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Recently, the Holy Spirit brought to my mind the passage in Ephesians 4:26-32. Yes, the Holy Spirit's work is to bring to our remembrance all things that Jesus taught [John 14:26]. I was counselling two staff who had a conflict over some work matters. One was angry, a believer and the other staff, a non-believer, told me that she would no longer ask for help from the other. I sat down with two of them and talked openly about the conflict. As I was talking, the passage of Ephesians came to my mind and I affirmed that to be angry was a normal human response but not to do anything to resolve that anger was wrong. Later I further talked to the Christian staff whom I said that not to forgive and to hold on to the anger would grieve the Holy Spirit [Ephesians 4:30]. I left her to think further on what God's Word had said. The incident made me reflect further on my own responses in anger towards others rightly or wrongly and how I too would have grieved the Holy Spirit if I continued to hold on to that anger.

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, grief is deep and poignant distress caused by or as if by bereavement. In medical terms, there is no consensus on the defining features that would distinguish normal and pathological *grief*, it is generally accepted that *grief* becomes pathological when the reactions are excessive, prolonged, or unresolved. In counselling the grieving, one understands that the loss of a close person, or loss of job or loss of a dream can be devastating. The Lord allows us to go through grief and in this, we can identify with Jesus who is acquainted with grief, and even borne our griefs, a man of sorrows [Isaiah 53:3, 4]. Christ's humanity brings us closer to Him and we can accept our human frailty of experiencing grief because He also experienced it. God has emotions but He is transcendent, beyond our comprehension.

The Bible uses the word "grieve or grieved" 37 times in the New King James translation. The Old and New Testament mentioned six times that God or Holy Spirit was grieved [Genesis 6:6; Psalm 78:40; 95:10; Isaiah 63:10; Mark 3:5; Ephesians 4:30]. Genesis 6:6 "And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart" tells us that God is grieved when man rebuffed his covenantal love in sin and disobedience. God was also grieved when the Israelites rebelled in the desert under Moses' leadership. God's anguished response to sin is evidenced in two main ways: divine judgment and compassion for the sinner. Because God is holy, He has to judge sin but He offers compassion and salvation for sinners in the process.

May we be very conscious that the Holy Spirit can be grieved through our actions, speech and our attitudes in our day-to-day life responses. Lord, teach us how to live and walk by the Spirit.

Sharing by Goh Swee Eng, Singapore,
NCFI Prayer and Care Committee Member

