

You Must Stir Yourself Up

2 Timothy 1:6-7

“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

In Galatians 5: 24-25, the Word of God says, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." **Children of God, we cannot afford to let spiritual things get away from us!** We hear the Word. We Get determined. **We get on fire for Jesus.** We get dedicated. But, we must learn how to maintain that zeal. **Praying and spending time with the Father will keep you dedicated.** It will keep that fire burning on the inside of you. The Word of God will keep you moving in the right direction - toward God.

The first few years of my ministry were years that were marked by an attitude of "up and down, hot and cold, excitement and depression." And then I began to study this matter of "faith." And as I began to see for the first time what the Word of God was saying to my heart in this matter of faith, I was set on fire for God.

You see, I knew that the Bible was God's inerrant Word, and I knew that I could depend on the Word of God more than I could depend on the word of a trusted friend. I learned that I could depend on the written Word that said, "By His stripes you are healed," just the same way, with the same expectation as if Jesus appeared to me in the flesh and called me by name.

I became so hungry to find out what God's Word says that I totally sold out to the Word of God. I hardly had time for anything else. There was nothing else as exciting to me as the Word of the living God.

I read God's Word. I listened to tapes and I read books that I had found about God's Word and about living by faith. I was dedicated. **I hardly thought about anything else.** My total interest was the Word of God. I would spend hours closed up in my study at home.

It was during those times that the Word of God had a powerful effect on my life. It began to revolutionize everything about my life. It turned an **up and down ministry** into one that was **filled with excitement and expectancy.**

But if you are not careful you can begin to allow yourself to grow cold. You don't have to, but many do. You can get interested in other things and lose your **desire** and **hunger** for the Word of God. **Revelation does not come as quickly to you anymore.** The Bible does not seem as exciting.

The spirit is the part of you that is reborn into the image of God. Your **soul** is your **mind**, will and **emotions**. 1 Peter 1:22 says that your soul is purified in “obeying the truth through the Spirit.” Hebrews 4:12 says that “the Word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,...dividing asunder between soul and spirit.”

Listen, you have to be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to change you to agree with God. The Spirit of God changed my mind, my will and my emotions to stop following after natural things with my attention but to immediately turn my attention to the things of God.

Your soul's desire will go after whatever you spend your time doing. If it is TV, you will have a desire to see more. If it is golf, you will have a desire to play more. **There is nothing wrong with that.** That is the way it is with anything in the natural world. But it is also that way in the spiritual world.

If you quit praying and spending time in the Word of God, your desire for it will get weaker and weaker and weaker. Whatever

you are doing instead of spending time with God is what you will desire. Whatever you give your attention to is the direction your desire will take. Desire follows attention, whether it is something good or something bad.

You want to keep your heart and soul with fervent desire for the things of God. You do that! It is a choice that you must make. I cannot do that for you. **Remember that what you give your attention to determines your desire.** Your *motivation* follows *attention*. God wants all of you!

This truth is made crystal clear for us in Revelation 3:14-22, "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

It may take you a while to get that fire back in my heart. It does not just happen overnight. It may take a while to get back that strong desire for God instead of for natural things.

Satan will set before you a *circumstance*, or an *attitude*, or *someone else* in the church, to get your mind off God and His blessings on your life. And if you don't keep yourself on fire, you will begin to cool off. If you let yourself go long enough in that condition, you will get in deep spiritual trouble!

If you are lazy about spiritual things, you are *not* going to walk after the Spirit and you are *not* going to walk in victory. Romans 8:5-6 tells us, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." **The Christian life is not something that is passive! The Christian life is something that is alive and growing, never stagnant!** The Christian life is something that requires our attention.

This truth is seen in Romans 8:13 -14, "For if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do destroy the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

You will notice that the emphasis is placed on the "Spirit." For example, we are told, "...if you through the Spirit do destroy the deeds of the body." And also, "As many as are led by the Spirit..." **But why is this so? Because God works in the spirit realm.** As we follow after the Spirit, He works in us!

The truth of the matter is this - you cannot be a Christian in your own strength or your own wisdom. Only the Holy Spirit can make you a child of God, and only the Holy Spirit can give you the power to live the Christian life, as seen in Galatians 3: 3, "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are now seek to be made perfect by the flesh?" **If you began in the Spirit, and God saved you by the power of the Holy Spirit revealing Christ to you, then through the power of the Holy Spirit you are able to live for God.**

You cannot live the Christian life. You cannot show me one verse of Scripture where God asks you to live the Christian life! And we have a lot of "legalistic" believers who are super pious, and they think they are living the Christian life. **Yet they are carrying animosity, bitterness, and hatred in their hearts.** My friend, that is all hypocrisy! Yet God has made a way for us to live the Christian life. And it is so simple that most of us miss it, and we keep stumbling along trying to live like Christians by our own efforts.

If the Christian life is not passive, and if it requires my attention, and yet I cannot live the Christian life, what am I to do? The word is **yield!** You see, God's plan and program is by yielding, as seen in Romans 6:13, "Neither yield your your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Listen carefully; to "yield" to God is an act of the will. It is a choice that each of us must make for ourselves. Romans 12:1 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present (there is the choice factor) your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The Greek word that is translated "present" literally means to "yield." **Child of God, none of us will ever accomplish what God has in store for us until we are willing to get ourselves out of the way and yield our lives to Him!**

Jesus made this statement in Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." And in John 6:63 He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Proverbs 4:22 tells us that God's Words are "life" and "health." **The Word of God feeds the spirit man just like bread feeds the body.** Food has to be built into your body. The vitamins and minerals it contains have a cumulative effect from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet.

The truth of the matter is that all the food in the world will do you no good unless you decide to eat something. A person can starve to death with a pantry filled to capacity. In like manner, you can have a Bible on every table in your house and never know one benefit of it's thousands of promises unless **read it** and **apply it to your life.**

Let me close with this statement: Open God's Word anew today. Come before Him expecting a fresh revelation of the Scripture and commit to Him to follow it up with obedience. Be a doer of God's Word and not a hearer only and watch your spiritual flame become rekindled for His wonderful glory!

If you are not saved, then why not today?

Everyone please stand for prayer.

Father,

I realize that Your Word brings life and nourishment, preservation and restoration. Give me the wisdom and courage to place myself in a position to receive Your Word into my life. Help me not to be just a hearer but a doer of Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.