

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2026**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST AND SECOND TIMOTHY AND TITUS**

Message Three

The Exercise of Our Spirit unto Godliness

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

1 Tim. 4:7-8—But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness. ⁸For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.

2 Tim. 1:6-7—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

2 Tim. 4:22—The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

I. 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:

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Gen. 2:7-12—Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. ⁸And Jehovah God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰And a river went forth from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four branches. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that goes around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.

Gen. 2:22—And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.

1 Tim. 4:7-8—But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness. ⁸For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.

A. 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.

Gen. 2:7—Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Prov. 20:27—The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

- B. 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; Psa. 18:28; John 3:6; Rev. 4:5; 5:6; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

Gen. 2:7—Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Prov. 20:27—The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

Psa. 18:28—For it is You who light my lamp; Jehovah my God lights up my darkness;

John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Rev. 4:5—And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev. 5:6—And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having *just* been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

- C. Regrettably, 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.

cf. 1 Thes. 5:23—And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

cf. Heb. 4:12—For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

cf. Jude 19—These are those who make divisions, soulish, having no spirit.

- D. When we are genuinely in our spirit, we see a throne set in heaven with One sitting upon the throne, and the self is dethroned—"Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting" (Rev. 4:2); "Oh, may my spirit flow, / Oh, may it flow! / I ask Thee, gracious Lord, / Oh, may it flow! / My trust in self o'erthrow, / Down from self's throne I'll go, / That living water flow / In spirit, Lord" (*Hymns*, #846, stanza 5; see Heb. 4:16, footnote 1, and Ezek. 1:26, footnote 1.)

Heb. 4:16—Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Ezek. 1:26—And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

- E. 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—1 Cor. 2:14-15; 3:1; 14:32; Eph. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:4; Dan. 6:3, 10.

1 Cor. 2:14-15—But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know *them* because they are discerned spiritually. ¹⁵But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

1 Cor. 3:1—And I, brothers, was not able to speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to fleshy, as to infants in Christ.

1 Cor. 14:32—And the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

Eph. 3:16—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

1 Pet. 3:4—But the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptible *adornment* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is very costly in the sight of God.

Dan. 6:3—Then this Daniel distinguished himself among the chief ministers and satraps because in him there was an excellent spirit, and the king considered setting him over the whole kingdom.

Dan. 6:10—Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had *always* done so previously.

- F. The spirit as our inmost part is the inner organ, possessing God-consciousness, that we may contact God (John 4:24; Rom. 1:9); the soul is the very self (cf. Matt. 16:25; Luke 9:25), a medium between our spirit and our body, possessing self-consciousness, that we may have our personality; the body as our external part is the outer organ, possessing world-consciousness, that we may contact the material world (1 Thes. 5:23):

John 4:24—God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Rom. 1:9—For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

cf. Matt. 16:25—For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.

cf. Luke 9:25—For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself?

1 Thes. 5:23—And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The body contains the soul, and the soul is the vessel that contains the spirit; in the spirit, God as the Spirit dwells; in the soul, our self dwells; and in the body, the physical senses dwell.
2. Our spirit is the deepest part of our being, a spiritual organ with which we contact God (John 4:24; Rom. 1:9); it is in our spirit that we are regenerated (John 3:6); it is in our spirit that the Holy Spirit dwells and works as the key to God's organic salvation, His deification, and His "Christification" of our entire being; it is in our spirit that we enjoy Christ and His grace (2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:18).

John 4:24—God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Rom. 1:9—For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2 Tim. 4:22—The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Gal. 6:18—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

3. God sanctifies us, first, by taking possession of our spirit through regeneration (John 3:5-6); second, by spreading Himself as the life-giving Spirit from our spirit into our soul to saturate and transform our soul (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18); and last, by enlivening our mortal body through our soul (Rom. 8:11, 13) and transfiguring our body by His life power (Phil. 3:21; see footnotes 2 and 3 on Heb. 4:12).

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Rom. 12:2—And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Rom. 8:11—And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 8:13—For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

Phil. 3:21—Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

Heb. 4:12—For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

II. The building of God into man is typified by both the tabernacle and the breastplate, and the key to God's building is our mingled spirit:

- A. The uniting bars of the boards of the tabernacle, made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, signify the mingled spirit, which is 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.

Exo. 26:26-30—And you shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, ²⁷And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward. ²⁸And the middle bar shall pass through in the center of the boards from end to end. ²⁹And you shall overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold as holders for the bars; and you shall overlay the bars with gold. ³⁰And you shall set up the tabernacle according to its plan, which you were shown in the mountain.

Rom. 8:16—The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

Eph. 4:3-4—Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace: ⁴One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

- B. 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 and footnotes 1, 2, and 3; Rom. 8:4, 14; 1 Cor. 2:9-12.

Exo. 28:30—And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before Jehovah, and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel on his heart before Jehovah continually.

Rom. 8:4—That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom. 8:14—For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

1 Cor. 2:9-12—But as it is written, “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and *which* have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” ¹⁰But to us God has revealed *them* through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. ¹¹For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God. ¹²But we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which have been graciously given to us by God;

III. 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:

John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Rom. 8:16—The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

2 Tim. 4:22—The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

1 Cor. 6:17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

1 Tim. 1:4—Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

2 Cor. 4:13—And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

A. 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.

Job 10:13—But You have hidden these things in Your heart; I know that this is with You:

Eph. 3:9—And to enlighten all *that they may see* what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

Rom. 8:4—That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Gal. 5:25—If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

B. 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.

Eph. 1:17—That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

Eph. 2:22—In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

Eph. 3:5—Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,

Eph. 3:16—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 4:23—And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Eph. 5:18—And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,

Eph. 6:18—By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

- C. 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.

1 John 5:4—For everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory which has overcome the world—our faith.

1 John 5:18-19—We know that everyone who is begotten of God does not sin, but he who has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him. ¹⁹We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the evil one.

1 John 5:21—Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

IV. The subject of 2 Timothy is the inoculation against the decline of the church, and the key to receiving and dispensing this inoculation for the saints' growth in life and their enjoyment of Christ is to exercise our spirit, which is to fan our God-given spirit into flame—Phil. 1:25; 1 Tim. 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; 4:22; Acts 6:10; 1 Cor. 14:32:

Phil. 1:25—And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith,

1 Tim. 4:7-8—But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness. ⁸For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.

2 Tim. 1:6-7—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

2 Tim. 4:22—The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Acts 6:10—Yet they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.

1 Cor. 14:32—And the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

- 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.

1 Tim. 1:3-4—Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things ⁴Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

1 Tim. 3:15-16—But if I delay, *I write* that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth. ¹⁶And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

1 Tim. 4:7-8—But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness. ⁸For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.

2 Tim. 1:6-7—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

- 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.

1 Tim. 4:7—But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness.

- C. To exercise our spirit is to fan our spirit into flame—2 Tim. 1:6-7:

2 Tim. 1:6-7—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

1. Second Timothy 1:6 refers to “the gift of God,” and verse 7 indicates that what God has given us is our regenerated spirit, our mingled spirit, of power, of love, and of sobermindedness; thus, the gift of God is our God-given spirit.

2 Tim. 1:6—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

2 Tim. 1:7—For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

2. We saved ones have the capital to live the Christian life and the church life, and this capital is our God-given spirit.
3. Fire is in our regenerated spirit, which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit; actually, our spirit is the fire—Luke 12:49-50; Rom. 12:11; Rev. 4:5; Prov. 20:27.

Luke 12:49-50—I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled! ⁵⁰But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!

Rom. 12:11—Do not be slothful in zeal, *but* be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

Rev. 4:5—And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Prov. 20:27—The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

- D. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, we must deal with the parts of our soul surrounding our spirit—our mind, emotion, and will—cf. 1 Pet. 3:4:

cf. 1 Pet. 3:4—But the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptible *adornment* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is very costly in the sight of God.

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 Tim. 1:7—For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

2. Our dear Lord Jesus is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls; our soul is our inner being, our real person; our Lord shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our real person—1 Pet. 2:25; Psa. 23:1-6; cf. Heb. 13:17.

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Psa. 23:1-6—Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside waters of rest. ³He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk Through the valley of the shadow of death, I do not fear evil, For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, They comfort me. ⁵You spread a table before me In the presence of my adversaries; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me All the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah For the length of *my* days.

cf. Heb. 13:17—Obey the ones leading you and submit to *them*, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.

3. Because the exercise of the spirit is linked to the parts of our soul and is so vital to living in the reality of God's economy, we need to cooperate with our Lord in His heavenly ministry by "establishing the souls of the disciples"—Acts 14:22.

Acts 14:22—Establishing the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith and *saying* that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.

4. To establish the souls of the disciples is to establish them (1) in their mind, that they may know and understand the Lord and the things concerning Him (1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 3:10); (2) in their emotion, that they may love the Lord and have a heart for the Lord's interest (Mark 12:30; Rom. 16:4); and (3) in their will, that they may be strong to remain with the Lord and do the things that please the Lord (Acts 11:23; Col. 1:10; 1 Thes. 4:1).

1 Cor. 2:16—For who has known the mind of the Lord and will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Phil. 3:10—To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Mark 12:30—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."

Rom. 16:4—Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

Acts 11:23—Who, when he arrived and saw the grace of God, rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart;

Col. 1:10—To walk worthily of the Lord to please *Him* in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,

1 Thes. 4:1—Furthermore, brothers, we ask and exhort you in the Lord Jesus that even as you received from us how you ought to walk and please God, even as indeed you do walk, that you abound still more.

- E. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to rejoice always, pray unceasingly, and give thanks in everything in order to enjoy the indwelling Spirit as the secret of doing all things in Christ—2 Cor. 12:2a; Phil. 4:11-13; Psa. 91:1; 1 Thes. 5:16-18.

2 Cor. 12:2—I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I do not know, or outside the body I do not know; God knows) such a one was caught away to the third heaven.

Phil. 4:11-13—Not that I speak according to lack, for I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content. ¹²I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack. ¹³I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

Psa. 91:1—He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

1 Thes. 5:16-18—Always rejoice, ¹⁷Unceasingly pray, ¹⁸In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- F. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to set our mind on the spirit—Rom. 8:6; Mal. 2:15-16:

Rom. 8:6—For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Mal. 2:15-16—But did He not make *them* one? And the remnant of the Spirit was His. And why the one? He sought the seed of God. Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one be treacherous to the wife of his youth. ¹⁶For I hate divorce, says Jehovah the God of Israel; and he *who does it* behaves in violence, says Jehovah of hosts. Take heed then to your spirit, and do not be treacherous.

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 inner sense of life and peace in our spirit—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 2:13-14.

Rom. 8:6—For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

2 Cor. 2:13-14—I had no rest in my spirit, for I did not find Titus my brother; but taking leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia. ¹⁴But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ and manifests the savor of the knowledge of Him through us in every place.

- G. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to discern our spirit from our soul—Heb. 4:12:

Heb. 4:12—For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

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.

Matt. 16:25—For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.

cf. Luke 9:25—For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself?

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.

Rom. 2:28-29—For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, in spirit, not in letter, whose praise is not from men, but from God.

Rom. 1:9—For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Rom. 8:4—That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom. 12:11—Do not be slothful in zeal, *but* be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

- H. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to live the normal Christian life, to practice the normal Christian church life, and to overcome the church's degradation by pursuing Christ with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.

2 Tim. 2:22—But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

- I. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, 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—1:6-8; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 2:1-3, 8; 1 Kings 8:48; Jude 19-21.

2 Tim. 1:6-8—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness. ⁸Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me His prisoner; but suffer evil with the gospel according to the power of God;

1 Tim. 1:3-4—Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things ⁴Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

1 Tim. 2:1-3—I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men; ²On behalf of kings and all who are in high position, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness and gravity. ³This is good and acceptable in the sight of our Savior God,

1 Tim. 2:8—I desire therefore that men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and reasoning;

1 Kings 8:48—And *if* they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;

Jude 19-21—These are those who make divisions, soulish, having no spirit. ²⁰But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.