

Message Five

**The Exercise of Our Spirit unto Godliness**

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; 4:22

**I. In the “blueprint” of God’s original intention, man is the center of the entire universe, and the center of man is his spirit—Zech. 12:1; Gen. 2:7:**

- A. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, contain God, worship God, live God, fulfill God’s purpose for God, express God, and be one with God—Prov. 20:27; John 4:24; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. Without God being the Spirit and without us having a spirit to contact God, to be one with God, the whole universe is empty and we are nothing—Eccl. 1:2; 3:11; Job 32:8; 12:10; 2 Cor. 4:13, 16-18.
- C. Due to the fall, men have not only overlooked and neglected the human spirit but also have even refused to admit that man has a spirit—cf. 1 Thes. 5:23; Heb. 4:12; Jude 19.
- D. Man as a vessel, through the exercise of his spirit, was to receive God in Christ as the tree of life so that life as a river would flow in and out of his innermost being for his transformation into precious materials for God’s building, God’s eternal expression—Gen. 1:26; 2:7-12, 22; 1 Tim. 4:7-8:
  - 1. The breath of God has become our human spirit, and our spirit is God’s lamp to contain God as the oil and to give us light—Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27.
  - 2. Man’s spirit became a broken lamp through his fall, but through God’s recovery in His salvation, man’s spirit is regenerated, rebuilt, and reinforced with the vivifying, sevenfold intensified Spirit—Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27; John 3:6; Rev. 4:5; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
  - 3. The central government and most prominent part of man’s being should be his spirit; a man who is ruled and controlled by his spirit is a spiritual man—2:14-15; 3:1; 14:32; Eph. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:4; Dan. 6:3, 10.
- E. The building of God into man is typified by both the

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tabernacle and the breastplate, and the key to God's building is our mingled spirit:

1. The uniting bars of the boards of the tabernacle, made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, signify the mingled spirit, the divine Spirit mingled with the human spirit to become the uniting bond of peace—Exo. 26:26-30; Rom. 8:16; Eph. 4:3-4.
  2. In the New Testament the reality of the Urim and the Thummim put into the breastplate is the mingled spirit—the unveiling Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, indwelling our receiving spirit, our regenerated human spirit—Exo. 28:30; Rom. 8:4, 14; 1 Cor. 2:9-12.
- F. The divine Spirit dwelling in our human spirit and the two mingled together as one spirit, the mingled spirit, is the strategic and central point of God's economy—John 3:6; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; 1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Cor. 4:13:
1. The great way to fulfill God's economy is for us to live and do everything according to the Spirit by exercising our spirit—Job 10:13; Eph. 3:9; Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:25.
  2. Whenever we turn to our spirit and exercise our spirit, we touch the Body, because the Body is in our spirit—Eph. 1:17; 2:22; 3:5, 16; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18.
  3. When we are in our spirit, we overcome the world, we cannot sin, the evil one cannot touch us, and we are guarded from idols—1 John 5:4, 18-19, 21.

## **II. The subject of 2 Timothy is the inoculation against the decline of the church, and the key to receiving and dispensing this inoculation is the exercise of our spirit—1:6-7; 1 Tim. 4:7-8; Acts 6:10; 1 Cor. 14:32:**

- A. Godliness, a living that is the expression of God, is the issue of the divine dispensing for the divine economy, and this dispensing depends on the exercise of our spirit to live Christ in our daily life for the corporate manifestation of God in the church life—1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15-16; 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.

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- B. The word *exercise* implies forcing; if we Christians want to be strong and want to grow in the Lord, we must force ourselves to use our spirit until we build up a strong habit of exercising our spirit—1 Tim. 4:7.
- C. To exercise our spirit is to fan our spirit into flame—2 Tim. 1:6-7:
  - 1. Fire is in our regenerated spirit, which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit; actually, our spirit is the fire—cf. Luke 12:49-50; Rom. 12:11.
  - 2. We saved ones have the capital to live the Christian life and the church life; this capital is our God-given spirit.
- D. To exercise our spirit we must deal with the parts of our heart surrounding our spirit—our mind, emotion, will, and conscience—1 Pet. 3:4; Psa. 51:10:
  - 1. A spirit of power is a spirit with a subdued and resurrected will, a spirit of love is a spirit with an emotion filled with God as love, and a spirit of sobermindedness is a spirit with a renewed mind—2 Tim. 1:7.
  - 2. To exercise our spirit is to exercise ourselves to have a good conscience without offense toward God and men and to have a pure conscience, which means to have a pure heart of seeking only God and His will—1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:3; Acts 23:1; 24:16; Matt. 5:8; Psa. 73:25-26.
- E. To exercise our spirit by rejoicing always, praying unceasingly, and giving thanks in everything to enjoy the indwelling Spirit is the secret of doing all things in Christ—2 Cor. 12:2a; Phil. 4:11-13; Psa. 91:1; 1 Thes. 5:16-18.
- F. To exercise our spirit is to pray, to approach God in a personal and confiding manner, for the interests of God—Christ, the kingdom of God, and the house of God—as the goal in God’s eternal economy—2 Tim. 1:6-8; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 2:1-3, 8; 1 Kings 8:48; Jude 19-21.
- G. To exercise our spirit is to set our mind on the spirit—Rom. 8:6; Mal. 2:15-16:

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1. When we set our mind on the spirit, we have the inner sense of life and peace, the sense of strength, satisfaction, rest, release, liveliness, watering, brightness, and comfort.
  2. When we set our mind on the flesh, we have the inner sense of death, the sense of weakness, emptiness, uneasiness, restlessness, depression, dryness, darkness, and pain.
  3. Our Christian life is not according to the standard of right and wrong but according to the spirit, and we know the spirit by the inner sense of life and peace—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 2:13-14.
- H. To exercise our spirit is to discern our spirit from our soul—Heb. 4:12:
1. We should always be on the alert to discern and deny anything that is not of the spirit but of the soul, the self—Matt. 16:25; cf. Luke 9:25.
  2. Whatever we are, whatever we have, and whatever we do must be in spirit; everything that God is to us is in our spirit—Rom. 2:28-29; 1:9; 8:4; 12:11.
- I. To exercise our spirit is to live the normal church life and overcome the church's degradation by pursuing Christ with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.