

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.

To set on fire; to cause to burn with flame; to light;

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)25

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 trials³³

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