it may well be for some of you may say well I've never been left to go into deep sin I've never been left to feel the thunderings of Mount Sinai in my heart as I have heard of some no no well same argument applies spiritually that he that hath begun will continue it in his own order but the point is upon what ground of hope has this impress been stamped upon your heart what is the outline and the impression of it is it the blood of Christ for your sin have you this sacred impress you know you've just sung of it that doesn't mean to say believe it

[20 : 37] I know but has it you know can you mark sweetness of the time the softness of your spirit can you tell how valuable it was to you that time that your hope was fixed on the sinner turning blood of Christ are you not thankful is not this precious thing do you would you part with it could you these are mere human words on my part for the answer undoubtedly is no they will never be taken away never they never have been through the wildest storm and the darkest temptation so this seal is a rigid holy divine seal of what of covenant truth of covenant blessing and this seal is as we read in the revelation of that book that

John saw which was sealed with seven seals and John wanted that book opened and it was powerfully impressed upon him so much so that he wept because none was found to open the book to break the seal that is none who had the legal authority and no one without legal authority speaking naturally can open the seal but when the voice in the fifth of revelation you will read it there spoke of the lamb who had prevailed to open the book how happy was John who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof no man in heaven nor in earth neither under the earth was able to open the book either to look thereof one of the elders said weep not behold the lion of the tribe of

Judah the root of David hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof there is an unsealing of the seal there is an entering into the reality of truth and that entering in is as when the book was opened for John the divine a sacred hope a sacred ground for faith to lay hold upon and in many cases a sacred assurance and a sweet spirit of adoption that all is well that the seal meant what it said that he will perform it till the day of

Jesus Christ and that all has been read and impressed and that you carry with you that is precious to you those shall I say half dozen scriptures are your sacred seals we could go on upon these lines as you can see in order to keep within the compass of the text and hope finish it you have further than this the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit the seal of his call the time appointed when he watched over you when you were

Satan's blind slave that that is going on now in his church for all we know this very hour it is his holy office to strike a sinner the arrow of conviction there was in your case wasn't there there came a time father said Jesus the hour is come and as it was with the Lord Jesus in his great sufferings so it is in every covenant purpose the appointed time rolls on a pace not to propose but call by grace the holy spirit the eternal covenant there was that mark upon the forehead there was that mark upon the newborn child cast out in his blood to the loathing of his person even though in the case of the dying thief that command came forth the last moment nevertheless there is the overshadowing the watchfulness of the holy ghost and then in all the changing scenes of life and here comes the first part of the text grieve not the holy spirit of

[27 : 47] God can he be grieved and can this grief be detected is the union the living connection between a convicted sinner and the holy spirit of truth so intimate that that guilty sinner can tell when the holy spirit is grieved do you ever sing that hymn return oh holy dove return sweet messenger of peace of love which he began and in company with the blessed lord jesus is carrying on that he can withhold his hand that you can feel a distance, a barrier, a lack of progress, a sadness?

Is this possible between a poor unworthy creature upon earth and the gracious spirit of truth?

He who seals and you who grieve, we who grieve.

Now this, this is one of the unmistakable evidences. This is where so many with a name to live sail along pleasantly and have no sense of his withdrawing.

The Sabbath does not dawn for them, though they have an outward religion, when they have to say, oh, barren and dark.

[30 : 44] Oh, the cloud. What's wrong? Why am I like this? Why can't I pray? Why can't I read?

Why is that little chapel such a job to get to? Why don't I want to go? Why can't I bear my breast to the searchings of the ministry of God?

Why is it? What is the cause? These are the solemn and unmistakable evidences of grieving the Holy Spirit of truth.

That blessed messenger that dealt with you in the beginning, is dealing with you still, but will not be trifled with, seeing that he has given you his plain command, his holy precepts.

You have quite a few of them in this chapter. The latter part of Ephesians abounds with them.

[32 : 15] Older's epistle to the Romans. It is a willful disobedience.

It is a willful rebellion. It is following, as Paul puts it here, after the vanities, the Gentiles, it is seeking those things which the Holy Spirit will not have.

And he puts it in verse 27, neither give place to the devil. Is this therefore something which is erected along the road to heaven as a solemn warning?

Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you're sealed against the day of redemption.

Now this blessed Spirit, God, therefore, has so much to do with the election of grace, that for the honor and glory of his great and holy name, as well as the honor of the dear Son of God, and the honor of the Holy Father, he is bound, bound to show you that you cannot walk as you like, that you are not your own, that you cannot walk in your own dictates.

[34 : 28] Are you complaining of a lack of progress? Are you complaining of a lack of progress? Does the thought ever penetrate your heart that you're a backslider?

could anyone with loving criticism say to you, well, my dear friend, don't you see that to us it is quite clear that you're walking inconsistent?

It grieves us. bound to grieve the Holy Spirit if we grieve one another. Can you not see that your life is fast ebbing away and the moment of truth is yet to come, perhaps upon a dying bed, when you're to be suddenly assailed and assaulted with this most solemn thought that you've spent much of your days as a solemn shadow.

You've had a name to live but not experience. And has the Holy Spirit withheld his operations from you?

Has he been grieved? Look at the Old Testament picture for a moment and see how God's anger rose to such a height.

[36 : 17] For example, when Moses came down from the mount with Joshua and they'd made the calf and God's anger waxed hot and Moses too so that this precious, these precious tables of stone written with the finger of God he dashed to pieces.

Can you face an angry God? That wrath says the psalmist who can stand before his anger.

Now with the Holy Spirit of truth to the election of grace we are favored to use a different word and that is grieve not.

Grieve not. This is his moderated, divinely moderated anger. anger is grieved.

Jesus was grieved when he saw his disciples disputing by the way who should be the greatest. It grieved him.

[37 : 46] And he took a little child and set him in the midst, softened their hearts. is your pathway one of disobedience?

And do you know it? Do you feel a lack? Oh, you say if only I could break the barrier. Oh, only I could break through.

Have you grieved the Holy Spirit of truth? Do you know what is wrong? Dig deeply into the court of conscience.

Do you know what is wrong? You come to the house of God let me ask one question prayerless.

And do you think that there are those that have come prayerfully? Do you feel that those that come have made their, bared their breasts, confessed their sins, laid their guilt before their God, before they came?

[39 : 13] Do you think that there are such who say, Lord, speak for thy servant hearing? Let it be as it may please thee, whether for doctrine, for instruction, for reproof, for correction, which however it may please thee, Lord, speak, to come to the house of God near, trembling at his word, seeking a fresh impress, and yet having laid your case before him, you bear your heart.

it will often be contained in one word, won't it? Unworthy, unworthy, of the least, of all the mercy and the truth which thou shone thy servant.

This is disobedience, disobedience, to the precept, the perceptive word of the Holy Ghost is vital to us.

There's scarcely any need for me to read some of these out. You might read them at your leisure to see how far they search you out.

You give place to the devil. You listen to his suggestions. Do you believe what he says?

[41 : 10] Is he a friend of yours in so far that you entertain what he says? And do not distinguish from the word of God that your very unworthiness and your very need is the thing that in the sight of God is a great price and to this man will I look at his poor or do you not understand that?

Are you poor enough for such a text? Because if you're not where do you stand? What is your religion?

And how much is it worth? and then rebellion will grieve the Holy Spirit knowing what to do and refusing to do it.

That great mountain not my will but thine be done may stand in your way. if it were but given to you in the softness of your heart for the Holy Ghost to impress that royal seal upon your heart how well it would be.

Not my way but thine. Not my will but thine. a sacred submission to the will of God as distinct from open or covered rebellion whereby you persist with life in your spirit.

[43 : 03] The Lord as with the Ephesians has turned them from darkness to light. He has quickened them. you hath he quickened who were dead.

Yes but they have to pass through all these scenes and they have to mourn an absent God a grieved Holy Spirit.

His work therefore is made known to us chiefly in two ways as clearly and distinctly as nature speaks to us of a great God.

The first is his holy word. Here is the work of the holy ghost in divine inspiration.

life. This is what he says. These are the people to whom he says it. These are his requirements. This is the way of life.

[44 : 18] This is the way of peace, spiritual prosperity. His promises with regard to grace all sufficient, patience all sufficient, the trial of your faith being in his hand for his determination as to its duration.

all these things are his own inscription in the written word. And to depart from these is to grieve him.

To contradict them in your own heart, to deny them as truth is to grieve him. the second great evidence of the Holy Spirit is the spirit of prayer.

These two go together because the whole volume from start to finish gives evidence of the spirit of prayer.

And it has about it a particular note, and that is a personal note. There are general prayers, but then there are prayers in the first person.

[45 : 54] I, I, I, me, me, me. Now this is the impress, the stamp of the good spirit in the word of God, that there were such people who used such words, and prayed such prayers, and these prayers are to be directed in one name, and one name only, and that is not the name of the Holy Spirit.

sacred mystery of the blessed spirit is beautifully set before us by the hymn writer, as well as in the teaching of the scripture, that the blessed spirit omits to speak of what himself has done, but turns the eyes another way to Jesus and his blood.

God and yet there he is, teaching a sinner to pray through the merits and in the name of Christ and teaching him through the word of God.

I was only speaking last night to my own people at the prayer meeting at home, the first chapter in Malachi, concerning the Gentiles, that they should offer pure incense and a pure offering.

And what is this incense? incense? How do we know anything about it apart from the Holy Spirit? It is he that caused it to be written by the will of God in the eternal covenant that incense should be compounded as one of the things used in the worship in the tabernacle.

[48 : 02] And now we have the sacred influence the incense of the Lord Jesus. All our prayers and all our praises are directed by the Holy Ghost through and to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as is revealed in the word of God.

To depart from these therefore is to be found upon the wrong road. There is perhaps an explanation therefore to someone tonight and I would find hope there is that you happen to look very far for the anxiety distance darkness concerned that you may be feeling and have felt for a long time.

And it lies in this that you have grieved the Holy Spirit truth who first began with you who is carrying on his work but is teaching you in this felt desertion a sanitary lesson and will bring you out of it by teaching from his own word alone and nothing else and will also grant you deliverance light and help through his holy inspired word which is written for our learning and given by inspiration of God.

So do not hunt about for something that isn't promised or that the gospel knows nothing of but remember this that the Holy Spirit can be grieved that his tender divine feelings are touched by the unbelief yes the disobedience the rebellion and all these other abiding evils in our heart and in grieving him he withdraws his influence but in walking in his ways he restores it this is according to his promise until the day of redemption many have to travel right down to the end of the journey in darkness comparative darkness they stand in their own light they are their own greatest enemy they nestle to themselves a spirit of dark unbelief rebellion does he leave them no he will redeem them in the end ultimately and bring them out but how will it be in what manner of spirit will they be found ah that wonderful spirit whereby they will testify only if only

I had been brought out of this years ago how different my life would be poor Samson poor Samson closing moments of his life he begs just once more and the good spirit returns his strength and he dies a saved sinner but what a history leaves behind him these are warnings on the other hand you come to one who when the child Jesus was brought into the temple took him up into his arms blessed him and said Lord I'm ready now Lord now let's thou thy servant depart in peace for mine eyes have seen thy salvation nothing else to live for nothing everything now is settled

[53 : 26] I have this blessed child in my arms I can do no more grieve not grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption he will never forsake his own word but our happiness spiritual happiness peace depend upon following through his grace these gracious precepts commands and how are we to do it the word is stamped indelibly it is this if ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children how much more shall your heavenly

Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask amen to come to ah honey exemplar not.