

In ancient Israel, the priests were instructed not to let the fire on the altar go out (Lev. 6:9,12-13). This required a lot of work, not the least of which was collecting firewood in a land not known for its dense forests.

Some scholars see the fire on the altar as a symbol for the flame of our devotion for the Lord. Spiritual passion is not something to be treated lightly or taken for granted. It will grow cold if we fail to keep it supplied with fuel.

The apostle Paul addressed the subject of spiritual fervor in his letter to the Romans (12:1-2,11). To keep the fire of our devotion burning strong, we must continue the hard work of stocking our fuel supply with hope, patience, steadfast prayer, generosity, hospitality, and humility (vv.11-16).

O God, my heart is the altar
And my love for you is the flame;
I'll keep the fire burning for You, Lord,
And I will rejoice in Your name. —Hess

Our love for Jesus is the key to spiritual passion.



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Central Mountains Baptist Church

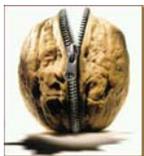
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Keep The Fire Burning



Modern air conditioning has taken the work out of keeping warm in cold climates. We simply set the timer on the thermostat, and the house is warm when we get up in the morning. But in former days, fire was carefully tended and fuel supplies were closely monitored. Running out could be deadly.

The same is true spiritually. If we think our “spiritual fire” can be ignited as easily as the air-con, we risk losing our fervour for the Lord.



Romans: Truth in a Nutshell

(unzipped for you)

“Must Haves III”- The Best Spirit

Romans 12:11 gives three equivalent descriptions of the best spirit:

1. Not _____, verse 11a

(Matthew 25:24-26) *“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, ... {25} 'And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' {26} "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant,'”*

(Proverbs 12:24) *“The hand of the diligent will rule, But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.”*

(Proverbs 12:27) *“The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, But diligence is man's precious possession.”*

(Proverbs 15:19) *“The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, But the way of the upright is a highway.”*

(Proverbs 18:9) *“He who is slothful in his work Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.”*

(Proverbs 21:25) *“The desire of the lazy man kills him, For his hands refuse to labor.”*

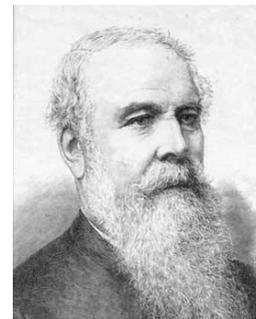
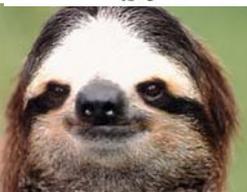
(Proverbs 22:13) *“The lazy man says, "There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!"”*

(Proverbs 24:30-32) *“I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; {31} And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down. {32} When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction:”*

(Revelation 3:15-16) *“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. {16} "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.”*

2. _____ on _____, verse 11b

(Acts 18:24-28) *“Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. {25} This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. {26} So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. {27} And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the*



disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; {28} for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.”
(Acts 1:13-14) *“And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. {14} These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”*

J. C. Ryle

3. Bound by _____, verse 11c

(Exodus 21:1-6) *“Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them: {2} "If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing. {3} "If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. {4} "If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. {5} "But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' {6} "then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.”*

