

## 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 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!