



SOUL: Spirituality



*Just as a candle cannot burn without fire,
men cannot live without a spiritual life.*
- Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha)

Definition: Spiritual wellness is the ability to experience the transforming power of God.

Verse: *And we all... are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.* - 2 Corinthians 3:18

Introduction

The word **spirit** comes from the Latin word *spiritus*, derived from *spirare*, meaning "to breathe." This was their translation of the Greek word *pneuma* meaning "breath" or "wind." It was associated in the Bible with the Holy Spirit of God.

The word **spirituality**, also derived from *spirare*, is used to describe the practice and experience of connecting with the Spirit. It usually involves personal growth and a transcendent or deeply meaningful aspect of human experience.

1. Spirituality As Life Giving

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus (John 3:5-8)

⁵ *Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. **So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.**"*

This verse illustrates the intangible nature of the Spirit. Just as the wind is felt through its effects (e.g., the rustling of leaves, the cooling of the skin, etc.), the work of the Spirit is experienced through its manifestations in a person's life -- e.g., a deeper sense of purpose, increased compassion, heartfelt forgiveness, etc.

The Spirit shines through us, enriching our lives and providing a connection to something greater than ourselves. Just as we need breath to live physically, we need spirituality to be alive internally.

2. Spirituality As Inner Compass

Listening to the Spirit within can become our inner compass, setting the direction of "true north" to guide our thoughts, actions, and purpose. By relying on God's direction and guidance, we can navigate life's challenges with greater confidence and peace.

- **Direction Setting (Establishes the Goal)**

Colossians 3:1–2: *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*

Before a compass can guide your steps, it must establish where you are going. In a world full of competing voices telling us to chase wealth and status, Christian spirituality fixes our eyes on a different horizon. It defines our "true north" as the kingdom of God. It shifts our primary objective away from building our own kingdom and towards participating in God's.

- **Daily Decision-Making (Guides us along the Way)**

Isaiah 30:21: *Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'*

Setting a destination is easy; navigating the actual terrain is where it gets difficult. Daily life is full of intersections—life choices, relationship boundaries, and ethical dilemmas. Spirituality acts as an active guide, translating big theological concepts into everyday

personal choices. Through the promptings of the Spirit, prayer, and scripture, our inner compass whispers, *"This is the way to show grace here,"* or *"This is the path of integrity."*

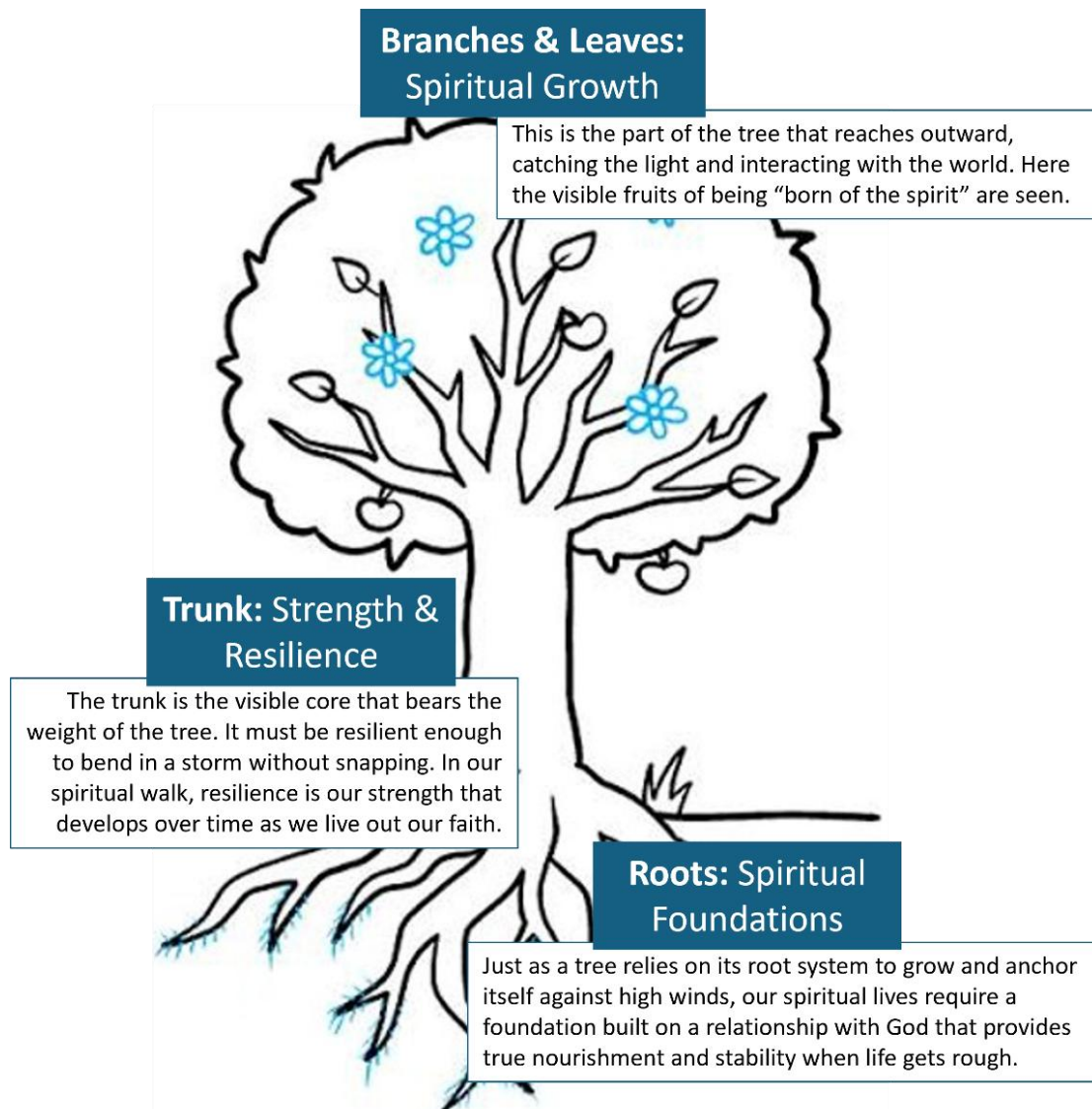
- **Correction and Resilience (Keeps us on Course)**

Psalm 119:105: *Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*

Life brings storms, heavy fog, and rough terrain that inevitably throw us off track. We stumble into old habits, make poor choices, or get blinded by pain and distraction. A compass is most valuable not when the weather is clear, but when we are lost. The Spirit within alerts us when we are drifting and provides the steady, unmoving anchor point we need to realign our lives and keep moving forward.

3. Spirituality as a Source of Stability and Growth

Psalm 1:1-3: *Blessed is the one... whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.*



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

- **Compass Exercise:** Imagine a compass with its needle pointing towards "true north." Reflect on what true north means in your own life, representing your values, goals, and spiritual direction. Write down your thoughts and insights, and use as a guide for making decisions and navigating life's challenges.
- **Centering Walk:** Take a walk in nature, observing the trees, their roots, and how they withstand various weather conditions and other environmental challenges. Reflect on how this relates to your own spiritual growth and resilience. Try using Handout #1 as a resource while you reflect.
- **Small Group Discussion:** Join or form a small group to intentionally share experiences and insights on building a strong spiritual foundation and nurturing growth.