Welcome / Guests

National Day of Prayer Recap

Prayer

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A Church on Fire

Act 2:1-4 / Acts 1:8

5/4/25

Many of us love fireplaces. There is a therapy in the flickering light, the crackle of fire, the smell of burning wood, the direct heat of a cheerful flame. God has always had His fireplaces. The burning bush, the brazen altar of the tabernacle, Mount Carmel, and the Upper Room...Fire in the Bible is a powerful symbol representing many different things!

* God's presence, power, & holiness
  + 2 Chronicles 7:1-3

When Solomon finished praying, fire flashed down from heaven and burned up the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glorious presence of the Lord filled the Temple.

* + Hebrews 12:29

*“For our God is a devouring fire.”*

* Judgment/Punishment
  + Genesis 19 (Sodom & Gomorrah)
* Holy Spirit
  + Matthew 3:11b

...He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

**Acts 2:1-4**

***1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.***

The only fireplaces God has today in all the world are the hearts of His people.... We are to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The fire of the His Holy Spirit is to burn in the fireplaces of our own hearts.”

Truth is there is nothing more pathetic than a drowsy, lethargic and Lukewarm church. When a church loses its passion or “fire” for Christ, it ceases to be a living body and becomes merely an organization lacking spiritual strength to operate as a true church for God! Today especially, this is something we, as His church cannot afford to let happen! God desires to have and will only work through a church that is “on fire” with His Divine Presence and Power!

Why is it so important to have this fire in our life and in our church:

* Fire consumes -- burns out the sinful and unnecessary “stuff” in our lives.
* Fire purifies -- makes us clean and holy before God.
* Fire prepares – cleansing and transforming us. Just like fire refines precious metals, it can also refine a person's character and spiritual state, preparing them to live for Christ stronger
* Fire softens -- the Holy Spirit softens the heart of the sinner, and we repent.
* Fire unites -- (as in uniting different kinds of metals) the Holy Spirit brings unity Church.
* Fire empowers -- Act 1:8 ***But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you***
  + The Holy Spirit is often depicted as a fire in scripture, symbolizing His power to ignite our faith and encourage our spiritual growth. Experiencing the Holy Spirit's fire can equip a person and a church with the ability to live, walk, and speak with greater conviction and authority.

So, how can we see if a person and a church is “On Fire”? We want to look at 6 things today that show whether you and a church is on FIRE!

**I. A Church On Fire Will Be a Humble Church**

To catch “Fire” we, as individuals and as a church have to take the focus off of ourselves and our way and focus on understanding and knowing Gods way! Get over Yourself - As Christians we have to move beyond self-centeredness and embrace a more selfless, Christ-centered mindset, as seen in the example of the disciples in the Upper Room. The disciples, as they walked with Christ showed many times their selfish ambitions and desires. But after Jesus’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, before receiving the Holy Spirit, were initially filled with fear and uncertainty. However, their time of prayer and unity and coming to end of themselves in the Upper Room, allowed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, transforming them into bold “on fire” proclaimers of the gospel!

* Jeremiah 9:23-24

*This is what the Lord says: “Don’t let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. 24 But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the Lord who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the Lord, have spoken!*

* Philippians 2:3-4

*Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.*

* Matthew 16:24-25

***24****Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.****25****If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.*

* John 3:30

*He must increase, but I must decrease.*

A Humble Church...

* Will remain receptive to God's guidance and correction, rather than becoming complacent or arrogant in its achievements.
* A humble church is more likely to be receptive to God's word and in turn live it out.
* A humble church will prioritize service, evangelism, and community engagement.
* A humble church will be willing to humble itself before God and seek His guidance in all things.
* A humble church will be more likely to forgive, reconcile, and work towards unity within the church and with others. It will be less prone to pride, division, and self-serving agendas.

In essence, a humble church that is "on fire" will not be consumed by its own flames of passion but will instead use that passion to serve others and glorify God with humility.

**II. A Church On Fire Will Fast And Pray**

A church on fire is one that is actively pursuing a strong relationship with God by engaging in practices like fasting and prayer to deepen their faith and spiritual connection A Church on Fire will see the need for these things and the value of earnestly seeking God through these things with the whole heart.

* 1 Cor. 7:5 .... that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer.

We’ve spoken to fasting, which involves abstaining from food or other desires for a period and even partake in it in the beginning of the year and on the 5th of every month. This can be a way to actually humble oneself before God, focus on spiritual matters, seek God's guidance and rekindle the fire! It can help us recognize our dependence on God and cultivate a deeper sense of dependence on Him.

* Examples
  + Moses received the Ten Commandments (Ex. 34:28).
  + Elijah received direction from the Lord (1 Kgs. 19:8).
  + Hezekiah received healing for his body.
  + Jesus Fasted for 40 days prior to his Ministry
  + The Early Church: Fasted before making important decisions and before appointing elders and received direction
* Reward is promised.
  + Matthew 6:17-18

***17****But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face.****18****Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.*

When we are on fire for God, we will respond to the needs of our day, our lives, and the direction of our church with prayer and fasting.

**III. A Church On Fire Will Be Uncomfortable In The World**

A church that is deeply passionate and committed to God, His ways, and and His Word, will find itself at odds with worldly values. They will reject material desires and unfruitful works of darkness in favor of spiritual fervor and holiness,

* 1 John 2:15

*Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.*

A church and person that has the fire of God burning in their hearts should be very uncomfortable with the things this world offers...The things we can listen too, the things we can partake in, the things we can watch, the ways we can act...All these things we need to be careful with, that we aren’t flirting with...Because a lot of times when you flirt with them, they become easier to “love”. We then become less uncomfortable in those things, then we are comfortable in Christ! Church, we as Christians can NEVER become comfortable with this world and its evil ways. Thus, why John warns us “NOT LOVE THE WORLD OR THE THINGS IT OFFERS YOU! Check your heart today and see where it stands on some of these things as this can produce a “false love of God”

I mentioned, “lukewarm” churches earlier, as Christ deems, he will “spit them out of His mouth” I’m concerned and curious when we attend church services time and time again have, we become so comfortable that we can never be very stirred by the preaching of God’s Word? Has the world and its things crept into the church? Has it become comfortable to do this or that even in church?

We have spoken to this many a times, but if you want to cool off or even kill the fire in the House of God, let the world and its ways in! Let the Word be altered to tickle the ears and make people “feel” good and not convicted, let the world “ways” and the “it’s ok” get through the door and sit in the pews! Before you know it, those things will stand behind the pulpit and the church looks NO DIFFERENT than the world and becomes cold or even worse “lukewarm”

* Eph. 5:11

*Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them.*

A church and person that has the fire of God burning in their hearts the desires for the things of this world burn away and matter to them no more!

**IV. A Church On Fire Will Care For Souls**

Matthew 23:37

*“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God’s messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let me.*

* Jesus shows us early, before the cross, as He wept over Jerusalem, He cared for their souls
* The 120 people that came out of the Upper Room was on fire and...3000 people were saved that day because of the care for people’s souls!

Decades ago, there was a pastor and professor in Cuba. The Cuban government instructed him to either abandon his faith or quit teaching school. They gave him 15 days to decide. He answered quickly and said, "I don’t need 15 days. I don’t need 15 minutes. I won’t be back to teach tomorrow."

Several days later, in the middle of the night, he was abducted and imprisoned in a Cuban concentration camp for over two years. In part, because of his dedication to sharing the gospel with those around him, he was transferred 13 times to new concentration camps. He cared for people’s souls!

A church on fire cares for all of those souls that are in jeopardy of spending an eternity without Jesus and in a very real Hell. A church and person on fire should be one to share the Good News with any and all who have not received it! Do we care for people’s souls?

**V. A Church On Fire Will Accomplish Great Things For God**

A Church on Fire represents a vibrant, active, and passionate family deeply engaged in serving God and spreading the Gospel. This type of church is not merely a place of worship, but a dynamic force fueled by the Holy Spirit, impacting the world.

* Daniel 11:32

*...the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits.*

* John 14:12

*“I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.”*

* 1 Cor. 2:4

*And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit.*

* Mark 16:17-18

*17 These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. 18 They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won’t hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.”*

The power of God is manifested in many ways to His glory through Healings, Gifts of the Spirit, and Miracles...all signs that a church is on fire!

Not only will a Church On Fire be humble, fast & pray, be uncomfortable in the world, care for souls and accomplish great things for God and the Kingdom, but they

**VI** **Will Contend For All The Blessings Of God.**

A church on fire will no longer be satisfied with powerless services or with the “status quo” of just going to church every Sunday to check a box...There will be an ongoing desire for a continued fire and Spirit of revival. A refreshing wind. A real outpouring of Gods Spirit as we draw near to Him each day! Again, I bring to our attention Act 1:8 - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (In Lompoc, in our workplaces, in Walmart, in our homes)

Conclusion:

I truly desire to be a man on fire for God...not just to “get by” by what Jesus did for me. I want to be more, share more, experience more...I desire more! I desire that my heart never ceases to draw near the flames, and I never allow my life or this church to “cool off”! Let my hearts fire spread into this church, and in turn this churches fires spread to our homes, our work, our community...and then as we come back together each week, let the fire, the passion, the hunger, get bigger and become more real!

In 1894, Methodist preacher, Evangelist, and founder of The Salvation Army, William Booth wrote the Hymn, Send the Fire. I believe the lyrics can set the tone for our church to catch fire today. As we close, let these lyrics, be our hearts prayer today!

Thou Christ of burning, cleansing flame, Send the fire!

Thy blood-bought gift today we claim, Send the fire!

Look down and see this waiting host, Give us the promised Holy Ghost, We want another Pentecost, Send the fire!

2.

God of Elijah, hear our cry: Send the fire!

To make us fit to live or die, Send the fire!

To burn up every trace of sin, To bring the light and glory in, The revolution now begin, Send the fire!

3.

’Tis fire we want, for fire we plead, Send the fire!

The fire will meet our every need, Send the fire!

For strength to ever do the right, For grace to conquer in the fight. For power to walk the world in white, Send the fire!

4.

To make our weak hearts strong and brave, Send the fire!

To live a dying world to save, Send the fire!

O see us on thy altar lay, Our lives, our all, this very day,

To crown the offering now we pray, Send the fire!

I pray that the Holy Spirits power BURNS in us and through us as individuals and as a church! Let our church fulfill Gods purpose in this town!

**Are we ready church for God to send the fire and become a “Church on FIRE”?**