

Becoming a
FIRE STARTER

Learning how to get on fire, stay on fire and
spread the fire of the LORD!

by Anthony Lee

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Acknowledgments:

First, I would like to thank all the people that helped pray for the success of this book. Thanks to Pastor Tim Stege for helping me to edit this book. Finally, thanks and God bless to all those who support Soldiers for God ministry so that this book can be produced.

Dedication:

This book is dedicated to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for giving me the wisdom and knowledge to put in writing what he has shown me through my walk with Him. Thank you Jesus for saving me and setting me on fire with the baptism of Your Holy Spirit.

Introduction:

What is a fire starter? A fire starter is a person that's on fire for God and helps others catch on fire for God as well!

What does it mean to be on fire for God? It means to be totally consumed by God's presence in your life, where it's all about Him and nothing else matters except pleasing God through your words and deeds and helping others do the same.

Are you a person that is hungering after the fire of God in your life? Are you attempting to be a person that is zealous for as well as obedient to His Word? If you are, get ready to be set on fire by the Holy Spirit and stay on fire by reading and applying the information that's in this book. Because there is one thing you don't want to happen in your life and that is getting on fire for God and then letting the fire die down.

A lot of people say that someone is on fire for God only to find out later down the road the person they said was on fire for God fell back into their old ways even more than before. People also say they are on fire for God, but then something happens, whether it be trials or temptations, and they fall back into their old sinful lifestyle as well and now all they have is their memory of the past when they used to be

on fire for God. Why is this happening to people in the church today?

This is what this book you are about to read is going to answer; it is also going to show you how to get on fire for God and stay on fire for God—as well as spread the fire you have to other people for the glory of God.

For fifteen years of my life I attended church off and on. At church I would go through the motions and even sing in the choir; however, outside of church I was a completely different person. I physically abused my wife, I cheated on her, I treated my kids horribly, I had five crooked businesses, and I was filled with pride and anger. I was violent, fighting anyone who even gave me a hint of attitude—once I pushed my own father through a wall. I was a scammer, a liar, a thief, and an adulterous person who used to party several times a week, getting drunk out of my mind. My wife was a fortune teller and I often conspired with her to con her customers.

The worst part of all this is I thought I was a Christian because I used to go to church and put a little money in the offering. I used to look at people in church and say to myself, “man I want what they have”; I didn’t understand it—I went to church, I believed in Jesus, but why wasn’t I excited like they were, why couldn’t I get involved in the worship like they did, why

didn't I have the zeal they had, why am I not on fire for God like them?

I really thought I was a Christian so I should have had what they had. One day, in October of 2004, I started to realize why I didn't have what they had. My mother in-law came in town and she said to me "Anthony you can go to church, you can pray, you can fast, and you can sing in the choir but if you are not in the Word of God it is all meaningless."

Then she gave me a Bible book store address and told me to go and buy a bible, so I listened and respected what she said because she was a person that preached Christianity with her mouth shut. What do I mean by saying that? She lived Christianity—not just talked about it. I used to treat her daughter horribly but she never argued with me, she never said anything negative to me, the only thing she did was pray for me. So that day I went and bought my first Bible, a New Living Translation. It was a Bible that can be read through in a year and it was an easy to understand Bible.

That day I started reading. I started in the Gospel of John, and in a few days I realized that I really wasn't a Christian and if I was to die I would have gone to Hell (Galatians 5:19). I also realized God's grace and love for my life and for the world (John 3:16). I also realized why I wasn't like the other people in the church

who appeared to be passionately on fire for God; it was because of my sinful lifestyle and my unwillingness to obey His Word.

I started reading the Bible every day and in one year I read the whole Bible cover to cover. In that year God delivered me from pride, anger, bitterness, adultery, lust, drinking, smoking, slander, gossiping, lying, scamming, witchcraft, and cheating. I gave up all the crooked businesses!

In that year I started hosting Bible studies in the basement of my house. In 2004 it started with about 15 people. We were set on fire; it was like the day of Pentecost with the disciples in the upper room! Since then until now, 2011, it has grown into a full-blown ministry with the Church of God. The Church of God denomination has given us a building; the building they gave us is the church I grew up in. I am now the pastor of the church I grew up in! Only God can do that.

My point of telling you a part of my testimony is this—God can change anyone if they are willing to be changed. Jesus said “the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41). If God can change my life He can change anyone’s; if you allow the Holy Spirit to move in your life through the Word of God that you are going to read in this book you will be set on fire by God and your life will never be the same!

John the Baptist said, “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matthew 3:11).

I am going to teach you through the Word of God how to be baptized by FIRE so you can become a FIRE starter in your family, in your friends' lives, and in your ministry!

Chapter 1:When God Answers with Fire

When you look at the story of Cain and Abel you will discover the first offering unto the Lord. There were actually two offerings, but only one was acceptable to God.

After some time Cain brought some of his harvest and gave it as an offering to the LORD. Then Abel brought the first lamb born to one of his sheep, killed it, and gave the best parts of it as an offering. The LORD was pleased with Abel and his offering, but he rejected Cain and his offering. Cain became furious, and he scowled in anger.

Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why that scowl on your face? If you had done the right thing, you would be smiling; but because you have done evil, sin is crouching at your door. It wants to rule you, but you must overcome it."

Then Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out in the fields." When they were out in the fields, Cain turned on his brother and killed him. (Genesis 4:3-8)

If you notice in the story, Cain brought some of his harvest while Abel brought the best he had. One was a farmer, one was a Shepherd; they each brought what they had from their labors, but one gave the best while the other merely gave some. Why didn't God accept it? The answer might be that God cursed the ground because Adam had disobeyed God's Word.

And he said to the man, "You listened to your wife and ate the fruit which I told you not to eat. Because of what you have done, the ground will be under a curse. You will have to work hard all your life to make it produce enough food for you." (Genesis 3:17)

This is just like us today. We try to give God some of our lives but not all and not the best. Incomplete obedience is total disobedience! Then we, like Cain, get upset at God and other people in the church because we are not receiving our blessings and we are not being used and we say things like, "I don't understand why God is doing this to me," or, "why is that person getting blessed and I'm not?".

Could it be that you are not giving your all to the Lord? See, Cain gave God something that

was from the ground that was previously cursed and God didn't accept it. You cannot live a life of disobedience like I was living prior to my born again experience and expect God to answer your prayers, bless you and set you on fire. The Bible says when you live in disobedience you fall in to the curse of the world. (Deuteronomy 28:15-20). You might say Jesus took all the curses of the world and the curse of sin; He did (see Galatians 3:13), but if you are not abiding in Jesus, living for Him, and obeying Him, you disqualify yourself from this (John 15) and you, like Cain, open the door to Satan (Genesis 4:7) and allow him to destroy you. You end up living a cursed, miserable, angry life because of disobedience to God.

Look what God says through the apostle Paul to the church:

So then, my friends, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer. Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of

*God---what is good and is
pleasing to him and is
perfect. Romans 12:1-2*

If you were to bring a sacrifice back then to the temple the priest would take the animal and usually cut the neck, meaning the animal is not coming back. So to present yourself as a living sacrifice means to constantly die to self on an every day level—it means to constantly crucify the flesh and not give in to the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life (1 John 2:16-17).

When you want to live a life like that then you will know the will of God and then you will be pleasing to Him and then God will accept your offering which is your reasonable act of service!

What does the story have to do with fire? Well, when you would bring a sacrifice to the priests they would put it on the altar and burn it. Before the tabernacle or the temple was built and established God would accept people's offerings by sending fire from heaven to consume it. Some theologians and scholars believe the reason Cain knew God didn't accept His offering is because God didn't send fire from heaven to consume it. They believe God sent fire from heaven to consume Abel's offering and that is how Cain knew God did not accept his offering.

Look at the following examples:

Gideon, the mighty man of valor.

His story is in the book of Judges. God called Gideon to go against the enemies of Israel. The problem was he was scared and in doubt but he soon realized God was with Him and He presented the Lord an offering:

So Gideon went into his house and cooked a young goat and used a bushel of flour to make bread without any yeast. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, brought them to the LORD's angel under the oak tree, and gave them to him.

The angel told him, "Put the meat and the bread on this rock, and pour the broth over them." Gideon did so.

Then the LORD's angel reached out and touched the meat and the bread with the end of the stick he was holding. Fire came out of the rock and burned up the meat and the bread. Then the angel disappeared.

Gideon then realized that it was the LORD's angel he had seen, and he said in terror, "Sovereign LORD! I have seen your angel face-to-face!" (Judges 6:19-22)

God accepted his offering with FIRE!

Elijah, the powerful man of God!

In the story we are going to look at, Israel was living in idolatry, worshipping the false god called Baal. This god was worshipped because they believed he was a god of increase and plenty. Sometimes we get like the Israelites—we think we have to do our own thing to be provided for, so we scam, steal, and connive to get what we want, which is idolatry. We worship money, and Jesus said we have a choice—either serve God or money, you cannot serve both! The Israelites should have remembered that one of the names of God is Jehovah-jireh, the Lord our Provider (Genesis 22:14). Next time remember that name before you fall for idolatry and serve money!

In the story, you have Elijah challenging the wicked Queen Jezebel's 450 false prophets of Baal in an old western-style showdown to see who is the true God:

Elijah went up to the people and said, "How much longer will it

*take you to make up your minds?
If the LORD is God, worship him;
but if Baal is God, worship him!"
But the people didn't say a word.
Then Elijah said, "I am the only
prophet of the LORD still left, but
there are 450 prophets of Baal.
Bring two bulls; let the prophets
of Baal take one, kill it, cut it in
pieces, and put it on the wood---
but don't light the fire. I will do the
same with the other bull. Then let
the prophets of Baal pray to their
god, and I will pray to the LORD,
and the one who answers by
sending fire---he is God." The
people shouted their approval. (1
Kings 18:21-24)*

I would really strongly suggest you read the whole chapter of 1 Kings 18, it is a really good story; but to get to the main point Elijah tells them "you built an altar I'll build an altar and whoever the true God is will send down fire to consume the offering." Elijah waits for them to get their offering and put it on the altar, then he starts taunting them, suggesting that their god is not home or is asleep. The people tried everything—they prayed to the false god, they danced, they cut themselves, they shouted—nothing happened. Then Elijah called to the people:

Then Elijah said to the people, "Come closer to me," and they all gathered around him. He set about repairing the altar of the LORD which had been torn down. He took twelve stones, one for each of the twelve tribes named for the sons of Jacob, the man to whom the LORD had given the name Israel.

With these stones he rebuilt the altar for the worship of the LORD. He dug a trench around it, large enough to hold about four gallons of water.

Then he placed the wood on the altar, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the offering and the wood." They did so, and he said, "Do it again"---and they did. "Do it once more," he said---and they did.

The water ran down around the altar and filled the trench.

At the hour of the afternoon sacrifice the prophet Elijah approached the altar and prayed, "O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, prove now that

you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant and have done all this at your command. Answer me, LORD, answer me, so that this people will know that you, the LORD, are God and that you are bringing them back to yourself."

The LORD sent fire down, and it burned up the sacrifice, the wood, and the stones, scorched the earth and dried up the water in the trench.

When the people saw this, they threw themselves on the ground and exclaimed, "The LORD is God; the LORD alone is God!" (1 Kings 18:30-39)

You may notice in the story that Elijah rebuilt the altar of the LORD. It is time for us to realize it is not only about praying, dancing, and shouting— it is about rebuilding in your life what God wanted from the beginning, a person that will lay down their life and sacrifice all for Him!

When you do that people will notice God's fire in your life and they will return to the LORD as the people in the story did. They also caught the false prophets and killed every one of them. It is time for us to stand out like Elijah did; God has not called us to blend in, He has called us to stand out!

When you do this God will answer with FIRE!

One final example: King Solomon

In this story King Solomon just finished building the temple of the LORD and he is dedicating it to God; this is where the offerings were to be brought. He prays in chapter six that God will live in the temple, that God will help His people, He will hear their prayers, and when the people mess up if they will repent He will forgive them and restore them.

Look what happens when you get to chapter seven:

When King Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and burned up the sacrifices that had been offered, and the dazzling light of the LORD's presence filled the Temple. Because the Temple was full of the dazzling light, the priests could not enter it.

When the people of Israel saw the fire fall from heaven and the light fill the Temple, they fell face downward on the pavement, worshiping God and praising him for his goodness and his eternal

love. Then Solomon and all the people offered sacrifices to the LORD. He sacrificed 22,000 head of cattle and 120,000 sheep as fellowship offerings. And so he and all the people dedicated the Temple. (2 Chronicles 7:1-5)

If you keep reading you will see that the altar was not big enough to hold all the sacrifices that King Solomon gave to God, so they had to use the temple courts! This is what we need to realize: Solomon's temple no longer stands, but remember the Bible says we are the temple of God! Read the following passages:

Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

There is no longer a Levitical priesthood to take our offerings of sacrifice, but the Bible says we are a royal Priesthood!

But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the

excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

There is no more bringing your sacrifice to the temple because Jesus Christ was the supreme offering unto God! As Christ was a sacrifice we should also live a life of sacrifice because the Bible says we are the sacrifice, as the Apostle Paul writes: “So then, my friends, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer” (Romans 12:1).

So we are the temple, the priest, and the sacrifice!

We are the whole worship system! So where is the fire?

Because there is no worship, if there isn't any fire!

Like Solomon we should see fire and God's presence fill our temples. When Solomon presented his offering, God answered and accepted it with FIRE!

If you look at the stories of Abel, Gideon, Elijah, and King Solomon, you will notice their lives were pleasing unto God and God answered their prayers and accepted their offerings and He answered with FIRE! When your life is not pleasing to God you will not see the fire and praise in your life.

So the question you need to ask yourself is are you pleasing unto God?

If you say no, well praise God! You're reading the right book! If you apply what you read you will become set on fire by God's presence and you too will become a fire starter. If you don't apply it you will live a life like Cain, unaccepted, destroyed by the enemy, angry and jealous of people who are on fire for God and you will live in regret! It is time for you to start living the life God called you to live—accepted, redeemed, set free and blessed!

To a true Christian it shouldn't be a choice. Read the next chapter and I'll explain...

Notes

Chapter 2 It's Fire or Nothing!

Jesus said something that really amazed me. First He begins in Luke 12 talking about whom people should fear—not man but God, who has the authority to throw you in Hell. Then He starts talking about a man that made his life all about his possessions and he didn't acknowledge God, and how God required his soul from him one night and he was not ready for God. Then Jesus explains not to worry about things of the world but please God and He will add to your life. He continues and says how if He comes back and faithful servants are serving Him they will be rewarded but if He comes back and the servants are not faithful they will be punished then He says this: "I came to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already kindled! I have a baptism to receive, and how distressed I am until it is over! Do you suppose that I came to bring peace to the world? No, not peace, but division. From now on a family of five will be divided, three against two and two against three" (Luke 12:49-52).

Jesus is saying that He came to set the world on Fire! Look at the context He says it in: talking about hell; a person who was living for himself, not worrying about life; then a faithful servant that gets rewarded; a servant that stops being faithful and gets punished; then he talks about how people are hypocritical.

It is simple, Jesus came to bring fire upon this earth so we will not have to face Hell's fire. In our houses today there are people who are on fire for God and there are people who are not on fire for God and do not fully want to submit themselves unto God! That is what He was saying about division in the house.

Look at some of the definitions for kindled:

KIN'DLE, v.t light or white, to shine.

1. To set on fire; to cause to burn with flame; to light;
2. To inflame, as the passions; to exasperate; to rouse; to provoke; to excite to action; the flame of love, or love into a flame.

Take a look at Jesus' words in John 8:12:
 "Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. 'I am the light of the world,' he said. 'Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness.'"

So He **is** the light—remember, the source of light back then was Fire!

Jesus also says in Matthew 5:14-16:

"You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead it is put on the lampstand, where it

gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.”

So we are supposed to be light—FIRE!

Remember what John the Baptist said in Matthew 3:11, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” This prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit filled the place where they were meeting.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1-4)

Water baptism is awesome, it is a declaration of our faith, an outward sign that we follow Christ. The baptism that Jesus is truly concerned with in your life is the baptism of fire!

Jesus said something in Acts chapter one I want to show you.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

The Thayer definition for the word power in Acts 1:8 is *dunamis*:

- 1) strength power, ability
- 1a) inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth
- 1b) power for performing miracles

The Strong's definition for the word power is *dunamis*:

doo'-nam-is

From G1410; force - ability, abundance, meaning, might (worker of) miracle (-s), power, strength, violence, mighty (wonderful) work.

Dunamis is where we get our English word for dynamite! Yes, dynamite, the powerful

explosive that is used to level mountains and buildings, to change the atmosphere wherever it is used.

So you see, if God is truly in our lives there is supposed to be evidence of change in our lives.

Right now, I want you to think of a paper napkin and a lit candle. Now, if you were to put the paper into the fire of the candle, what would happen? The napkin would be set on fire and a few things would happen to the structure of the napkin in the process of its burning. One, the napkin would change from a napkin to ashes. Two, the napkin would have given off light because of the fire that was consuming it. Three, the napkin would have given off heat from the fire that was consuming it and it would have been warm around the napkin. Four, the fire would have spread from one end of the napkin to the other.

Now, using the four steps that the napkin would experience because of the fire, ask yourself these four questions:

#1: Is my life changed completely because of Christ? 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come."

#2: Am I shining my light as a good witness for Jesus? John 1:7: "The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him." Like John the Baptist we are supposed to bear witness of the light, Jesus Christ. The way we do that is shining our light!

#3: Am I showing love for people (do I have a warm heart towards others)? 1 Corinthians 13:1: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal." IF YOU HAVE NO LOVE YOU HAVE NO JESUS!

#4: Am I spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, am I a person who goes out of their way to share Jesus with others? Mark 16:15: "He said to them, 'Go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all people.'"

If you are not doing these things you are not on fire for Jesus, and if you are not doing these things you are not truly serving Jesus, and if you are not serving Jesus you're working against Him! Matthew 12:30 says, "Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering."

If you are not truly a new person in Christ Jesus and if you are not shining your light for Jesus and if you are not showing love to Christ

by obeying Him and loving His people, by helping and ministering to them the Gospel of our LORD, you are not baptized with fire!

If you ever want to be effective for Jesus it is time to seek after the baptism of fire!

The Laodicean church in Asia Minor thought they had everything. They had a booming city, a big congregation, lots of money in the bank—they thought they had it made. Jesus sent them this message:

"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: "This is the message from the Amen, the faithful and true witness, who is the origin of all that God has created. I know what you have done; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! But because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth!" Revelation 3:14:16

A lot of people misunderstand this scripture. They say, "I can't be hot or on fire for God so I'm going to be cold, I'm not even going to try to go to church or read the bible and pray because I don't want to be a hypocrite because

I'm still in the world and I don't want to be lukewarm”

When Jesus said I wish you were one or the other, hot or cold, cold represents an atheist, a non-believer and when He says hot it means a person that is on fire for God. So we don't have a choice of being cold because people that confess Jesus are believers and believers in Jesus can either be hot, on fire, or lukewarm, claiming Christ but living like a nonbeliever!

So then, why would Jesus wish they were either hot or cold? Why didn't He just say I wish you were hot, on fire for God? Well, because if they were atheists or nonbelievers, God could send someone that is on fire for Jesus to show them a true witness of Jesus. That is why Jesus introduces himself as the Faithful and True Witness (Rev 3:14). Too many people in this world are living like hell, expecting to go to heaven. Then people who are in the world start coming to church and they see these lukewarm so-called Christians and they think this is the normal way of being Christian. Especially because you have a lot of sugar-coating, water-diluting pastors out there that do not preach the full Gospel of Jesus! This is why people do not understand the judgment of God.

In the text of Revelation three, Jesus says because you are lukewarm I will spit you out of

my mouth! Back then in the days of the Laodicean church they had a water problem in the city so they had to build an aqueduct (like a bridge/piping system) to bring in the water from a city six miles away. The water used to enter into the aqueduct ice cold, but by the time it traveled six miles to enter Laodicea the desert sun had been beaming on it so by the time it came out of the aqueduct it was lukewarm!

So Jesus was basically illustrating that the same way the lukewarm water is disgusting to you is the same way your lifestyle is disgusting to me! So if Jesus spits us out of His mouth it means to cast us out of His presence.

I want to share a scripture with you that changed my life.

“People's desires make them give in to immoral ways, filthy thoughts, and shameful deeds. They worship idols, (practice witchcraft), hate others, and are hard to get along with. People become jealous, angry, and selfish. They not only argue and cause trouble, but they are envious. They get drunk, carry on at wild parties, and do other evil things as well. I told you before, and I am telling you again: No one who does these things will

enter God's kingdom. God's Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways. And because we belong to Christ Jesus, we have killed our selfish feelings and desires. God's Spirit has given us life, and so we should follow the Spirit." Galatians 5:19-25

"Practice witchcraft" translated from the Greek means drugs and fortunetelling.

I was going to church and doing pretty much every sin that is mentioned in this passage. If I was to die I would have gone straight to Hell; I would have been cast out of God's presence. I was lukewarm!

Go over the list in Galatians and see if you are dealing with any of those sins.

We should have the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, not the fruit of the flesh!

How do we do that? To get fruit you need seed. The Bible is the seed that brings the fruit of the Spirit of God. I started reading the Bible in 2004 and I never stopped. The Word of God is the fuel for the fire. We will talk about this more in the next chapter.

Should we want the fire of God in our lives? We should not only want it, we should seek after it. We should tell people to seek after it. It should be our life mission to get on fire for God, stay on fire for God, and spread the fire of God, because without the fire of God in your life there is no release from the bondages in our lives because the Bible says where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom! If there is no fire there will never be true happiness and joy in our lives because the Bible says in His presence there is fullness of joy! And if there is no fire there is no Heaven because without allowing the Holy Spirit to work in your life you will never please God, and if you don't please God on earth you will not be allowed to serve Him in heaven!

This is the reason this chapter is called "It's Fire or Nothing!"

I hope you realize the need for the baptism of the Holy Spirit with fire in your life. If you do, then get ready to learn how to receive it through looking at God's Word in the remainder of this book. We will look at seven things we as believers need in our lives to get on fire and stay on fire for God:

1. The Word of God
2. Eyes free from lust
3. Strength to get through trials

4. Prayer time
5. Fasting
6. Fellowship
7. Time of witnessing in our life

Notes

Chapter 3: Fuel for the Fire

I was in the east coast in May of 2011 on a six day crusade, and on one of those days I was scheduled to preach in Washington, D.C., for a pastor friend of mine, Pastor Frank. I was actually going to preach a sermon on how to get on fire for God, and on the way there my van ran out of gas. I was so frustrated; we were only blocks from the church when it ran out of gas. The church service had to start without us, we were 30 minutes late. I was upset at one of my guys that was on the trip with me because he was driving and he didn't pay attention to the gas gauge. I start walking in frustration, and then God ministered to me and said, "I'm going to use this in the sermon tonight so calm down." So I did; we got some gas and went to church and the fire of God fell on that place like I haven't seen in a long time!

The point God gave me about the gas is this: to have fire you need fuel. You're responsible to make sure you have the fuel. No one else is to blame, you have to constantly watch your spiritual gauge and can never allow yourself to run out because you might be close to where God wants you, but it's not about being close it's about being right on for the glory of God!

Don't get me wrong, I'm a person who runs out of gas a lot. I just don't pay attention or sometimes I think I can stretch the gas longer

than it can go. We will not be perfect in this life with God, but God sure does want us to try. The word perfect in the Greek means “mature”; it is time to grow up and put gas in the car and make sure it never gets low.

What is the fuel? The Word of God! Jesus said in Matthew 4:4: "The Scripture says, 'Human beings cannot live on bread alone, but need every word that God speaks.' "

Like my mother-in-law told me, “you can pray, go to church, fast and be in the choir, but if you’re not in the Word of God it’s all for no reason!” You need to realize the Word is seed. 1 Peter 1:23 says, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

Jesus said in John 3:3: “You must be born again to SEE the kingdom of God,” and in John 3:5 Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot ENTER into the kingdom of God.” The water in this text represents the Word as well so when you get seed and water something is going to grow! It produces the fruit of the Spirit! “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23). Then you will SEE God’s Kingdom move in your life here and then when it’s all

done you will ENTER God's kingdom in Heaven later.

Look what the book of 1 John says in chapter 3, verses eight and nine: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

Jesus the Word was manifested to us for this very reason, to destroy the devil and to bring forth the Word of God for us so we can have fuel to be on fire for God!

Sometimes you see people and they look like they are on fire for God but then the fire dies down. Why is this? The answer is found in In Luke chapter eight. Jesus gave an illustration about a man that sowed some seed on four different types of ground, then later He explained the story to the disciples more clearly. This is what He said:

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe

and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.”
Luke 8:11-16

So the reasons why people start to look like they're on fire for God then die out are because: one, their hearts are hardened; two, they have no Word in their daily life, only in church (they have no root in themselves, that's why when temptation comes they are too weak to fight it off); and three, those who are worried about the cares and riches and pleasures of this world. Notice the person that had the good ground received the seed and produced fruit

(see Gal. 5:22), then right after that Jesus talks about the sower and the seed He immediately starts talking about a lit candle being displayed, not hidden. He says in Luke 8:16, “No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.”

The Word is the Fuel for the FIRE so all can see!

I love this quote from John Wesley: “If we get on fire for God people will come watch us burn.” That is what it is all about, showing God’s glory! This quote reminds me of a story about Moses. In the book of Exodus chapter three Moses, after forty years of being gone from Egypt, gets called by God to help bring His people out of bondage and slavery. The way God did it is what amazes me. Moses is tending His father-in-law’s sheep when something happened...

One day while Moses was taking care of the sheep and goats of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian, he led the flock across the desert and came to Sinai, the holy mountain. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him as a flame coming from the middle of a bush. Moses saw that the bush

*was on fire but that it was not
burning up.*

*"This is strange," he thought.
"Why isn't the bush burning up? I
will go closer and see."*

*When the LORD saw that Moses
was coming closer, he called to
him from the middle of the bush
and said, "Moses! Moses!"*

*He answered, "Yes, here I
am." (Exodus 3:1-4)*

Moses probably saw many burning bushes in the desert but there was something strange about this bush—it wasn't burning out! So Moses gets curious. He never saw a bush on fire that did not burn out, so he leaves what he is doing to check it out. When He gets there it is the Lord Himself! The LORD gives Moses a mission to go back to Egypt and bring the people out of bondage.

I want to connect it to the church. People have seen their share of burnouts in the church, but when people start hearing and seeing people on fire for God that don't burn out but keep on burning for the Lord what will happen is people will stop what they are doing to talk to you. They will stop what they're doing and they will come to your church. They will see the the light

from the fire in you and your ministry and they will be drawn to you to hear what you have to say (Moses' name actually means drawn out), what your church leader has to say, and when they do they will get a Word from you because when you are on fire for God you will always have a Word. Jeremiah said (see Jeremiah 20:9) "But when I say, 'I will forget the LORD and no longer speak in his name,' then your message is like a fire burning deep within me. I try my best to hold it in, but can no longer keep it back."

When they get this Word they need for their life they might be stubborn at first. Moses was hesitant to go, but God kept on encouraging Him. He finally gave in and accepted the mission that forever changed his life and helped millions of Hebrews be delivered from the hands of the Egyptians and the bondage they were in. In the book of Jeremiah it says, "My message is like a fire and like a hammer that breaks rocks in pieces" (Jeremiah 23:29).

This is our mission as well—to be fired up for God so people can come watch us burn, so that they can see the hope in God in our lives through our testimony, so they can be delivered from the bondage of the world and set on fire as well! Remember, we are the bush, God is in the center. He's the source of the fire. The Gospel of John says Jesus is the Word and the Word came down and dwelt among us (John 1)

so when you have the fuel always in the center
you'll always be on fire!

Moses' right hand guy was Joshua. After
Moses died and Joshua took over the
leadership position, God told Joshua
something that is actually what I live by as well:

*“Be sure that the book of the Law
is always read in your worship.
Study it day and night, and make
sure that you obey everything
written in it. Then you will be
prosperous and successful.
Remember that I have
commanded you to be
determined and confident! Do not
be afraid or discouraged, for I,
the LORD your God, am with you
wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:8-9)*

It is time to get in the Word every day—then
you will be successful and prosperous. Jesus
told the people in John 8:31-32: "If you keep on
obeying what I have said, you truly are my
disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth
will set you free." If you keep on continuing in
the truth and obeying it you'll be set free.
People don't continue in the Word, that's why
they are still in bondage. Psalm 1:1-3 says:

*“Happy are those who reject the
advice of evil people, who do not*

follow the example of sinners or join those who have no use for God. Instead, they find joy in obeying the Law of the LORD, and they study it day and night. They are like trees that grow beside a stream, that bear fruit at the right time, and whose leaves do not dry up. They succeed in everything they do.”

The word of God gets you through your trials and makes you succeed when you're in it every day.

This chapter should have taught you the Word of God is your fuel for the Fire of God and this fuel allows you to destroy the work of the enemy (Matt. 4:4), makes you successful and prosperous (Josh. 1:8), it sets you free (John 8:31-32), it gets you through trials and tribulations (Psalm 1:1-3), it makes you produce fruit (Gal. 5:22), it's the fuel for the fire of God (Luke 8:16), and most importantly it makes you born again (1 Peter 1:23).

Show me a person on fire for God and I will show you a person that is in the Word!

If you read three chapters a day and four chapters on Sunday, you will read the Bible in one year! Start in the book of John then go

right around. Since 2004 until now (June 2011) I have read the entire Bible three times and the New Testament over 10 times. I'm presently going through the Bible again for the fourth time, reading a Bible with a commentary edition, reading one chapter and all the commentary with that chapter. Why am I telling you this? Because I need to fuel up everyday to keep the fire of God strong in my life. I need my daily bread. However you plan to read the Bible, just start reading the Bible.

There might be people who cannot read in your family; tell them the Bible is available on CD, DVD and mp3 nowadays, so they can still get in the Word! You might say I don't understand the Bible, what's the use? Let me tell you a story that I found on the Internet one day; this is exactly how I read it:

There was an old man that lived in the mountains of eastern Kentucky. The old man had a big family. One day one of the old man's grandsons approached him with a problem. The Grandson said, "Pap, I read the Bible and I don't understand it, and what I understand I forget as soon as I close the Bible covers. What's the use of reading the Bible!" The Grandfather ordered the grandson to get the basket

they used to carry the heating coal into the house and run down to the river and bring back a basket of water to the house. To please his grandfather, the lad grabbed the basket, ran to the river and got a basket of water. The lad ran back to the house with the water. By the time the lad reached the house the basket was empty.

The grandfather chided the young boy, "Hurry and go bring me a basket of water. DO IT NOW!" The lad ran quickly from the river. The basket was full when he left the river, but by the time he arrived at the house the basket of water was dry. After his third trip, the boy told his granddad, "It is no use, I cannot retain the water in the basket until I get here. It is useless." The grandfather looked at the disgusted young boy and said, "So you think it is useless?" "Yes! Pap it is useless to try!" the boy replied. The Grandfather said to the boy, "BUT LOOK AT THE BASKET, CAN'T YOU SEE SOMETHING?" THE SMALL BOY WAS AMAZED, AFTER THREE TRIPS TO THE RIVER,

THE DIRTY COAL BASKET WAS CLEAN. Pap said, "See, that is what the Word of God does to you. As you read, you say you don't retain and understand it, it's no use but your basket is cleaned. THE WORD OF GOD DOES THE WORK OF GOD!"

Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word." Don't focus on what you don't understand in the Bible. Focus instead on what you do understand, and apply that. In time, the Holy Spirit will lead you into deeper truths, and you will continually understand more as you grow deeper in the Lord.

Always remember: Keep fueling up and you will keep burning up!

Notes

Chapter 4: Keep Your Eyes on the Fire

When you see the names of men in the Bible like King David, King Solomon, and Samson, what comes to your mind? Maybe you're thinking mighty men of God, or famous men of God, or good looking men of God? Well, they are all true; these men have one more thing in common and that is they all fell for the lust of the eye!

King David was known in the Bible as a Shepherd, an armor bearer, a poet, a prophet, the ultimate King, a warrior, and a man after God's own heart. King Solomon was known as the wisest, richest, most famous King ever, a man that built the temple of the Lord and saw fire come down from heaven, saw God two times in visions. Loved by the Lord so much that the Lord God even gave Him another name, Jedidiah, which means "beloved of Jehovah". Then there was Samson, one of the most famous judges in Israel, the strongest man that ever lived! What happened to these mighty men beloved of God?

King David fell for Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:3), King Solomon fell for hundreds of pagan women that God strictly forbade—he actually had 1,000 women altogether including wives and concubines. He even burned incense to his wife's false gods (1 Kings 11:7-9). Then

there was Samson—he fell for Delilah and other pagan women (Judges 16:6).

The quickest way fires are extinguished in believers' lives is falling for the lust of the eye! Remember from the previous chapter that the fuel for the fire is the Word. Well, every one of these men heard the voice of God and knew the Word of God. King David said, "I have hidden thy Word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:5). The point is they stop looking to the Word for help, they didn't look to the Word for strength, they stopped obeying the Word of the Lord! They all had to pay the consequences for their sin. King David's consequences were three of his kids died and one of his daughters got raped by her own half-brother. Also, his own son went out with his concubines in broad daylight (2 Sam. 12:1-23). Then there was King Solomon; one of his his consequences was that the kingdom was divided into a northern kingdom and a southern kingdom. Samson's consequence was the enemy beating him up and making a mockery out of him; they also gouged out his eyes (Judges 16:21).

You see, even when we repent and ask forgiveness for our sins, and receive God's mercy and grace, sometimes our sins still have a negative impact on our lives (2 Samuel 12:12-13). God has forgiven and forgotten the

sins, but there may still be consequences that do not go away.

I want to show you why they all fell into the sin of the lust of the eye by showing you a story Nathan the prophet told King David to illustrate the sin that David did. It is found in 2 Samuel 12:1-10:

The LORD sent the prophet Nathan to David. Nathan went to him and said, "There were two men who lived in the same town; one was rich and the other poor. The rich man had many cattle and sheep, while the poor man had only one lamb, which he had bought. He took care of it, and it grew up in his home with his children. He would feed it some of his own food, let it drink from his cup, and hold it in his lap. The lamb was like a daughter to him. One day a visitor arrived at the rich man's home. The rich man didn't want to kill one of his own animals to fix a meal for him; instead, he took the poor man's lamb and prepared a meal for his guest."

David became very angry at the rich man and said, "I swear by

the living LORD that the man who did this ought to die! For having done such a cruel thing, he must pay back four times as much as he took."

"You are that man," Nathan said to David. "And this is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'I made you king of Israel and rescued you from Saul. I gave you his kingdom and his wives; I made you king over Israel and Judah. If this had not been enough, I would have given you twice as much. Why, then, have you disobeyed my commands? Why did you do this evil thing? You had Uriah killed in battle; you let the Ammonites kill him, and then you took his wife! Now, in every generation some of your descendants will die a violent death because you have disobeyed me and have taken Uriah's wife.'"

You see the visitor in the story is the devil and he wants to come to your house to destroy you by making you lazy and get you to lust. You see when King David fell into the lust of the eye that day he was supposed to be on the battlefield fighting with his soldiers, but he

stayed home that day and saw Bathsheba taking a bath (2 Sam 11). That sin gave birth to more sin and then he wound up killing Bathsheba's husband Uriah to cover up his sin of a love child and also to get Bathsheba as his wife.

See when you fall into the lust of the eye and the lust of the flesh and the pride of life you kill Uriah in your life... you might be thinking what do I mean by saying you will kill Uriah in your life? Uriah in the Hebrew means *The Fire of Jehovah!* You see when you get your eyes off of God's fire and put them where you shouldn't you end up killing the fire of God in your life!

Look at the first sin in the garden in Genesis chapter three: "The woman saw how beautiful the tree was and how good its fruit would be to eat, and she thought how wonderful it would be to become wise. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, and he also ate it." (Genesis 3:6) Satan came as a snake and started deceiving Eve by first getting her to lust with the eye for the fruit, then after she lusted with her eyes she lusted in the flesh by saying it would be good to eat, then third she wanted to be wise like God (the pride of life).

Every sin in the world falls into one of these three categories: the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life.

It always starts with the lust of the eye! 1 John 2:14-17 says the key things we need to know:

“I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know him who is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

The Word is the key; not only reading it or saying amen to it, but actually keeping hold of it. Don't let it go, because if you do you'll end up extinguishing the fire in your lives; but if you hold on you will overcome the evil one! Let's learn from these mighty men. They fell; let's learn from their mistakes so that we won't fall into the same mistakes. The only way we can overcome where they failed is by listening to the Word of God and the convicting and

leading power of the Holy Spirit! Here are some verses we should meditate on as we seek to remain free from the corrupting power of lustful thoughts:

Matthew 5:27–28: "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'" - But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

James 4:4: You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

James 1:13: When tempted, no-one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

Proverbs 6:25: Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes.

Proverbs 5:1-16: My child, pay attention and listen to my wisdom and insight. Then you will know how to behave properly, and your words will show that you have knowledge. The lips of another man's wife may be as sweet as honey and her kisses as smooth as olive oil, but when it is all over, she leaves you nothing but bitterness and pain. She will take you down to the world of the dead; the road she walks is the

road to death. She does not stay on the road to life; but wanders off, and does not realize what is happening. Now listen to me, sons, and never forget what I am saying. Keep away from such a woman! Don't even go near her door! If you do, others will gain the respect that you once had, and you will die young at the hands of merciless people. Yes, strangers will take all your wealth, and what you have worked for will belong to someone else. You will lie groaning on your deathbed, your flesh and muscles being eaten away, and you will say, "Why would I never learn? Why would I never let anyone correct me I wouldn't listen to my teachers. I paid no attention to them. And suddenly I found myself publicly disgraced." Be faithful to your own wife and give your love to her alone. Children that you have by other women will do you no good.

Satan wants not only to kill the fire in your life by the lust of the eyes but he wants you to spend eternity in the fires of hell. What do I mean? In Galatians 5:19 it says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness," then it goes on to say anyone living this life style will not enter the kingdom of God! (see Gal. 5:21)

You might say okay what's the big deal? The Greek word used for fornication here is *porneia*; it's where we get our English word

pornography! According to a CBS special, at the big hotel chains—Hilton, Marriot, Hyatt, Sheraton and Holiday Inn—50 percent of guests view adult films on in-room pay-per-view television systems. Fifty percent!

If you find that statistic startling, this one is downright tragic: another Internet site reports that hotel adult rentals increase during ministry conventions. That means that some pastors are viewing hotel adult movies at a higher rate than the general public! This is the reason why a lot of the fire has not been in the churches because the leaders have fallen for the lust of the eye. You might say you don't watch dirty movies...

Jesus said in Matthew 18:8-9, "If your hand or foot causes you to sin, chop it off and throw it away! You would be better off to go into life crippled or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into the fire that never goes out. If your eye causes you to sin, poke it out and get rid of it. You would be better off to go into life with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fires of hell."

Even if the movie is not an adult film, let's say it's a rated R movie but it's a pretty racy part, it still causes you to lust. Do what Jesus said, cut it out. He didn't mean to literally cut your hand or your foot or pluck out your eye. What He means is if anything is causing you to sin take

it out of your life! Don't set yourself up to fail! If you're having trouble with the cable cut it off, or even the Internet cut it off or put blocks on it!

I personally don't watch anything over rated PG-13; sometimes I can't even watch those movies. You might say that's over doing it, well ask yourself how bad do you want the fire of God in your life? I love what Job said in Job 31:1, "I have made a solemn promise never to look with lust at a woman." I have made that same covenant with God—I will not lust after a woman because I want the fire of God in my life more than I want the fire of passion and lust in my life.

You can rest assured you can fight it off by the power of Christ Jesus. In Matthew chapter four you see Satan trying to tempt Jesus the same ways he did Adam and Eve: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life. Where the first man Adam failed the second Adam succeeded (1 Cor. 15:47). Jesus did it by quoting passages out of the book of Deuteronomy, chapters six and eight. The word Deuteronomy means to repeat the word. This is exactly what Jesus did in every temptation. Jesus quoted the Word of God and defeated the enemy! He did this to show us an example of how to overcome temptations. When I get tempted I ask God to help me and He does and I openly quote Scriptures like Romans 6, "I am not a slave to sin any more," or Isaiah

54:17, “no weapon formed against you will prosper.” Jesus didn’t think Satan away, he openly rebuked him by verbally quoting Scriptures. If you do this and ask for His help He will help you because in 1 Corinthians 10:13 it says, “God will not allow temptation come upon you so strongly that you can’t handle it but He will make a door way out,” that door way is Jesus! Also, don’t set yourself up to fail, don’t test God. If you’re getting tempted by someone or something don’t put yourself around them and don’t give in to it or watch it!

Jesus said something that really woke me up to keeping my eyes on the FIRE of God. In the Scripture you’re about to read it shows us if we put our eyes on the darkness of the world we will kill the light (FIRE) of God in our lives.

"No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where its light can be seen by all who enter the house."

"Your eye is a lamp that provides light [FIRE] for your body. When your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light [FIRE]. But when it is bad, your body is filled with darkness. Make sure that the light you think you have is not actually darkness. If you are

filled with light, with no dark corners, then your whole life will be radiant, as though a floodlight were filling you with light." Luke 11:33-36, NLT

This is what you should take out of this Scripture, when your eyes are on God because God is good (Mark 10) and Jesus is the Light (John 8:12), your whole life will be consumed with God's presence and the fire of God will be evident in your life so all can see so that you can be like a flood light! Flood lights come on when there's a storm and in blackouts (darkness). You will be used to help people come out of the darkness of the world and help those who are going through trials find encouragement when you keep your eyes on the FIRE and don't hide anything from God (dark corners) and allow God to move in every area of your life!

Just make sure the light (FIRE) you think you have is not actually darkness!
What do light and darkness have in common?
Nothing!

If you keep your eyes on the FIRE you'll be something special for God!

Notes

Chapter 5 Tested by Fire

Mark 9:47-50 says, "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."

The Good News Translation says it this way in Mark 9:49: "Everyone will be purified (tested) by fire as a sacrifice is purified by salt."

In the verses we just read Jesus was talking about watching your eyes, then He moves on to a believer being tested. We just got through in the previous chapter talking about watching your eyes, so in this chapter I also want to talk about how believers are tested by God's fire for the glory of God!

Why are believers tested in the first place?

“Be glad about this, even though it may now be necessary for you to be sad for a while because of the many kinds of trials you suffer. Their purpose is to prove that your faith is genuine. Even gold, which can be destroyed, is tested by fire; and so your faith, which is much more precious than gold, must also be tested, so that it may endure. Then you will receive praise and glory and honor on the Day when Jesus Christ is revealed.” 1 Peter 1:6-7

The Greek word for trials in the text is *peirasmos*.

Thayer Definition:

trial, proving

integrity, virtue, constancy

adversity, affliction, trouble: sent by God and serving to test or prove one's character, faith, holiness

In Mark 9 it talks about how we are to be salt; salt represents our witness for Christ. Why a person has to be tested is for the purpose to make our witness for Christ shine. As Peter says, as fire tests gold so your faith has to be tested; just like the gold goes under fire to purify it so our lives before God need to be

pure. The more fire the more the purity will be revealed in the gold and in us!

The result is we will be people of integrity, virtue, faith and holiness. God wants to make sure you become the real deal. There are too many so-called Christians out there that bless the Lord when everything is ok but then bail on Him when things get a little hard and that's why the fire burns out in their life. Luke 8 gives us the perfect description: "The seeds that fell on rocky ground stand for those who hear the message and receive it gladly. But it does not sink deep into them; they believe only for a while but when the time of testing comes, they fall away" (Luke 8:13).

We need to embrace the fire, not run from it! The book of Malachi gives us an awesome example:

"But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap: and he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as gold and silver; and they shall offer unto Jehovah offerings in righteousness." Malachi 3:2-3

Notice how it says He will “sit” as a refiner, a person that purifies silver or gold who has to sit there to make sure two things get done. First, they have a screen-like spoon and as the fire heats up the gold or silver, all of the dross (the impurities) from the metals rise to the top, and as the impurities rise the sanctifier sets apart what is bad from what is good! Praise God, I hope you’re getting this! When the fires of trials rise up in your life there might be words that come out that shouldn’t or thoughts that you entertain that are not right or even actions that take place or bad habits you fall into that aren’t right before God. God wants you to realize that you need to work on those things so that you can give them to Him so He can take them out of your life so you can live a sanctified life before Him!

The second reason why the refiner sits there is to make sure the gold and silver don’t burn. 1 Corinthians 10:12-13 says:

“If you think you are standing firm you had better be careful that you do not fall. Every test that you have experienced is the kind that normally comes to people. But God keeps his promise, and he will not allow you to be tested beyond your power to remain firm; at the time you are put to the test, he will give you the strength

*to endure it, and so provide you
with a way out.”*

God does not want you to fail, He wants you to succeed and He will help you!

Isaiah 43:1-2: Israel, the LORD who created you says, "Do not be afraid---I will save you. I have called you by name---you are mine. When you pass through deep waters, I will be with you; your troubles will not overwhelm you. When you pass through fire, you will not be burned; the hard trials that come will not hurt you.

You might say, I've been getting tested too much. Well, keep believing and keep waiting. God will get you through, but make sure it's a test and not discipline. A lot of people confuse the two, they commit adultery, they lie, they cheat people, they live according to the flesh and then they say " I'm going through some trials." NO! That's discipline—repent and then God will stop your discipline!

1 Peter 4:15-16: "For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters: but if a man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."

I want to share with you another story I read on the Internet to bring the story of the refiner in full light.

There was a group of women in a Bible study on the book of Malachi. As they were studying chapter three, they came cross verse three which says: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."

This verse puzzled the women and they wondered what his statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out about the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible study.

That week this woman called up a silver smith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest in silver beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silver smith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in

the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest so as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot -- then she thought again about the verse, that he sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. She asked the silver smith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left even a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silver smith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy--when I see my image in it."

This story is especially meaningful to those of us who may be in the hottest part of the flame right now. To know that God has his eyes fixed on those he is refining and cannot be

distracted is most comforting! Nothing that happens in your life goes unnoticed by the Father. He is aware of all, and guess what? He's on your side! Jesus will allow the strong fires of testing to come your way until He and everyone else sees His image, His Son's character in your life!

There's a story in the book of Daniel that illustrates people seeing Jesus in your life through trial and tribulation. It was about three Hebrew men that were carried to Babylon and taught the ways of the Babylonians. One day the king of Babylon made an idol of gold and he set it up for all to see. He then assigned musicians to play at a certain time of the day and when people heard the music they were commanded to bow down and worship the idol that was resurrected. The three Hebrew men would not submit to the king of Babylon because it was against the law of their God. So the Babylonian king summoned them into his quarters and commanded them to bow down; they wouldn't submit and then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego said:

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace;

and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”

Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded certain mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

Then these men were bound in their hosen, their tunics, and their mantles, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. And these three

men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste: he spake and said unto his counsellors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said unto the king, "True, O king."

He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the aspect of the fourth is like a son of the gods." Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace: he spake and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come hither." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came forth out of the midst of the fire. Daniel 3:16-26

They came out unharmed and loosed! The only thing that burned up was the ropes and the people that threw them in the fire. When you get through a test of fire in your life without

bowing down to the things of this world and giving into the enemy, even if you feel God might not change the situation and you can say like the three Hebrew men, “even if God doesn’t come and deliver me out of this situation I will not give in, I will not let go I will not bow down!” When you do this the only thing that will be burned is the bondages that tried to hold you down (dross) and the enemy won’t be able to touch you because of your submission to God through the testing by fire! You will go through the fire without getting burned. And like the refiner’s fire people will see Jesus in you! The people saw a visitation of Jesus in the middle of the fire waiting for the three Hebrew men, protecting them with His holy FIRE!

A lot of people don’t realize that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego’s names were actually Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (see Dan. 2:17). Hananiah means favor, Mishael means like God and Azariah means the Lord helps. The king gave them those Babylonian names after the gods of Babylon when they came to Babylon. Remember we talked about how the trial tests your character. Well, their characters’ stood intact; they showed they had the FAVOR of God because right after they got out of the furnace the king promoted them to a higher level in Babylon. Also the king realized no other god could save like the God of the Hebrew men. GOD HELPED THEM and

because of this the people saw THE SON OF GOD in their lives!

This is another reason why God allows tests of fire in your life, to promote you! Don't be discouraged through a trial—your setback just might be a set-up!

I will end this chapter with a story from my life that was the biggest test I had to go through.

It was in August of 2005. I got a phone call from one of my family members that my mother was brain dead in the hospital and people were saying it was her husband that did it. So, I immediately made plans to go to New York. When I got there I saw my mother full of hoses and cuts and scrapes on her arms and neck and I start thinking about how two weeks prior she called me and said, “Anthony this man is going to kill me, he put a knife to my throat and cut me.” I was looking at the scars from what she was describing. On the phone she also asked me for money and I told her no because I was upset that she was staying with him, even though I told her that he was going to kill her.

So for days I prayed and fasted for my mother all while asking God to give me strength not to lose it, because my mother's husband was in the hospital the whole time. One day he came in the hospital room while I was there and I got

up from my chair and God put such a peace upon me. He started talking about how he was praying to some saint and I told him how the only way to get to the Father was Jesus! So as the days went by God was working with me and one day I was reading the Bible, I was in the book of Jeremiah where it says “the vengeance is the Lord’s” so I realized what God wanted me to do. Days later my family decided to pull the plug and take her off life support. God gave me peace about it, the doctors said there was no way that she would come out of it even though I knew God could raise the dead. So if it was His will, He could have raised my mother up.

So I told them to take the machines off because if it’s God’s will for her to live, the machine isn’t going to stop it. The Lord’s will came to pass, and He took her to heaven. Shortly thereafter, we did the burial and God gave me the grace to forgive him and forget. I told him that I wasn’t crazy; I knew he did it, but later I shook his hand and forgave him anyway by the grace of God.

You might say Anthony how do you know for sure he killed your mother? Well, my wife’s aunt was married to the son of the man who killed my mother. My wife asked her aunt what happened and she said “I can’t tell you because they will kill me too.” Also, he was accused of more than one other murder. He

might think that he has connections because out of more than two murders he never got charged with one.

The Bible says God directs government officials (Rom. 13:1), also that vengeance is the Lord's. I would rather him change his life around and be a servant for Christ like Saul; he was a Christian killer but then gave his life to follow Christ and became Paul the apostle (Acts 9). Whatever God has planned for that man I pray for mercy upon his soul.

Thankfully, though, God gave me the strength to get through the test. If you remember in my testimony I told you I was a very angry person and I fought with anyone that gave me an attitude. I used to beat up my wife and even threw my father through a wall before, but when you're in Christ the old is gone and the new has come (2 Cor. 5:17).

If God got me through that test he can get you through your tests!

I believe God used that time in my life to purify me from my rage and anger. Don't get me wrong the enemy still tries to attack me sometimes with anger but the only thing I can do is give it to the sanctifier that purifies me more and more through the tests of fire!

Also, God used that time of testing to turn it into a testimony of how He got me through that tough time in my life. I wrote a book about it, it's called *How God Moves*. It's basically how God moved during that time of my life through that trial. The book ended up in the hands of a young girl whose mother was also murdered and she had unforgiveness for the person that did it. She was also upset at God and she stopped going to church. She received the book from a person that got it at a church where I used to do an outreach in Indianapolis, IN. She read the book and praise God she got back in church!

A lot of people say "I don't want to become Christian because I'm going to be broke." That's a lie from Satan! If He does take your wealth it's because you make money your god or He wants you to show others that you will serve Him no matter what like Job, and like Job if you serve Him faithfully you will be blessed double. Another thing people say is, "I'm going to go through too much." God will allow trials but they are for our own good. I would rather go through some stuff with God then without Him! God allowed me to go through a lot because I wouldn't have been able to minister and connect with people if I never went through the things they go through. Remember, you can't give someone something you don't have. Get through the tests and God will turn your

test into a testimony because there's glory in the stories of God's people.

I close this chapter with this: recently I found out that my mother had a dream in August of 2003. In her dream she was standing in a huge room full of stained glass and there was a bright light you couldn't look at shining through the stained glass and she said that the light actually looked like a silver color. Then she noticed a lot of people rushing to this open doorway that had no door to it. It was just a wooden open doorway and all kinds of people were going through this doorway; there were all kinds of people from all different nations. Then my mother started to rush to the doorway as well to see where everyone was going but right before she got through the doorway a woman at a desk stopped her and asked her "where are you going?" My mother said "through the door," then the woman said "hold on," then she opened up this huge book and start scrolling through the pages and then she looked at my mother and said "your name's not in the book." Then my mother asked her "why does my name need to be in the book to go through the doorway?" Then the woman said "you have two years to turn Christian then your name will be in this book then you can go through this doorway." Then my mother woke up.

Two years after that my mother died in August 2005! Praise God she made heaven!

But why I brought the dream up is she saw the light that was obviously God, which is a consuming fire. So why was the light a silver color? I actually studied this. Our fire we have shines in colors like orange, blue, and purple—this is because of the impurities in the fire. But a fire without impurities will shine bright white, even like a silver. Each test of fire you pass the more you will become purified, the more purified the more we shine like Jesus! As John Maxwell said, “Don't allow the fire of adversity to make you a skeptic. Allow it to purify you.”

Notes

Chapter 6 The Consuming Fire

Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

I want to spend some time in this chapter talking about the importance of prayer. Jesus said in John 15:4-5: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing." Additionally, the psalmist says in Psalm 73:28, "But it is good for me to draw near unto God: I have made the Lord Jehovah my refuge, That I may tell of all thy works." These verses teach us clearly that we need to make every effort to draw near, and stay near, to our Savior. Being close to Him is the only way our lives will have lasting significance.

Because God is a consuming fire, the more time we abide in and draw near to Him the more our lives will be set on fire and the more our character will turn into the character of Christ. One of the definitions for consume is to waste away, slowly; to be exhausted. The old

nature will slowly waste away and we will be a new person in Christ.

Here are some Scriptures about the importance of prayer:

Phillipians 4:6: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Colossians 4:2: “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: “Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Timothy 2:1-4: “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

1 Timothy 2:8: "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing."

Hebrews 4:16: "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

James 1:7: "But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord."

James 4:3: "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

James 5:13-16: "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of

the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

By looking at those Scriptures I hope you have seen the importance of prayer. Now I want to show you something. Pay close attention to what Jesus says in Matthew 6:5-12:

And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This,

then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Jesus said in that text three times, WHEN YOU PRAY. This means He is expecting us to take time and pray! He's not asking you, He's not saying if you can get around to it or if you can pray He's saying when you PRAY!

It should be a normal part of your Christian walk because Jesus always took time to pray. His favorite spot was the Mount of Olives. We should not just want to pray in public settings or when people request us to pray. We should do what Jesus said, go in our rooms, shut the door, and God will see you. Did you just catch that? He didn't say when you pray God will hear you. He said "God will SEE you." He will see your dedication, He will see your hunger to be consumed by His fire and He will reward you.

Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

The Greek word for diligently is *ekzēteō*.

Thayer Definition:

- 1) to seek out, search for
- 2) to seek out, i.e. investigate,
- 3) to seek out for one's self, beg, crave
- 4) to demand back, require

When you search for God's presence and investigate His Word to find out who He is and all the blessings He has for you, you will begin to crave that FIRE for your life and then you will require it through spending time with Him like the story of Moses when He went up the mountaintop and spent time with God and heard His words.

And Moses went up into the mount, and the cloud covered the mount. And the glory of Jehovah abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the appearance of the glory of Jehovah was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights. Exodus 24:15-18

The Hebrew Word for devouring is: âkal aw-kal'm ; at all, burn up, consume.

We, like Moses, have to spend time with God and we will totally be consumed by the fire of God so we will be able to hear God's voice more clearly so that like Moses we will be able to minister properly. Moses stood forty days and forty nights on the mountain. The number forty in the Bible represents life changing; our lives will be forever changed when we spend time with God and develop a prayer life.

In 2007 I went to Israel on a tour. We actually stayed a day in Athens, Greece, as well. I walked where Paul the apostle walked, I stood on Mars hill (Acts 17). Then I went to Israel and stayed there seven days, me and about twenty pastors and a few congregation members. We went to Bethlehem where Jesus was born, we went to Nazareth where He was raised, we also went to Galilee and I stood on the shores of the sea of Galilee where Jesus walked on water, called His disciples and cast the demons out of the demoniac. We also went to the Garden tomb and we had a special communion service right there in the garden where Jesus was resurrected! I also was baptized in the Jordan River. I even helped baptize a person in the Jordan river, the same place where Jesus was baptized. I even went to Jesus' favorite place to pray, the Mount of Olives!

A lot of people ask me, what did you feel, did you feel different? Basically, they believe because you go to Israel you should feel closer to God. Don't get me wrong it was a dream come true to be there and of course I felt different; it was awesome, but can I tell you when I felt God the strongest in my life? It was when I just started getting serious about Christianity and I gave up all my crooked businesses. I gave up all the nice cars and I stopped scamming people to make a living. Well, something happened—I went broke.

I remember getting up one day and I felt like I was oppressed, depressed, and just hopeless. It was like I couldn't even smile if I tried; I had no money for the mortgage, I had no money to make money, and I had no plan to get out of the rut I was in. I remember going into my office, closing the door behind me and dropping to my knees and praying "God please help me", and I lifted my hands to Him and I felt like it was a thousand pounds being lifted off my chest! It was awesome, but that's not the end of the story. For about seven hours I hung out in my office studying the Word and listening to worship music and just really enjoying the presence of God when suddenly there was a mighty rushing wind! No, I'm joking. But there was something like that. I was sitting there in my office when I started to smell the most beautiful scent I ever smelled—it was like roses and cedar wood and while I was asking

myself “what is that God?”, Gina, my wife, comes in the room and asks me if I was burning incense and I told her “no I’m not”. Then she shuts the door and in minutes she was back in the room looking out my window asking me “what was I doing?”. I told her “it’s not me it’s God” then she said “no it’s not” and she walks out of the room and she comes back with my mother-in-law. When my mother-in-law enters the room her knees buckle and she says “God is here. God is here.” Then she said God’s presence smells like this and Satan smells like garbage.” She didn’t know it at the time but Jesus referred to Hell as Gehenna. Gehenna was a garbage dump in Jesus’ day.

Here’s my point. God’s glory came down in that office. His Shekinah Glory (His presence). You don’t have to go to Israel to spend time in God’s presence, you can do what Jesus said; go in your room and shut the door and when you pray He will see you and all the garbage that’s in your life. He will take it and fill your life with His glory (FIRE) if you let Him!

You need to develop a prayer time with God. Think about it this way: we want 100% from God, but ask yourself this question, do you even give Him 1% of your day? You might have said yes, but think about this: 1% of a day is fourteen minutes and forty-five seconds (14:45). So, do you spend at least fifteen minutes a day with God? It’s sad, a lot of

people want 100% from God but they don't even spend 1% of their time with God. Then they ask themselves, why am I not on fire for God? It's time to start spending time with God not only in your prayer closet but while you're driving, while you're walking, while you're vacuuming and while you're working. Just talk to Him, fill your mind and heart with God and you will be filled with God! You will never be consumed by God's fire if you don't draw near to the consuming God!

On that Israel tour in 2007 we went to a certain area next to the Wailing Wall as they call it in Jerusalem, and our tour guide told us a story where he was on a tour and a certain man was on that tour. His name was Neil Armstrong. You guessed it, the first man on the moon. Well the tour guide was telling us that Neil Armstrong came to him and said, "Ronny, can you take me to a place where it isn't a traditional sight but a factual sight where one hundred percent Jesus walked?" Then Ronny the tour guide and Neil Armstrong went to an old archeological site which has hardly been altered since the days of Jesus. While He was telling us this story we were actually standing at that very place, that same archeological site. Ronny the tour guide told us that Neil Armstrong was walking around the area like a kid in a candy store, then Neil Armstrong said something to Ronny that blew me away. He said "Ronny, for me to know I'm walking around where my Lord

Jesus Christ walked is better than me ever walking on the moon!" Wow! The biggest accomplishment in His life didn't mean anything to Him compared to spending time in a place where Jesus' presence was!

I believe Neil Armstrong was on FIRE for God!

Remember the first chapter, when He answers with fire, when you become a person that's on fire for God, He will answer your prayers by sending fire, like Elijah when an evil king tried to send his men to arrest Elijah:

Then he sent an officer with fifty men to get Elijah. The officer found him sitting on a hill and said to him, "Man of God, the king orders you to come down."

"If I am a man of God," Elijah answered, "may fire come down from heaven and kill you and your men!" At once fire came down and killed the officer and his men. 2 Kings 1:9-10

You see, when you pray it's spiritual warfare; God will send the fire to destroy the work of the enemy that tries to hinder your life!

I recently learned something that I want to share with you: The circumference of this earth

is 25,000 miles round and the speed of light is approximately 186,282 miles per second! So the Bible says God is light (FIRE); also, when God would send His angels they would be accompanied by light (FIRE). Two examples are first, when the angel came and set Peter free out of the jail cell; this happened because the church prayed! The jail cell was full of light (Acts 12:4). Second is when Elisha was with his servant and the army of the Syrians was about to attack him. Elisha's servant was afraid so Elisha prayed: "Then he prayed, 'O LORD, open his eyes and let him see!'" (2 Kings 6:17). The LORD answered his prayer, and Elisha's servant looked up and saw the hillside covered with horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. My point of telling you this is if God is light (FIRE) and His angels are light (FIRE), then if the speed of light travels at approximately 186,282 miles per second and the world is 25,000 miles round that means you can pray to God and He can send an angel to help you, and that angel would be able to travel over seven times around the world and still be by your side in one second! Praise God! It's time you start praying. I pray as Elisha did for His servant—may your eyes be opened to the FIRE of God. It's time we realize what Neil Armstrong did, nothing you can ever do or accomplish will ever be better than the presence of the consuming fire of God!

Notes

Chapter 7 Fasting for Fire

Matthew 6:16-18: "And when you fast, do not put on a sad face as the hypocrites do. They neglect their appearance so that everyone will see that they are fasting. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you go without food, wash your face and comb your hair, so that others cannot know that you are fasting---only your Father, who is unseen, will know. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

Jesus is expecting us to pray, He is also expecting us to fast. He said WHEN YOU FAST. Prayer and fasting go hand and hand, Jesus also said in Matthew 9:14-15:

Then the followers of John the Baptist came to Jesus, asking, Why is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your Disciples don't fast at all?"

Jesus answered, "Do you expect the guests at a wedding party to be sad as long as the bridegroom is with them? Of course not! But the day will come when the

bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."

Fasting means to abstain from food. It also means to "cover the mouth". There have been people that fast from TV, radio, and bad or negative thoughts. I mean that's a good way of denying the flesh but that's not fasting; fasting is depriving yourself of food so that you can deny the flesh and feed the Spirit by spending time with God so you can be more sensitive to His voice and His leading. Like Elijah, he fasted forty days and the Bible says he heard the small still voice of God (1Kings 19:12).

Fasting is not a way to twist the arm of God to get what you want; it is a way to bring your body into discipline to find out what God wants for your life. In the book of Exodus Moses went up the mountain fasting for forty days to find out what God wanted for His people:

The LORD said to Moses, "Write these words down, because it is on the basis of these words that I am making a covenant with you and with Israel."

Moses stayed there with the LORD forty days and nights, eating and drinking nothing. He wrote on the tablets the words of

the covenant---the Ten Commandments. When Moses went down from Mount Sinai carrying the Ten Commandments, his face was shining because he had been speaking with the LORD; but he did not know it. Aaron and all the people looked at Moses and saw that his face was shining, and they were afraid to go near him. Exodus 34:29-35

When Moses spent time with God fasting He received the instructions from the Lord, instructions like the Ten Commandments. Scholars also say that he received all of the other instructions as well, like the instructions for the tabernacle and the stories from Adam and Eve all the way to the time Moses was born. This is why we have the first five books of the Bible known as the Law or the Pentateuch, written by Moses. Point is, He spent time with God through prayer and fasting and received God's Word for His life and the world! When He came down from the mountain his face was shining, the light of God (FIRE) was upon him, and the people got scared. Why did they get scared? When people saw angels their first reaction was fear and the angel would always say "do not fear"; sometimes the people would faint or collapse, then the angels would have to get them up. Remember the angels appearance is of light (FIRE) just like God is; it

represents the glory of the LORD. So when Moses spent time with God in prayer and fasting, the glory of God came upon him and the people couldn't handle it. Our flesh cannot handle the sight of God, that's why the Bible says the corruptible (flesh) has to put on the incorruptible (the glorified body) before it enters heaven (1 Cor. 15). Every time we fast we are "killing the flesh" so to speak, so we can be sensitive to the Spirit so the fire of God can come upon our lives to hear the instruction of the Lord, and then as Moses did, share it with people.

Fasting is also a way to destroy the attacks of the enemy so that you can receive understanding and direction for your situation.

Then a hand took hold of me and raised me to my hands and knees; I was still trembling. The angel said to me, "Daniel, God loves you. Stand up and listen carefully to what I am going to say. I have been sent to you." When he had said this, I stood up, still trembling.

Then he said, "Daniel, don't be afraid. God has heard your prayers ever since the first day you decided to humble [fast] yourself in order to gain understanding. I have come in answer to your prayer. The angel prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed me for twenty-one days.

Then Michael, one of the chief angels, came to help me, because I had been left there alone in Persia. I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the future. This is a vision about the future." Daniel 10:10-14

Daniel had been fasting for twenty-one days because he had a vision that he couldn't understand and it grieved him so bad that he fasted and prayed so that God would give him understanding. The angel that came to Daniel explained how he was battling an angel from the kingdom of Persia, which represents the fallen angel which we know as Satan. You see, God wants to bless us but a lot of times the enemy wants to stop the blessing from coming to us. The Word says that our battle is not against flesh and blood but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age (Eph. 6:12). So, there's a battle in the spiritual world that we cannot see. When you fast it causes you to get stronger in your prayer life and to seek God more diligently and then that causes the enemy to weaken in his attack towards you. Like Daniel, God will send you an angel of light (Fire) to help you gain understanding and destroy the work of the enemy in your life.

Hebrews 1:14: "What are the angels, then? They are spirits who serve God and are sent

by him to help those who are to receive salvation.”

Think about this, fasting helped Daniel get the interpretation he needed, that interpretation is about the end of the world. Without the book of Daniel you could not interpret the book of Revelation properly and without this we could not understand the warnings God gave us for the end times!

Another example that fasting helps destroy the enemy is found in Matthew chapter 17, where a father comes to Jesus saying his son was possessed by a demon and the demon would oftentimes throw his son in water and fire. He also suffered from epilepsy and the father goes on to say that he took his boy to the disciples and they couldn't cast out the demon. Jesus openly rebukes His disciples: “Jesus answered, ‘How unbelieving and wrong you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you? Bring the boy here to me!’” (Matthew 17:17).

Jesus then casts out the demon and the boy is set free! The disciples came to Him later and asked “why couldn't we do it?” then Jesus says “But this kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:21).

The disciples had success before in casting out demons, so why couldn't they do it for this

boy? Sometimes the enemy has a stronger hold than usual on people and when you fast it weakens and breaks the enemy's attacks!

One day, on Christmas 2009, I received a phone call from a man that lived in Indianapolis, Indiana. He was crying; I said "what's wrong?", then he began to explain to me how his son was acting strange and calling himself the "dark lord" and going into seizures and the man said, "please, pastor, help me!" Immediately, the story of the father that came to Jesus because of his son that was possessed by a demon came to my mind that I just spoke about. I told the man I would be there tomorrow. I called up one of my guys and told him to fast and I explained the situation. The next day we started to make our way from Chicago, IL, to Indianapolis, IN. All the way there we prayed and fasted for God to intervene and set the boy free.

When we got to the house there was a peace there and I realized that God had already answered our prayers. He went before us—I could feel His presence. Me and the two guys that I was with sat at the table with the family and we began to talk about everything that was going on with the boy. Then I told the boy and the two guys that were with me to go with me in the basement. The reason I went in the basement is because this is where the family explained the demonic presence was the

strongest. I wanted to show the enemy that we were not afraid, and I also wanted the demon to show itself in the boy. The reason why I did this is because the boy was acting normal as can be, but God ministered to me that the demon was hiding. I began to talk to him how the demon probably came in his life, through lust, cursing, anger; also, he was watching demon possession movies and going on the Internet to watch that sort of stuff as well. Then I told him how the Bible expects a person that's a Christian to live, then I lead him in the sinner's prayer. After this I anointed him with oil and began to rebuke the demon and to quote Scripture (Col. 2:15, 1 John 4:4, and Luke 10:19). He fell off the chair he was sitting on and then his hands started to twist around, and then he let out a big sigh and fainted in my arms. When he came to he didn't even know what happened. Praise God he was delivered!

We all went upstairs and began to pray and thank God, and then we went to go eat something, me and my guys and the boy and some of his family. When I went outside God directed me to go to the garage. As I was going towards the garage I felt a spirit of fear come on me. I began to rebuke it and proceeded to the garage. When I entered the garage, I turned my head and saw a Satanic pentagram and broken crosses on a board hung in the garage. I then removed the images and broke them. We realized the house was used as a

place of sacrifice to Satan. Not too long later they moved. Thank God through prayer and fasting, just as the boy in the Bible got set free, the boy in Indianapolis got set free! A lot of people say Christians can't get possessed. They're right, but the people that claim Christianity but then don't practice it and rebel against God stubbornly are the perfect candidates to get oppressed or possessed by demons! (see Luke 11:25)

Ask yourself is there a certain bondage or addiction you keep falling into in your actions, words, thoughts and attitude? I believe if you pray and fast you can break that stronghold on your life so that the fire of God can totally be evident in your life. I had a huge problem with anger and I used to fast for it, usually once a week and sometimes even twice a week for a year straight, and praise God it really worked. Don't get me wrong it still wants to come back, but when you pray and fast and give it to God it really makes a difference.

Fasting also helps change the circumstances of other people's lives when you fast for them. Like the story of Esther. The Bible says in Esther that all the Hebrew people was in danger of being totally annihilated because an evil man named Haman that hated the Jews and served under the King of Persia had tricked the king into signing a decree to kill all

the Jews in the world. This decree went out throughout the world.

So Esther, being a Jew herself, as well as the queen of Persia, found out. Now you would imagine all she had to do is tell the king and that's it, right? Well back in that day you were not allowed to enter the king's presence unless the king held out his scepter and summoned you. If you were to come into his quarters without being summoned, you were in danger of death! But Mordecai her uncle explained that the Jews were endangered and so was she. At the start Esther was fearful, but then she made a plan; what was that plan? Prayer and Fasting!

"If anyone, man or woman, goes to the inner courtyard and sees the king without being summoned, that person must die. That is the law; everyone, from the king's advisers to the people in the provinces, knows that. There is only one way to get around this law: if the king holds out his gold scepter to someone, then that person's life is spared. But it has been a month since the king sent for me."

When Mordecai received Esther's message, he sent her this

warning: "Don't imagine that you are safer than any other Jew just because you are in the royal palace. If you keep quiet at a time like this, help will come from heaven to the Jews, and they will be saved, but you will die and your father's family will come to an end. Yet who knows---maybe it was for a time like this that you were made queen!"

Esther sent Mordecai this reply: "Go and get all the Jews in Susa together; hold a fast and pray for me. Don't eat or drink anything for three days and nights. My servant women and I will be doing the same. After that, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. If I must die for doing it, I will die."

Mordecai then left and did everything that Esther had told him to do. Esther 4:11-17

The story ends with Esther finding favor with the king, and the Jews were spared, and the evil Haman was hanged! When we fast we also find favor with the king, who is the KING of KINGS! As Mordecai told Esther “maybe you were put here for such a time as this.”

Esther saved the Jews by proclaiming a group fast for three days and saved a nation! How many people in your life that you know are not saved and are living a life that is not pleasing to God, and if they were to die would go to Hell? Pray and fast for them, because “maybe you were put here for such a time like this!”

Fasting also shows God that you’re dependent on Him and not yourself.

There’s a story in the Bible that illustrates this fact. It’s found in the book of 2 Chronicles chapter twenty. King Jehoshaphat had a problem—multiple enemies of Israel were coming against him and his people, so King Jehoshaphat had to come up with a plan fast! Here’s his plan:

“Jehoshaphat was frightened and prayed to the LORD for guidance. Then he gave orders for a fast to be observed throughout the country. From every city of Judah people hurried to Jerusalem to ask the LORD for guidance.” 2 Chronicles 20:3-4

This is what happened when they went to the temple of the Lord:

The spirit of the LORD came upon a Levite who was present in the crowd. His name was

Jahaziel son of Zechariah; he was a member of the clan of Asaph and was descended from Asaph through Mattaniah, Jeiel, and Benaiah. Jahaziel said, "Your Majesty and all you people of Judah and Jerusalem, the LORD says that you must not be discouraged or be afraid to face this large army; for the battle is not yours, but God's." 2 Chronicles 20:14-15

Fasting shows God that you know that the battle's not yours but the LORD's! It keeps us humble to the fact that we can't do it, we need to remind ourselves of that fact on a regular basis. Fasting helps you do this and causes you to seek God and in return your battles are won and you receive the blessing!

King Jehoshaphat and the people followed the instructions of the Lord to send the Levites ahead of the people praising God and them following behind the Levites while the people were praising the Lord. God caused confusion to the enemies of Israel to turn on each other and they killed one another!

When the Judean army reached a tower that was in the desert, they looked toward the enemy and saw that they were all lying

on the ground dead. Not one had escaped. Jehoshaphat and his troops moved in to take the loot, and they found many cattle, supplies, clothing, and other valuable objects. They spent three days gathering the loot, but there was so much that they could not take everything. The fourth day they assembled in Beracah Valley and praised the LORD for all he had done. That is why the valley is called "Beracah." 2 Chronicles 20:24-26

They didn't even see the battle let alone fight in the battle. This is what God does for us. Pray, fast, and praise God in advance, knowing that the battle is not ours but the battle is the LORD's!

I preached this message at a church on the north side of Chicago for a pastor friend of mine, Pastor Leo. He got a report that his wife Tonya was diagnosed with cancer, so he asked me to come and bring a Word from the Lord. I ministered this story about how the king and the people praised, sang, and fasted and how God was going to fight this battle for them, and God told me to tell them Tonya was healed from cancer. I did this by writing on a rollaway chalkboard; I turned the chalkboard toward me and wrote so they couldn't see what I was

writing. I wrote the words “you are healed from cancer”, then I explained “maybe you can’t see your blessing right now, but if you keep praying and praising God like the people of Judah in the story you will see your victory.” Then I turned the chalkboard around and shouted “you are healed of Cancer!” I wish you could have seen the service—there was dancing, praising, singing, crying, and many people, including myself, fasted for Tonya. They truly had faith and they accompanied their faith with fasting and they praised God in advance. A week later the doctors told her she was cancer free! Hallelujah!

There are so many stories we can talk about in the Bible about fasting; there are too many to list. I encourage you to find a story out of the Bible and see if you can also find some things that fasting produces.

My wife Gina and I have seen many blessings and answered prayers come true through prayer and fasting, like when our church needed a building because we were renting and we had to keep moving from place to place because the locations were not right or the people were raising the rent on us. We went on a twenty-one day fast (a Daniel fast) for three reasons. That God would bless the ministry, our immediate family, and bring salvation to our lost loved ones. Not too long later after the fast was over, maybe two months or so, the

overseer for the Church of God in the Great Lakes Region at that time gave us a building. The building was the church that I grew up in! The property also has a church parsonage that's connected to the church. This saved us \$2,700 a month we were paying to rent a church, and \$1,600 we were paying to rent a house, for a total of \$4,300 worth of savings each month. So now we went from renting to becoming renters, we rent the church out to other churches which brings even more financial help to the ministry. The best part is we only owe \$15,000 to pay the whole property off that's worth over \$600,000.00. Remember, we also fasted for our family to be saved. Well, praise God they now come to church because they are closer to this building and I'm still praying for many more of my family members as well.

Not too long after we got the building we did a forty-day revival at the church. Yes, 40 days consecutively of full-blown church services. We had many pastors come in; I only preached 15 of those services myself. It was an awesome time in the Lord. I did this because I told God one day, "God, if you give us our own building I will do a forty-day service", so I kept my promise. Me and a couple people from the church did a forty-day fast. Twenty-one of those days we did the Daniel fast, the remainder of the days we did not eat any meat. What was the blessing? We enjoyed the

awesome presence of God like never before. We raised over \$5,000.00 to send out of country to Armani to help build a church and a lot of people that never preached before shared a message for the first time. Why 40 days? The number 40, like I said before, represents life-changing in the Bible. When you pray and fast your life will never be the same!

I also went on a three day water-only fast when my mother was dying. Those days were hard, but praise God He got me through that tough time and I didn't lose my witness. A book came out of that tragedy that turned into a testimony for His glory.

You might say, I try to fast and it doesn't help, or I can't do it, or God doesn't hear my prayers. The Scripture you're about to read is going to answer those questions and show you what He requires when you fast.

You wonder why the LORD pays no attention when you go without eating and act humble. But on those same days that you give up eating, you think only of yourselves and abuse your workers. You even get angry and ready to fight. No wonder God won't listen to your prayers! Do you think the LORD wants you to

give up eating and to act as humble as a bent-over bush? Or to dress in sackcloth and sit in ashes? Is this really what he wants on a day of worship? I'll tell you what it really means to worship the LORD. Remove the chains of prisoners who are chained unjustly. Free those who are abused! Share your food with everyone who is hungry; share your home with the poor and homeless. Give clothes to those in need; don't turn away your relatives. Then your light will shine(FIRE) like the dawning sun, and you will quickly be healed. Your honesty will protect you as you advance, and the glory of the LORD will defend you from behind. When you beg the LORD for help, he will answer, "Here I am!" Don't mistreat others or falsely accuse them or say something cruel. Give your food to the hungry and care for the homeless. Then your light will shine (FIRE) in the dark; your darkest hour will be like the noonday sun.

The LORD will always guide you and provide good things to eat

when you are in the desert. He will make you healthy. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water or like a stream that never runs dry. You will rebuild those houses left in ruins for years; you will be known as a builder and repairer of city walls and streets. But first, you must start respecting the Sabbath as a joyful day of worship. You must stop doing and saying whatever you please on this special day. Then you will truly enjoy knowing the LORD. He will let you rule from the highest mountains and bless you with the land of your ancestor Jacob. The LORD has spoken! Isaiah 58:3-14

I love what Isaiah 58:12 says in the American Standard Version: “And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”

Basically when you fast with right motives God will bless you and people will see the light (FIRE) on you and use you to rebuild peoples lives by helping them to be restored to the paths of righteousness.

Remember Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness (Matt. 4). He destroyed the work of the enemy and was successful in His ministry. I believe one of the reasons was because He fasted. He didn't start His earthly ministry until He fasted! This should teach us If we call ourselves Christians, which means Christ-like and imitator of Christ, we should do what Jesus did, FAST! Remember He said "when you fast"; it's time to start fasting for FIRE.

How do you fast?

God sees the heart and when you do it with right motives and you really are trying for the glory of God to fast, God will give you strength to fast. Here are some ideas. I have to say this, though: check with a doctor and see if you're physically able to fast, some health conditions prevent some forms of fasting.

1. Full Fast

- Drink only liquids (you establish the number of days).

2. The Daniel Fast

- Eat no meat, no sweets and no bread.
- Drink water and juice.
- Eat fruits and vegetables.
- It's usually twenty-one days but you can set the days as well.

3. Three-Day Fast

- This fast can be a Full Fast, Daniel Fast, or give up at least one item of food.

4. Partial Fast (half day)

- A partial fast is from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm or from sun up to sundown.
- You can select from three types of fasting — a Full Fast, Daniel Fast or give up at least one item of food.

Remember that it is the attitude of a heart sincerely seeking Him to which God responds with a blessing (Isaiah 58, Jeremiah 14:12, 1 Corinthians 8:8). May God greatly bless you as you fast!

Scripture References for Fasting:

Matthew 6:16-18, Matthew 9:14-15, Luke 18:9-14

Corporate Fasting:

1 Samuel 7:5-6, Ezra 8:21-23, Nehemiah 9:1-3, Joel 2:15-16, Jonah 3:5-10, Acts 27:33-37

Relation to Prayer and Reading of the Word:

1 Samuel 1:6-8, 17-18, Nehemiah 1:4, Daniel 9:3, 20, Joel 2:12, Luke 2:37, Acts 10:30, Acts 13:2

I really recommend a book by Jentezen Franklyn called *Fasting* if you want to read up more on fasting.

Notes

Chapter 8 Fellowship of Fire

Acts 2:1-4: And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Fire came upon the disciples when they were in one accord. The Greek word for accord gives us a good definition to define what kind of people we should have fellowship with.

homothumadon

Thayer Definitions: With one mind, with one accord, with one passion

The people who want the fire of God in their life should be hanging out with people with the same mind (Phil. 2:5). It says let this mind be in you which is in Christ. We need to be with people who are passionate about saving the lost for the cross and are passionate about serving and obeying Jesus no matter what!

Strong's dictionary gives us another definition for the word accord that defines good fellowship:

homothumadon: unanimously:= with entire agreement of minds

To be unanimous means out of a hundred people a hundred people are in agreement. Even if there were ninety-nine people out of a hundred in agreement it wouldn't be unanimous.

We cannot hang out with people who are double-minded towards Jesus because it will hinder your walk and fire with Christ! Paul the apostle wrote something that illustrates this point; I hope you realize the seriousness of it.

"In my other letter I told you not to have anything to do with immoral people. But I wasn't talking about the people of this world. You would have to leave this world to get away from everyone who is immoral or greedy or who cheats or worships idols. I was talking about your own people who are immoral or greedy or worship idols or curse others or get drunk or cheats people. Don't even eat with them! Why should I judge outsiders? Aren't we supposed to

*judge only church members?
God judges everyone else. The
Scriptures say, "Chase away any
of your own people who are evil."
1 Corinthians 5:9-13 CEV*

Like Paul I'm not saying we are to stop associating with people that are of this world and don't know about Christ, because as Christians we are to come alongside of people in the world and help them find their way to Jesus. I am saying like Paul we should not fellowship with people that claim they are Christian and live contrary to the Gospel. Paul says don't even sit down and eat with them! Why should we apply this to our lives? I'll give you a few reasons...

First it's a command.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 6:14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" If you are a person that's seeking the light (FIRE) of God you will realize we should not have anything in common with those people who claim Christianity but then blaspheme the name of Christ by the way they live. You might say Anthony the Scripture says "unbelievers". The Greek word for believe is *pisteuo*, it defines a true believer.

Strong's Definition. pist-yoo'- Respect, entrust, commit, and to trust

A true believer is one who respects God, one who entrusts their life to God and one who stays committed to God. A person that claims to be a follower of Christ but does not respect, entrust and commit their lives to God is just like a non-believer because they don't want to entrust their life to God fully and get committed to God and in doing so they live a life that disrespects the ways of God. You should not have fellowship with them if you want the light (FIRE) to come upon and stay upon your life.

Second, if you're not careful their ways will rub off on you.

"Don't fool yourselves. Bad friends will destroy you." 1 Corinthians 15:33 CEV

"A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray." Proverbs 12:26

"Don't make friends with people who have hot, violent tempers. You might learn their habits and not be able to change." Proverbs 22:24- 25

I stopped by at a family member's house one day and I walked in on a dinner where they were entertaining guests from out of town. The problem was they were drinking liquor. I really

wanted to stay and witness to my family members so I stayed even though the Scripture tells me not to because they all claimed to be Christians, but they were cursing, drinking and disrespecting God (1 Cor. 5:19). Well, the guy that was from out of town was my old drinking friend from the past. I began to witness to him but he wasn't receiving it too well because he was drunk and he started acting prideful and giving me an attitude. I began to get hindered by the way he was acting and then I began to give him an attitude and started condemning him because of the things he does in his life, like literal witchcraft, all while claiming he loves God. So I said, "your serving the devil not God". I realized the way he was acting actually rubbed off on me a little. I should have never condemned him and I should have never given him an attitude.

What I'm about to tell you is going to amaze you; while I'm writing this about this guy from out of town I was thinking I have to call him and apologize. While I was thinking this I got interrupted by a phone call—it was the guy from out of town! He calls me on my cell phone, I answer and he said "who's this?" I said, "it's Pastor Anthony". Then he began to tell me how he didn't understand how he got me on the phone because he was trying to call a person to get him illegal drugs! Then I told him how I'm writing about him and I apologized about my behavior and then I told him how

God has a plan for his life and that it wasn't a coincidence that he called me, it was God confirming that he wanted me to write this and apologize to him and most importantly that God didn't want him to do drugs anymore. He was trying to call "the connect" for drugs, but God wants to connect him to good fellowship and the Word of God! Praise God he said he's coming to church tonight!

That night I wasn't planning on witnessing to people outside of my family. If I was, I would have done what Jesus showed us to do which is to go with another person. Jesus sent His disciples out two by two (Mark 6:7) because when you go with another person they are there so they can help you. If you say something wrong they are there to help you, if you fall they will pick you up and if they do the same you can help them (see Ecc. 4:9). When I was giving the guy from out of town an attitude, if I was with one of the guys from church they would have corrected me. We have this thing we do sometimes when we are witnessing to people. We will text message one another if we have something to tell one another to help the witnessing connect, like Scriptures or we will say "you're preaching too strong" or talk about this certain testimony, etc. I believe if I was with one of the guys I would have gotten a text message. Thank God though, even where I messed up God used it for His glory (Rom. 8:28).

Third, you might fall away from the faith.

If you want to witness to people that are unbelievers or believers that are living in a life of sin, take a person that is a true born-again believer with you so you can help one another and watch out for one another because this is the way Jesus instituted it (Mark 6:7).

I know a guy that use to serve with me as an usher a while back that was on fire for God and his life was really showing fruit of the Spirit. One day he told me how he hung out with one of the guys we both knew that was living a life of total rebellion to God. I began to tell him that he needed to watch who he hangs out with because this could cause him to fall back into the world, and how he should take someone with him next time he wants to talk to that guy about God. He told me he wouldn't fall and he would be okay, so he kept hanging out with this guy and about two months later he was no longer a servant in the church and no longer on fire for God!

Please take my warning! This man did not take the warning of the Word of God; don't make the same mistake. There have been too many people that have lost their fire for God because of the people they continue to hang out with. Jesus said something that we need to apply: "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his

own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26-27) The Greek word for hate is translated “to love less”.

We have to put everyone and everything on the side. It’s about Him and Him alone, because Jesus is the friend that sticks closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24). We have to crucify the flesh and not give in to people who want to hang out with us or that we want to hang out with that are not respecting the ways of God and are in open rebellion. The Bible says it’s actually evidence that you follow Christ when you have right fellowship: “If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:6-7).

If we walk with people who are in darkness and in rebellion to God and have no plans on changing their lives, we are not walking in truth. When we have true fellowship with God, who is the source of light (Fire), then it is automatic that we will have fellowship with people of the light (Fire)!

The Greek word for fellowship in 1 John 1:6-7 is *koinonia*. *Koinonos* in classical Greek means a companion, a partner or a joint-owner. Therefore, *koinonia* can imply an association, common effort, or a partnership in common. The common ground by which the two parties are joined together creates an aligned relationship, such as a "fellowship" or "partnership". In the New Testament, (Luke 5:10) James, John, and Simon are called "partners" (*koinonia*). The joint participation was a shared fishing business. They were not only in fellowship with one another in regarding to business. The Bible says they left everything and everyone to follow Jesus and be in fellowship with one another to go mind God's business:

As Jesus walked along the shore of Lake Galilee, he saw two fishermen, Simon and his brother Andrew, catching fish with a net. Jesus said to them, "Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people." At once they left their nets and went with him. He went a little farther on and saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat getting their nets ready. As soon as Jesus saw them, he called them; they left their father Zebedee in the boat

*with the hired men and went with
Jesus. Mark 1:16-20*

Think about these three disciples, Peter, James and John. They were a part of Jesus' inner circle of fellowship; they saw things the other disciples didn't get to see like when Jesus was on the way to heal a little girl. Her father Jairus came and requested Jesus to come and heal her, then while he was asking Jesus to heal His daughter a messenger from his house came and said "the little girl is dead, trouble not the master any more" then Jesus said "don't fear only believe". Then Jesus told everyone to stay behind. He only allowed Peter, James, John and Jairus to go with him. When He got to Jairus' house He saw people wailing and crying for the little girl. Jesus said "the girl is not dead she is only sleeping," and they began to mock Him and laugh. Jesus said this to illustrate her situation was only temporary. How could the people go from wailing and crying to laughing and mocking Jesus? Back then the people who lost a loved one would hire professional mourners to wail and cry, to show respect to the dead person. Before Jesus went to see the girl he did something, let's read:

*But the people laughed at him.
After Jesus had sent them all out
of the house, he took the girl's
father and mother and his three*

disciples and went to where she was. He took the twelve-year-old girl by the hand and said, "Talitha, koum!" which means, "Little girl, get up!" The girl got right up and started walking around. Everyone was greatly surprised. Mark 5:40-42

I actually have done a three point sermon on this story; it's basically about resurrecting the dead things in your life, getting back to a relationship that's alive in Christ. Below are the three points:

1. Wise council. Jairus didn't listen to the messenger, he listened to Jesus. We can listen to people we know, like family and friends, or we can listen to the wise council of Jesus. I explained how you need a man of God in your life, a good pastor that will give you wise council from the Word of God and experience.
2. Good fellowship. Jesus brought the three disciples with Him and he threw out the bad fellowship that was in Jairus' house before He did the miracle. Sometimes it takes you having to get rid of people who act like they like you but are bad for you, just like Jesus threw them out, you have to allow them to be out of your life as well, and then you will see the miracles!

3. The Word of God. I explained how Jesus said "Talitha, koum!". It didn't only mean little girl get up. A talith was a prayer shawl that the Jewish people used to put over their heads and pray. The talith has the promises of God and the Law of God written on it; when a person would die back then they would cover the dead body with the talith. So in essence what Jesus was saying is "little girl in the word, get up!" I explained how we have to wrap our problems in the Word of God and don't doubt!

Like the sermon, if you follow the wise council I'm giving you to get in good fellowship because the Word of God says so, the dead things in your life will be resurrected and you too will begin to see miracles in your life!

There is another story that the three disciples were a part of. It was when Jesus and the three went up to a mountain top to pray. This was no ordinary prayer service, Elijah and Moses showed up and began to talk with Christ!

Six days later Jesus took with him Peter and the brothers James and John and led them up a high mountain where they were alone. As they looked on, a change came over Jesus: his face was shining like the sun, and

his clothes were dazzling white. Then the three disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus. So Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Lord, how good it is that we are here! If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

While he was talking, a shining cloud came over them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased---listen to him!" When the disciples heard the voice, they were so terrified that they threw themselves face downward on the ground.

*Jesus came to them and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid!" So they looked up and saw no one there but Jesus.
Matthew 17:1-8*

Think about this—Moses had a light (fire) upon him so bright people were afraid to even look at him (Exo. 34:29). Elijah used to call down fire from heaven to destroy his enemies (2 Kings 1:10), he used to give offerings where God used to send fire from heaven to consume them (1 Kings 18:25), and when God was

finished using him on the earth at that time He sent a chariot of fire to bring him to heaven (2 Kings 2:11).

Then you have Jesus there, shining brighter than the sun. Remember the sun is a big ball of fire! But Jesus, the Son of God, is the source of the natural and divine fire! Also, you have God the Father coming in a shining cloud and confirms that they need to listen to Jesus because He is the fullness of the Word! Moses represented the law, Elijah represented the prophets and Jesus represented the source of the Word spoken by Moses and the prophets being fulfilled in Him!

Again: 1. Wise council (GOD) 2. Good fellowship (Moses, Elijah, and Jesus) 3. Obey The Word of God!

With these things you will have the fellowship of fire!

Remember these three left everyone and everything to follow Jesus, and because of this they saw things no one else saw before. Are you willing to do the same and tell those certain people in your life, whether it be friends or family, that you are starting to be serious about following Jesus and that you want them to be serious too, but if they are not willing you will disconnect and serve Jesus no matter what?

If we break down the word fellowship into two words it means something very interesting. Fellow means a companion or an associate. One of the explanations for the word ship, means a vessel that takes you from point A to point B. Basically, whoever you have association with and make your companion, that's where you will go in life! Where do you want to go in life? If you choose to get connected with a fellowship that's on fire you will see things a lot of people don't get to see and you will experience miracles like never before and your life will go from point A where you're at now to point B where God wants you to be, on fire for Him! Also, just to give you a heads up, you will get persecuted from the people you disconnected from, but the Word tells us in 1Peter 4:3-5:

You have spent enough time in the past doing what the heathen like to do. Your lives were spent in indecency, lust, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and the disgusting worship of idols. And now the heathen are surprised when you do not join them in the same wild and reckless living, and so they insult you. But they will have to give an account of themselves to God, who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Keep praying for the people who insult you and pray for those people in your life that are not believers and keep praying for the believers that are living against the Word of God so that they all may know God in Spirit and in truth and that they will be consumed by the awesome presence of the living God so that they too will live a life set on fire by God!

Matthew 18:19-20: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

The Greek word for agree in this text is another word for accord! When the disciples were in one accord God sent fire and the Holy Spirit! I've heard something that illustrates this verse. About eight years ago in Houston, Texas, a church held a men's retreat and one of my pastor friends was there, Pastor Frank. He took a picture of a group of people praying and worshipping. When he looked at the picture he saw something; it was a ring of fire around the group of people that were worshipping. Many people have seen this picture that I know. God allowed the camera to capture what was going on in the spiritual realm. God, the consuming fire, was in the midst of them! The fellowship of the world brings demonic activity around you

as the fellowship of the light (fire) brings the presence of God!

I'll end this chapter with a verse from Joshua 24:15: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah."

Just as Joshua openly made this statement in front of his family and friends before entering into the promise land, we too have to do the same! Get connected to people with a passionate mind to serve Christ and get ready for the fire to fall as it did on the day of Pentecost.

Notes

Chapter 9 Fan the Fire

2 Timothy 1:5-8: "I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you. This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News"

Paul the apostle in his final days before he went home to be with the Lord writes his last letter, which we know as 2 Timothy. He starts by encouraging Timothy about the faith he has and how he was brought up by women of God who taught him the Word and walked in faith. Then the text goes on to encourage him to fan into flame the gift God gave you. Basically, if you follow the text he's encouraging him not to be afraid of

persecution, trial and tribulation that comes along with being a witness for Jesus. He's also encouraging him to fan the fire by always spreading the Gospel, the good news!

Jesus, before He ascended to Heaven, said:

“And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”
Matthew 28:18-20

Here's the question: shouldn't the last thing Jesus said before He ascended to heaven be the first thing we do? To witness, to baptize, to teach people to obey all Jesus commanded! Of course it should be. Paul said the very same thing to Timothy before he went to heaven—fan the flames!

It's time we realize the word GO in Matthew 28 is a verb, it's an action. A lot of people and churches talk about witnessing, they pray about witnessing, but they just don't go

witness. Then they ask why people are not on fire for God. The reason is we are not fanning the fire and ministering to the people of God.

One time in a church I used to go to we took an eight-week course called “The Way of the Master”. It is an awesome course about witnessing, I really do recommend you check it out. While the course was going on we talked about how we were going to go to downtown Chicago and witness to people after the course was over. We prayed that God would give us wisdom and that we wouldn’t be ashamed of the Gospel (Rom. 1:16). I couldn’t wait to get out there and apply what we learned. When the eight-week course was over I was waiting to go out with the church to go and save souls. All of that training and waiting and we never went out to witness! Don’t get me wrong, I believe the people that went through the course use the material when they witness. Like me, I still use the material I learned in the course today. It’s just that I believed we should have gone out as a church body.

God showed me something, though; we shouldn’t have to wait until someone else tells us to go out, or we are invited to go out. It should be a normal thing as believers. It should also be your main priority if you are seeking to get on fire and stay on fire for God!

A woman came up to Billy Sunday the famous evangelist and asked, “Why do you keep doing revivals when they don’t last?” Billy Sunday said, “Why do you keep taking baths?” If you believe in Jesus and love Him, you are in a relationship, and like a relationship it has to be maintained.

Think about a barbecue pit—when you are cooking with brand new charcoals the fire is at its best but then after a while they start dwindling down. What I’ve noticed is when this happens people usually get something to act as a fan and they start fanning the fire so that they can rekindle the flames. This is what happens when a person gets on fire for God; they start getting involved and start to go witness and be a part of the fellowship and then the fire starts to dwindle down because they stopped the fellowship and the witnessing and then after a while they say “I remember when we were on fire for God”. It’s because they didn’t fan the fire, they didn’t stay involved, they got lazy. There is a story in the Bible where Jesus gave a parable about how three servants were given a certain amount of talents (coins) and how the master entrusted them to invest the money and when he came back he would settle the accounts and see how they did (Matthew 25:14).

Two of the three servants were faithful and received rewards, but the third of the three was

not faithful. When the master asked why he did this, the man starts making excuses and even blames his master. The master replied, “go away from me you wicked and lazy servant.” God has entrusted to us the most precious thing in the world and that is His son and His son’s message and we cannot be lazy in spreading this good news. What we must do we must do quickly, because we do not know when Jesus will come back. I don’t know about you but I want to be found faithful when He comes back. I am not saying if you don’t witness you will go to a fiery hell, what I am saying is we should get on fire by witnessing so others won’t go to hell! I love what Paul said in Romans: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

You don’t have to wait until you feel you’ve learned enough to start witnessing. Don’t get me wrong, the Word says be ready with a word to defend your faith, and it says study to show yourself approved. While you are learning you can still go out and witness for Christ. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:1-2, “And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

Tell people what Jesus did for you, how He brought love and peace in your life, how He saved you from hell and how He wants to do the same for them. Remember it's not your job to get them to change, it's the Holy Spirit that brings a person unto repentance. It is your job as a Christian to get the Good News out there. The Bible says in Romans 10:14:

"But how can they call to him for help if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed? And how can the message be proclaimed if the messengers are not sent out? As the scripture says, "How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!"

After the Holy Spirit and fire came upon the disciples in the upper room in Acts 2, they started witnessing. Think about the six things we have discussed in the previous chapters about getting on fire and staying on fire: #1 the Word of God, #2 eyes free from lust, #3 passing our tests, #4 spending time in prayer, #5 spending time in fasting, and #6 fellowshiping with the right people. The disciples did all these things and this is how they got on fire, stayed on fire, and most

importantly spread the fire! And this is what we need to do, this is #7—spreading the Word. This is how we are supposed to fan the fire, because sometimes you can do all of steps 1-6 and the fire feels like it's going out and the reason is we are not shining our light. When you try to put a bowl over a lit candle it will go out: "You are like light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead it is put on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16

Jeremiah tried to stop witnessing but he couldn't: "But when I say, "I will forget the LORD and no longer speak in his name," then your message is like a fire burning deep within me. I try my best to hold it in, but can no longer keep it back" Jeremiah 20:9. We, like Jeremiah, should come to a point where even when we don't feel like shining our light and being a witness for God we still do it because we can't help it. We have to come to a point where it's not about us having the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit having us! We have to truly be the church that God has called us to be. In the Scriptures when Jesus spoke about the church he wasn't talking about a building—we are the church! The word church in the Greek

is *ekklēsia*; it means “the called out ones”! We are called out by God out of darkness to light and we are also called out to GO witness to bring others to the light (fire). It’s time we get the church to the people not just the people to the church. We go to a building we call the church, to learn how to be the true church (*ekklēsia*). When we walk according to that definition of the word church we can truly be a witness for Jesus Christ.

“But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” Acts 1:8. The Greek word for witness in this text is *martus*, it’s where we get our English word for martyr. The definition for a martyr is “To put to death for adhering to what one believes to be the truth; to sacrifice one on account of his faith or profession.”

The first martyr in the Bible was Stephen (Acts 7). What was he doing before he was martyred or murdered? Witnessing! You see back in the time of the disciples to call yourself a witness was to say you were willing to die for your belief in Christ. This is why Paul the apostle told Timothy “God has not given us a spirit of fear”, so that Timothy would not be moved by fear but by faith (2 Tim. 1:7).

The church was under persecution for their belief in the Christian faith. Their persecutions included getting burned at the stake, being thrown in an arena with wild animals like lions, being scourged, stoned to death, locked up, and crucified. Some Christians today don't go through anywhere near the persecution the early church went through, and when the trials come they stop being a witness because they can't pay their bills or because they can't take the pressure and trials that sometimes come because of being a Christian. People like the apostles used to go across land and sea to win people to Christ. A lot of people won't go down the street to witness or encourage another person, and then they say "why am I not on fire or why isn't there fire in the church anymore"?

Then Jesus called the crowd and his disciples to him. "If any of you want to come with me," he told them, "you must forget yourself, carry your cross, and follow me. For if you want to save your own life, you will lose it; but if you lose your life for me and for the gospel, you will save it. Do you gain anything if you win the whole world but lose your life? Of course not!" Mark 8:34-36

It's time to be a true witness for Christ. It's time to make it about Him and forget the old life and

what's behind and press towards the goal, which is winning others to Christ and entering into an eternal life that will last forever.

Sometimes I don't feel like witnessing. I get lazy or I get discouraged about things, but what I have always noticed is no matter how I felt, when I would encourage people even when I didn't feel like it, I was encouraged myself. Our life isn't about feelings, it's about faith. Jesus spent a little over three years witnessing to people in the hot desert sun. He healed all kinds of sickness, encouraged many and even raised the dead. After all this, Jesus was mocked, whipped, beat up, spat on and nailed to a cross. You would think He would take a break, right? Not our Jesus. There were two thieves being crucified with Jesus, one to His left and one to His right. They both began to mock Jesus at first but then one of the thieves realized Jesus was truly the Son of God.

The man confessed that he was deserving death for his crime and that Jesus didn't deserve to be crucified, then asked Jesus to remember him when He enters His kingdom and Jesus said "today you will be with me in paradise". In my opinion this man took the first sinners' prayer. Jesus didn't allow His situation to hinder the opportunity to witness and save one more soul for His Father's glory! When you're weak physically and just feel discouraged or depressed and you feel like you

can't go anymore, pray like Jesus prayed in the garden "Father not my will but your will be done," and then GO!

In the book of Romans Paul said, "every time I pray I ask that God in his good will may at last make it possible for me to visit you now. For I want very much to see you, in order to share a spiritual blessing with you to make you strong. What I mean is that both you and I will be helped at the same time, you by my faith and I by yours" (Romans 1:12-13). This is what we have to do, be encouragers and go and bless people with our faith in Jesus and when we do that we will be helped as well, because when you go and witness you are in the exact will of God. This is what He created us for, this is the Great Commission, this is our mission in life and when you are in the will of God you will receive the blessing of His presence and fire in your life.

"And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" Mark 16:16-17. The definition for the word accompany in this text is to go with as an associate or companion and to follow. When you go witnessing, encouraging and helping people in need in the name of Jesus, then and

only then will you see the fullness of the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit working in your life, accompanied by miracles, signs and wonders. When you start going then the Holy Spirit will start showing! First you have to GO then the signs and wonders will follow.

A couple examples:

I was called by one of the congregation members in our church one day; he began to tell me about his uncle and how he was just diagnosed with cancer. He asked me to come to one of his uncle's doctor appointments, so I agreed and went to the hospital to meet him. I never met the man before but I found out that he never went to a Christian church before. I began to explain how Jesus is looking for a relationship and not religion and how sometimes God allows sickness to come to bring a person to repentance if they are living a life of sin, and how God would forgive him and heal him if he would pray and believe and turn from his wicked ways as the Bible says (2 Chr. 7:13-14).

Then I explained how the Bible says call the elders of the church and anoint the sick with oil and pray for them in faith and this will heal the sick and forgive their sins (Jam. 5:14). We started to lay hands and pray for him and afterwards he went with the nurse and about two hours later the doctors told him he was cancer free! Signs will follow when you go.

Another example:

There was a man that called me to pray for his family and a new house they just moved into, so I agreed and went to his house. When I got there we were having normal conversation and his wife was serving us coffee and after the coffee I started speaking to his son that was in rebellion to God and his family. You might remember me talking about this boy in the 7th chapter that was set free from a demon—well, he went back to his old sinful ways again. The Bible says that if you go back to your old sinful life that the demon that was cast out will come back and bring seven demons stronger than itself with him (Matt. 12:44).

I began to tell him this Scripture and me and a few guys that were with me began to pray for him. He began to scream, then he collapsed and when he woke up he began to run toward a bedroom and I had to tackle him and hold him down because the demon was trying to hurt him. While I was doing this the mother of the boy that was just serving me coffee came into the room and shouted, “take me, leave my son alone!” I told her to stay quiet because she didn’t know what she was doing and to leave the room. After she left the room the boy was back to normal, the demon left. The Spirit of God ministered to me that the demon was now in the boy’s mother. You might say, can that

really happen? Yes it can, if a person is in disobedience to God and in open rebellion like the boy and his mother.

You see the mother is one of the authority figures in the boy's life. The Bible says what's bound on earth is bound in heaven and whatever is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven (Matt. 16:19 & see Eph. 6:12). I left the boy and came in the kitchen and I said to the mother "come here". She began to run and scream around the kitchen table. I quoted Colossians 2:15 that says, "In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross." She literally fainted without even laying hands on her. We began to pray and a long story short she got set free! The awesome thing was after she got set free we began to talk and she said she began to be thirsty like never before and while she was wanting water she saw a man with a white robe on that was barefooted, she could only see His feet. When she went to stretch her hands towards His feet she felt fire moving through her body and she said she felt the fire come out through her mouth. This is when the demon left her. The woman had a vision and I believe that man she saw was none other than Jesus Christ himself! I remember she went to the sink and grabbed a bowl, filled it up with water and drank and then we began to praise God! It's been a couple years since that happened,

thank God I haven't heard of any demonic possessive activity in that family ever since. I told that story to teach you when you GO, God will send signs and wonders. He delivered the woman with the Holy Ghost fire!

I'm not telling you to go out and start rebuking people and I'm not trying to scare you because as Paul said, "God has not given us the spirit of fear but love, power and a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). What I am saying is when you go to witness to people God will give you the signs and wonders you and the people need for whatever situation the people are going through.

One final example:

One night I ministered to a family about running from God. I told them the story about Jonah and how when he ran from God, like Jonah we start doing things Jonah did. He was in a depression, he wanted to be alone, tried to sleep through his storms and then he even became suicidal. He told the sailors on the ship to throw him overboard. I had no clue what the family was dealing with, I just wanted them to know you won't get out of the storms of life until you come to Jesus.

After I was done ministering, this young girl came to me and said "you don't understand pastor how badly I needed to hear that

message, because I have been locking myself in my room and I don't want to be around anyone, and a couple nights ago I took a knife and tried to kill myself." I then began to pray with her. You can't imagine how I felt that night, it was awesome. The fire of God was definitely fanned. I hope in Jesus' name whoever is reading this book will run to God not from God.

Signs and wonders will accompany the believer. God brought healing to the man with cancer, deliverance from demonic spirits to the family and a word of knowledge to the girl to save her from Satan's grip. When you go and witness the Bible says the Holy Spirit will give you the words to say (Mark 13:11).

You'll never know who you will witness to and who they might become for God. Read the following story I found that illustrates this point.

According to Christian Biography Resources, D. L. Moody, the famous Evangelist, when eighteen years of age, was a boot salesman in his uncle's store in Boston. His Sunday school teacher was a Mr. Kimball, and he had set his heart on winning the young man for Christ. After praying about the matter, he arranged to visit him at the boot store. "I was determined," to use his own words, "to speak to him about Christ and about his soul, and started down to Holton's boot store. When I was nearly there I began to wonder whether I ought to go in just

then during business hours. I thought my call might embarrass the boy, and that when I went away the other clerks would ask who I was, and taunt him with my efforts in trying to make him a good boy. In the meantime I had passed the store, and, discovering this, I determined to make a dash for it, and have it over at once. I found him in the back part of the building wrapping up shoes. I went up to him at once, and putting my hand on his shoulder, I made what I felt afterwards was a very weak plea for Christ. I don't know just what words I used, nor could Mr. Moody tell. I simply told him of Christ's love for him, and the love Christ wanted in return. That was all there was. It seemed the young man was just ready for the light that then broke upon him, and there in the back of that store in Boston, D. L. Moody gave himself and his life to Christ."

Forty years afterwards, when preaching in Boston, Mr. Moody himself thus described the effect of his conversion upon his life: "I can almost throw a stone from Tremont Temple to the spot where I found God forty years ago. I wish I could do something to lead some of you young men to that same God. He has been a million times better to me than I have been to Him. I remember the morning on which I came out of my room after I had first trusted Christ. I thought the sun shone a good deal brighter than it ever had before. I thought that it was just smiling upon me, and as I walked out upon

Boston Common and heard the birds singing in the trees, I thought they were all singing a song to me. Do you know? I fell in love with the birds. I had never cared for them before. It seemed to me that I was in love with all creation. I had not a bitter feeling against any man and I was ready to take all men to my heart. If a man has not the love of God shed abroad in his heart he has not yet been regenerated." (wholesomewords.org)

Praise God! What if Edward Kimball ran away from the shoe store, what if he left it for another day? Who knows? But I know this, you might not have ever known of a man by the name of Edward Kimball, but millions have heard of a man named Dwight L. Moody! He has continued to inspire millions even after his death, with schools all over and a national radio program and many other things he accomplished to save souls for the Lord. He became very powerful in ministry years later when something happened.

He became very settled and successful in ministry in Chicago. He sat on at least ten separate committees while at the same time fighting the call of God to step out as an itinerant evangelist. Ministry was becoming mechanical. In June 1871 a great burden came upon two older ladies in his congregation to pray that he would receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. These two ladies became very obvious to Moody as they sat on the front

pew and prayed as he preached. When he inquired about their praying they informed him that he needed the power of the Spirit.

At first Moody could satisfy himself that he was okay. But the persistence of these ladies led him to meet and pray with them. They poured out their hearts, asking God to fill His servant with His Spirit. From that day a deep hunger and prayer gripped Moody. By October he was in agony of soul as he prayed and sought God for the promised gift. At times he would roll on the floor in agony and in tears with this singular prayer to be baptized in the Holy Ghost and with fire. This was a wrestling match between his will and God's will. It was that very month that Chicago burnt to the ground. All his works, efforts, and organizational committees literally went up in a blaze. Shortly after this, while passing through New York on his way to Britain the second time, God heard his prayer. As he walked the streets his will bent before God, the power of the Holy Ghost fell upon him, and the Lord drew near and revealed Himself to His servant. Moody rushed to a friend's house and asked for a room and to be left alone. Hour after hour he bathed in the presence of God as the Holy Spirit filled him. So strong was this that he cried out to God to stay His hand lest he die. He was filled with the joy of the Lord. When he left that house it was in the power of the Spirit. When the fire fell upon him he truly

became the man God called him to be!
(pentecostalpioneers.org)

Think about Andrew, the first disciple. He was with Jesus first, then he went and told his brother Simon, who later became known as Peter, about Jesus. Peter became the rock, the man that spoke more than any of the other disciples, the man that messed up more than a lot of the disciples, but he was the man Jesus selected to lead the church for His glory. Why wasn't Andrew this man? I mean, he was the first of the disciples, why didn't Andrew write any books in the Bible like Peter did and why is it that you don't see Andrew speaking a lot in the Bible? I believe Andrew was a man that didn't care who did the job, just as long as it got done! You see, you can be a D.L moody and maybe even a Peter, but if you never become one of them you can definitely become an Edward Kimball or an Andrew. People like them help change the world! Like D.L Moody, Peter wasn't fully the man God called him to be until the Holy Ghost and fire came down on him on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

I remember when God called me to host Bible studies in my house. I was smoking still and doing some other things I shouldn't have been doing, but I was still learning as I read the Bible and began to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit and apply everything you have been reading in this book. The Holy Spirit fell upon

me and I started speaking in new tongues. I remember when I use to say, “I don’t care about speaking in tongues if God wants to give me that gift He will”. Then I realized I want every gift God wants to give to me. Like for Christmas, are you going to leave a gift with your name on it under the tree? Of course not. So I began to pray like many others prayed before me to receive the gift of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then one day I did and my life has never been the same since.

I don’t want you to misunderstand what I’m saying. I’m not saying just seek the gift of tongues, because if the Holy Spirit wants to give you that gift (2 Cor. 12:10) and you start praying to receive it and you do, praise God. I’m talking about seeking the Holy Spirit and fire so God will consume your whole body, mind and life, not just your way of praying and prophesying. It’s not only about speaking in tongues, it’s about living a new life in Christ.

One of the key things to do in order to get this baptism is witness. When I started witnessing and hosting these Bible studies at my house, God really poured down His fire upon me and every time I feel the fire dwindling I fan the fire by witnessing and also going on evangelism trips. Since June 3rd, 2007, until June 26th, 2011, I have visited eleven different cities in the United States and in Canada, and preached in over twenty churches.

One day I was going on one of these evangelism trips and one of the guys in choir came to me and said "Pastor, don't you think we should do our worker's retreat before you go on the trip?" He asked me this because every three months the workers and I go on a two day retreat where we study, fellowship and worship. I told him that I wanted to be fired up before we do the worker's retreat and how this evangelism trip would help fan the fire. Well, I just got back from the trip where we saw many come to repentance from drugs, witchcraft and many other sins. Also, a man gave me a watch that retailed new for \$29,000 as a love offering! The man said, "I have heard nothing but good things about your church and I know a lot of people that are in Christianity one day and the next day they are out of it, but you have never quit. I want to give you this from the bottom of my heart," then he gave me the watch. It was truly an awesome time in the Lord!

Jesus spoke about this with His disciples:

"Yes," Jesus said to them, "and I tell you that those who leave home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and for the gospel, will receive much more in this present age. They will receive a hundred times more houses,

*brothers, sisters, mothers,
children, and fields---and
persecutions as well; and in the
age to come they will receive
eternal life.” Mark 10:29-30*

I'm totally not a prosperity teacher but I do believe God does prosper His people according to His will. If I go out witnessing and never get another love offering again in my life, I will not stop preaching the good news for God's glory. You might never receive a thing for preaching God's message on earth, but in the end it will be worth hearing those awesome words, "welcome home my good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your rest."

Well, praise God that trip fired me up. As soon as I got back, God started ministering to me all the information for this book. Guess what day He got me up out of my sleep to give me the idea for this book? The day of Pentecost! It was a couple weeks ago; Sunday, June 12, 2011. The day of Pentecost is always fifty days after Easter Sunday. The next day I started writing, I couldn't get away from the computer. Seventeen hours later I got out of my office—at 7:00 am the next day! The fire fell upon me to write this book so it can be used as a witness tool to help people learn how to get set on fire for God, and most importantly how to spread that fire. This book was written in about two weeks. I had nothing to do with it; God told

me what to say and I put it down. That's why this book is dedicated to Him, He wrote it and I hope you apply it!

The workers' retreat is coming up next week. Guess what book we are going over and studying? This one! In manuscript form, of course. I'm going to teach the guys what God taught me, so they can get fired up as well and go fan the fire!

Here's the reason you should do it. According to the US Census Bureau (for 2009), there are 1.8 deaths per second worldwide, meaning that there are over 100 deaths per minute. There are over 150,000 deaths per day and over 55 million deaths per year.

According to this over six thousand people die in an hour. How many people went to hell? It's our job to get on fire for God and fan that fire by witnessing so we can spread that fire to other people so they won't go to hell's fire!

John Wesley said, "Give me ten men that hate nothing but sin and love nothing but God and we will change the world." Do you want to become one of those ten? Then you can start by praying this prayer: "Give me the love that leads the way, the faith that nothing can dismay, the hope no disappointments tire, the passion that will burn like fire. Let me not sink to be a clod: make me Thy fuel, flame of God" (Poem by Amy Carmichael).

Remember when you feel like the fire is going out—fan the fire!

Notes

Conclusion

Zechariah 4:6: "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts."

The man Zerubbabel was a person that was helping to restore the temple, but he was faced with opposition from the enemy so God gave a message to the prophet Zechariah to give to him. "Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit." Before God told Zechariah this, He showed him a golden lamp stand; by the lamp stand there were two olive trees and the oil was coming out of the olive trees and going into the lamp stand.

What God showed me is this: one of the priest's jobs in the temple was to make sure the lamp stands had olive oil in them so that the fire would continually burn. So when God showed Zechariah the vision of the olive trees supplying the lamp oil, God ministered to me: "I don't need man, I can provide my own oil and my own fire." That's why he told Zechariah to tell Zerubbabel, "Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit." To encourage Zerubbabel that God was going to win the victory for him. You see, God is the one who provides the oil, the anointing in our lives, so that we can be on fire for Him. Remember, though, we are the

priest, sacrifice, and temple of God now; so we, like the priest, need to maintain the anointing through obedience to God. If you apply the seven keys we have discussed in this book—#1 the Word of God daily, #2 eyes free from lust, #3 passing the tests, #4 spending time in prayer, #5 spending time fasting, #6 good fellowship, and #7 spreading the Word by witnessing—it will make it a lot easier for you to maintain.

God does not need us, just like He didn't need the priest. He could put two olive trees there to provide the oil. The awesome thing is God wants to use us! You have to submit to Him though. Just a few days ago we finished a two-day revival at our church. The second day something happened; the choir was singing a song that describes how you have to allow yourself to be broken so God can use you. The song goes like this: "Lord, I am broken in pieces but your strength is perfect in all of my weakness." As the church was worshipping to this song the anointing oil that was on the pulpit fell and shattered; it was broken into many pieces. No one was there to make it fall. When that happened the church began to smell beautiful because of the fragrance of the oil; it reminded me of the woman that broke the alabaster jar to anoint Jesus (see John 12).

I believe God showed up and allowed the bottle of oil to fall and break, to provide the

church with a powerful illustration—that when you allow God to move in your life with His strength and are totally submissive to Him, the anointing will flow and you will send out a beautiful fragrance both to Him and the world. When you do this, you will always be on fire for God. Over the next couple of days after the revival, I received several reports of miraculous healing. A woman that was supposed to undergo eye surgery went to the doctor to schedule the surgery, and the amazed doctor told her she did not need it anymore. Another woman had to have surgery to remove cancer and when the doctors removed the cancer they told the family how the cancer was all gathered in one place and it hadn't spread! Also, a servant in the church received the gift of tongues, and many more people have rededicated their lives to the Lord and have been set on fire!

If you do not allow yourself to be broken so that God can use you, then you will give off a disgusting smell to God and the world and hinder the anointing God wants you to have. Ecclesiastics 10:1 says, “Dead flies cause the oil of the perfumer to send forth an evil odor; so doth a little folly outweigh wisdom and honor.” The perfume that King Solomon was writing about was made by an apothecary. If the apothecary did not protect the ointments and perfumes in his shop from collecting flies that would die in the jars, they would begin to smell

badly instead of beautifully. Exodus 30:25 states, “and thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil.” This oil was used to anoint all the utensils of the temple, the altar, and the priests.

What do dead flies have to do with anything? In the Gospels, Jesus referred to Satan as Beelzebub (Matt. 12:27), which means the “lord of the flies”. Satan sends out demons to destroy people and plant thoughts in people’s heads. If you plan on holding on to “flies” (sins), whatever sins they might be, like gossip, slander, unforgiveness, anger, spirit of offense, bitterness, lust, adultery, pornography, greed, lying, addictions such as drugs and drinking, and many other sins like these, you will not ever be on fire for God until you get the flies out of the anointing and allow God to move in your life! Remember, “not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord of hosts.” God wants to use you to spread His fire, if you truly seek to get set on fire for God He will set you on fire so people will come watch you burn.

According to Revival Library’s history of William Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival, in 1906 a massive spiritual awakening erupted at Azusa Street in Los Angeles. The event was so great that the after-shock has been felt throughout the world for over a century,

impacting almost every nation of the world. A new Pentecost had come. God had opened up his heavenly portals again and had sent great power to his people once more. This marked the beginning of the Pentecostal Church. Thousands of pastors and leaders from all over the world visited this place of divine visitation, especially during its vibrant early years between 1906 and 1908, and took away the fire of God to kindle the Pentecostal flames in their nations. It grew very rapidly and has continued to spread like wildfire. Today, there are over 550 million Pentecostals and Charismatics who trace their spiritual ancestry back to this awesome event. Currently, they are growing at an estimated rate of 50,000 new converts a day! Thank God for the continuing aftershock!

This was known as the Azusa Street revival!

One time during a service firemen came on the scene, because they had reports that the roof of the building was on fire where they were having their services. The firemen came in and realized there was no physical fire. You see, God allowed people to see in the spiritual realm that the place was of fire—they were on fire for God! Those people who came got set on fire and became fire starters just like the disciples in the upper room. If God sent His fire for the disciples in the upper room, and if He sent His fire for the people who attended the Azusa Street revival, He will do it for you!

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8).

Every person that got on fire and stayed on fire for God, spread the fire of God! Every person spread it to glorify God. D.L. Moody said, “We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won’t need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don’t fire cannons to call attention to their shining—they just shine.” God has called us to be servants of fire. Psalms 104:4 says, “The winds are your messengers, and flames of fire are your servants.” Allow yourself to be broken so God can use and anoint your life so that you can get set on fire, stay on fire, and spread the fire of God!

Go start some fires!

Additional Resources:

If this book has blessed you in your walk with God and you would like additional copies or other resources from Pastor Anthony, such as CDs and other books, please contact him at anthonysfgm@gmail.com or call him at 708-296-7663. You can access Pastor Anthony's two-minute daily devotions via cell phone. Just text the above number to subscribe. Just type "add me" with your name and number and you will start receiving these inspirational messages for free.

Pastor Anthony Lee is also available to minister at your church, small group, or retreat. Contact him at the above email or phone number to schedule your event.

About the Author:

Pastor Anthony is the senior pastor of the Soldiers for God Ministry in Chicago, IL. He ministers to a Roma Gypsy congregation and evangelizes across the city and the country. Pastor Anthony has a powerful testimony of God's transformative power, and shares it through his ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. God has been using this testimony to deliver others from the bonds of sin. *Becoming a Fire Starter* is Pastor Anthony's third book.