Grieving the Holy Spirit of God

Ephesians 4:30

Introduction

1. Why do people have children? Answers may abound, but the word which transcends them all is "relationship." People have children to become parents, i.e. to have the precious relationship (one of ultimate love) which comes with having children.
    a. They can see themselves in their children – physical characteristics.
    b. More than that, they nurture their children after their values – they ultimately sought children because they wished to share themselves with them – to cultivate something important, or of interest in them – to make them like them in the most important ways, ways beyond the merely tangible and physical.
    c. For Christians, much of the same applies with the added weight of the importance and desire to introduce them to God, and to share them with God.
2. We have one Father as Christians – **Ephesians 4:6** – He loves us deeply and intentionally made us His children (elected us in Christ) for the same reason, but on a cosmic and eternal scale.
3. To seek a relationship with God without understanding His decision to reveal Himself as our Father is to do so in vain.
4. This understanding should motivate us to growth in faithfulness and add to our understanding of the weight of unfaithfulness toward Him. It causes God great grief – **Ephesians 4:30**
5. What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit? How does it happen?

I. The Nature of the Holy Spirit
    A. A Divine Person – He Grieves
        a. The Holy Spirit is not a thing, or a concept, but a person.
        b. He grieves – ***"by whom"*** – chosen by translators instead of "by which" due to the personhood of the Spirit, but in context the connection to the emotion of grief.
        c. He can be lied to – **Acts 5:3-4** – ***"to God"*** – He is a Divine Person.
        d. He communicates love – **Romans 5:5**
        e. He fosters love – **Romans 15:30**
        f. The capacity to love and be loved includes the capacity to be grieved (**Ephesians 4:30**).
    B. He Acts Through Instrumentality and Agency
        a. Divine activity recorded in scripture consistently reveals the pattern of agency and instrumentality:

i. Father – **Genesis 1:1; Psalm 33:6, 9; John 1:1-3** (creation through the agency of the Word)
ii. Son – **John 14:16-18** (presence through the Spirit); **Ephesians 1:22-23** (activity in the world through the church)

b. The Spirit – **2 Peter 1:19-21** (revelation through people); **Ephesians 6:17** (active force through the word)

II. Our Relation to the Holy Spirit

A. Communication

a. Jesus promised full revelation – **John 14:25-26; 15:26; 16:12-15** – through the Spirit of truth.
b. The Spirit communicates the mind of God – **1 Corinthians 2:9-12**
c. We must listen – **Ephesians 5:17-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22**

B. Faithful Obedience

a. As the Spirit communicates, man is to submit – **Acts 16:6-10**
i. **(vv. 9-10)** – the vision is recognized as the Lord calling them.
ii. **Acts 13:2-3** – the Spirit initiated the first missionary journey.
iii. Here, the Spirit is dictating through the vision the Lord's intentions of them, and they must submit. (To disobey the Spirit is to disobey the Lord.) (vision – ***"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day,"*** **Revelation 1:10**)

b. The Spirit sanctifies for obedience – **1 Peter 1:2**
i. In receiving the Spirit's communication through the word, and obeying it, one is set apart for salvation – **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**
ii. This relationship with the Spirit is continued through the continued reception of His truth, and obedience to it – **2 Thessalonians 2:15**

c. The Spirit communicates with us daily through the word of God, and the retaining of that word in our hearts, calling us to resist the pull of the flesh, and submit to Him – **Galatians 5:16-18**
i. **(v. 18)** – ***"under"*** (*hypo*) communicates the idea of submission (*hypotassō*).
ii. Not under the law because you are submitting to the Spirit.

C. Fellowship

a. When we listen to the Holy Spirit, and submit to His loving rule and guidance, we engage in fellowship with Him.
b. **2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:1** – such is fellowship between brethren through the Spirit, but the basis of that is their individual

fellowship with the Spirit ***("we both have access by one Spirit to the Father," Ephesians 2:18***)

c. In that fellowship we belong to Him – **Romans 8:9, 11, 14** – belong to Christ, indwelt by the Spirit, children of God.

III. Grieving the Holy Spirit of God

A. His Desire for Possession

a. "by whom you were sealed" (Ephesians 4:30)

i. **Sealed** – *sphragizō* – "to mark with a seal as a means of identification, mark, seal" (BDAG)

ii. **Ephesians 1:13** – ***"God put his special mark of ownership on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that he had promised." (New Century Version)***

iii. "In Him, we also have been made an inheritance" (Ephesians 1:11, LSB); "in whom also we were made a heritage" (ASV)

iv. This at the point of saving belief – **1 Peter 1:22-23; Romans 8:16**

b. "for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30)

i. Future – God's ownership of us is present but not finalized.

ii. **Ephesians 1:14** – the possession has been purchased but not fully redeemed.

1. "[the Holy Spirit] is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession" (NASB).

iii. The bodily resurrection to glory – **Romans 8:21, 23** – redemption of our body.

c. **Ephesians 1:14** – the Holy Spirit acts as a ***"guarantee"*** or ***"down payment" (fn, NKJV)*** of our inheritance.

i. By the Spirit's activity in our lives (via the Word), we have identity as God's children – we find our relation to Him through the Holy Spirit.

ii. The inward dwelling of Christ through the Holy Spirit will be consummated in the outward/bodily identity with the glorified Christ – Romans 8:29-30; 1 John 3:2

B. His Desire for Transformation

a. This identification with us, and desire to possess us as His own is not in a manner of compromise.

i. There is grace, mercy, longsuffering, etc. but not compromise.

ii. He does not alter Himself or His standard to make us His but elevates us to His fellowship through transformative process.

b. Paul wrote of his excelling ministry as an apostle, and touched on this transformative process by the Spirit through the gospel:
   i. **2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:3-6, 12** – transformed into the glory of the Lord by the Spirit's gospel, life at work in the believer through the gospel.
   ii. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18** – inward renewal in contrast to outward affliction – via the word of God.
   iii. **2 Corinthians 5:1-5** – the building from God, a body in context, but not physical, is reserved by a "down payment" of the Spirit – (**4:16-17** – inward renewal that awaits the eternal weight of glory in the immortal body).

c. In our initial salvation through faithful obedience to the Spirit inspired gospel, God marks us as His. This is not final, but the beginning of an ongoing and growing relationship where we take on the attributes and nature of our Father through His Spirit.
   i. Though certain physical attributes and idiosyncrasies may naturally manifest, a child only takes on the most important aspects of the parent through nurture.
   ii. ***The Holy Spirit's direction is the nurture for the child of God – it is God's effort to further identify with us and make us a part of Him.***

C. His Grief in Rejection
   a. **Ephesians 4:30** – Do not cause deep sorrow for the Holy Spirit who intensely desires your fellowship, and for it to be brought to eternal completion, by resisting and rejecting His influence in your life.
   b. As the children of Israel grieved His Spirit – **Isaiah 63:10**
      i. Reflections in captivity – **(vv. 7-9)** – He loved them, was hurt by their hurt, and stooped to save them.
      ii. The reason of the captivity **– (v. 10)** – They brought intense grief to His Holy Spirit by rebellion against Him, and He punished them.
      iii. The nations' remembrance of God's past deliverance in the context of requesting that He so act again **– (vv. 11-14**) – where is He that saved us, and brought us to the promised land and caused us to rest by His Spirit?
      iv. He is against them now, because they betrayed Him – **(v. 10)** – His reason for rescuing them was to shape them after His likeness, and dwell with them, and they showed heavy disinterest through rejecting who He is in rejecting His Spirit.

c. Another description of the highly emotional topic of betraying and grieving God – **Hosea 11:1-4** – rescue, identity, calling and rejection of calling – going away from God – turning to other gods.
d. The broader context of the statement – **Ephesians 4:30**
    i. After establishing the Spirit's work in revealing the mystery through Paul, he calls them walk worthy of the calling of the Spirit in the gospel, and to keep the unity of the Spirit – **4:1-3**
    ii. ***"gifts"*** left by Christ to equip the brethren for the task – **4:11, 13, 15** – teaching, unity of the faith, speaking truth (all the Spirit's activity through His revelation)
    iii. Application – don't live like you were in your ignorance now that you've learned – **4:17-24**
        1. ***"righteousness and holiness of the truth" (v. 24, NASB***)
        2. I.e. the new man is created to be like God – righteousness and holiness – by means of the truth (revealed and inspired by the Spirit).
    iv. Specific sins of the old man to put off, and activity of the new man to put on – **4:25-32**
        1. **(v. 30)** – Through the gospel revelation of the Spirit, God is trying to shape you to be like Him, your Father.
        2. He loves you, and wants you to follow after Him, and to know Him more intimately – to embrace the relationship, and pursue it to the fullest measure (**4:13** – that of Christ).
        3. To continue living in these ways is to grieve the Spirit, because it is a decision to be dissociated from your Father (**3:14**) – to want nothing to do with Him and His family.
        4. He saved you (**2:1-10**), gave you His Spirit to make you like Him **(3:14-21**), and you are showing you are interested in being like someone other than your Father – THIS CAUSES GREAT SORROW TO A FATHER.

Conclusion

1. The Holy Spirit was sent by the Son in accordance with the Father's plan. He reveals Himself through the Son who reveals Himself through the Spirit. Through this revelation we can know Him on the intimate level of a Father and His child.
2. When we refuse the direction of the Spirit through the word, we effectively show our Father that we don't want to be like Him, and we do not love Him as He deserves – this grieves our God.