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Fire of the Holy Spirit Part 3— How to Sustain the Fire of the Holy Spirit Ps David

In the past few weeks, I have been sharing about the Fire of the Holy Spirit, and how to receive the Holy Spirit and build that relationship with Him. Today I am going to consider the important matter of how to sustain the Fire of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

There is no need for our faith to grow erratically. There is no need for us to be good one week and then bad the next or have a personal revival on Sunday, only to fall into sin on Monday. You can stay on course, you can be consistent, and you can live the victorious Christian life throughout your life.

How do we sustain the fire?

First, we must understand that by exercising the spiritual basics you can avoid spiritual crises.

Consider the following scenario: I go to the doctor because I am not eating, I am not sleeping or I am not exercising. I say to the doctor, "Doctor, I just feel terrible, something just feels wrong with my body, my mind isn't sharp, my body is tired, I am aching, I am in pain, I am weak, I don't understand what's going on." If he is a good doctor, the first question he would ask me should be the basics, because he wants to rule out the simple things first.

He would ask things like 'are you able to sleep and eat well, and are you exercising?' Why do doctors ask these questions up front? They want to see if you are doing the basics, because not engaging actively in the basics can automatically lead to many problems. So, before they recommend that you undergo surgery, or jump to the conclusion that you are suffering from such and such a disease or even recommend any medication they would firstly assess and see if you are doing the basics. The same thing is true with our spiritual lives. If you are engaged in what I call the spiritual basics, you can avoid spiritual crises.

Some people would say to me, I am tormented, I need deliverance, I need help, I am this, I am that. But oftentimes when they are asked, "How is your walk with God? How's your prayer life?" They would say, "Oh, it has its ups and downs, and I pray every now and then." When asked, "How is your devotion to the word?" their reply is commonly, "Oh, I could do better there." When asked, "How is your lifestyle marked by worship and repentance?" they would say, "Oh well, those areas could use some work." To these people I would tell them to work on the spiritual basics first. If these basics are in order, we can then look at other solutions.

Most of the time when we deal with these spiritual basics, we will find that our problems would actually be resolved. You will be amazed at how many of what you might think are major spiritual issues would be resolved in a matter of weeks if you simply take care of the spiritual basics. You would be astonished, you would be amazed, you would go "Oh, my goodness, was it that simple? Simple, yes. Easy? Not always. You would be amazed at how many things cease to become issues if you simply observed and engaged yourselves with the basics.

As I have mentioned earlier, you can avoid spiritual crisis by exceling in spiritual basics. I believe people getting set free from laying hands on them. I believe in the power of God. But often we try to blame demons for what is basically a lack of discipline on our part.

Often, we try to blame our problems on everything else but we refuse to admit that the real problem is simply disobedience on our part. We want to go and have the excitement in some worship service, we

want to have that special oil poured over our head, we want to have hands laid on us and to instantly experience everything that we should already be experiencing if we were practising the basics.

I believe there is a place for special anointings but even if you did obtain a breakthrough in that way, when you return to living your life as you have lived it without implementing the spiritual basics, you will just find yourself in the same predicament. This is why we repeat these cycles of chaos and bondage, these cycles of immaturity, these cycles of confusion. We go from one event to the next, from one conference to the next, from YouTube channel to YouTube channel, from book to book. But all the while we have not really changed our behaviour, and we continue to hope that someone else would do the spiritual work for us. It is almost like we want a strong muscular body but only if someone else would do the weight lifting for us. That is not going to work.

As I have said earlier, you can avoid spiritual crisis if you do the spiritual basics but what are the spiritual basics.

These are the 7 basics that we need to follow.

1. Live a lifestyle of repentance
2. Protect your purity
3. Evangelise and serve
4. Cling to Jesus
5. Stay in the Word
6. Immediately respond to the Holy Spirit
7. Surround yourself with others who are on fire for the Lord

1. Live a Lifestyle of Repentance

Sin hinders the influence of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Take for example Samson, who was seduced by Delilah. Now, who was Samson?

Judges 13 talks about an Israelite couple but they were childless and they cried to the Lord for His help in this area. Eventually an angel appeared to the wife and gave her the message of hope.

Judges 13:5 You will become pregnant and have a son whose head is never to be touched by a razor because the boy is to be a Nazirite, dedicated to God from the womb. He will take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines.”

Subsequently, and in accordance to what the angel had said, she gave birth to a son and named him Samson meaning “sun”, seen as a hope, the deliverer of Israel.

Samson was a biblical character during the time before there was a king in Israel. He was a judge during that period of time. He had great power given by God to protect God’s people from the Philistines, Israel’s enemy, but Samson lived a wild life.

Judges 14:1-3 Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman. ²When he returned, he said to his father and mother, “I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife.”

³His father and mother replied, “Isn’t there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?”

But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me. She’s the right one for me.”

Samson disobeyed God’s law by marrying a non-Israelite woman, a Philistine woman who was the enemy of God’s people. As some of you might know, the wedding didn’t go well and his wife was eventually given to someone else.

Judges 16:1 One day Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute. He went in to spend the night with her.

Samson did what he liked and lived as though God didn’t exist.

He then met another Philistine woman called Delilah

Judges 16:4 Sometime later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, “See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver.”

Delilah kept pressing on Samson asking him to reveal the secret to his strength. Again and again, Samson gave her the false answers. But her persistence eventually wore Samson down and one day he revealed that the secret of his strength was in his hair. The Philistine woman cut his hair, and Samson was rendered powerless and he was captured and tortured by the Philistines. Samson would eventually die in the enemies land.

If you look at that narrative, you will find that Samson was seduced in stages. He gave up the secret of his strength in phases. Delilah set up a campaign of persistent nagging until she managed to draw out Samson’s secret. As she pressed in, she got closer and closer to the secret. It happened little by little until finally one day when Samson got up to fight the enemy, he didn't even realise that the supernatural strength had left his body. He didn't know that the Lord had left him, and when the scripture says the Lord left him, it is talking about the power upon him.

Temptation is not an event, it is a process. You fall into sin on Friday because on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday you were looking at things and listening to things you should not have been looking at or listening to. You fall into sin because you are with the people you shouldn’t be with and doing the things you shouldn’t be doing.

Those things accumulate and result in the eventual falling into temptation. This is how you find yourself in that situation again, because you have allowed temptation to overtake you incrementally, little by little. That is how the enemy lures you in. He will give you a little taste of something that doesn't seem like it has heavy consequences. He is training you to give in to temptation for the big thing. He trains you in the little things that you don't realise the big hook is coming. He tempts you with the bait until such time as you swallow the whole bait, hook line and sinker and you do not even know that the hook was there.

The problem with us is that we make a practise of saying yes to sin, even those that might appear to be just little sins, if you could even call it that. I mean, technically speaking, there is no such thing as a small sin, but over time sin can have stronger and stronger influence in your life as you continue to give in to them.

Take for example receiving a Facebook message. Let's say that a woman sends you, a married man, a message on Facebook. You say, I remember this woman from school. I remember she was really nice, and maybe you liked her. So, you return her message asking, "How are you doing? How's life?" In other words, you responded. The first fall.

You say pastor David, aren't you being religious? No. I am being realistic, because we know in our hearts what we are doing, don't we? We should also know in our hearts what we should not be doing either. That is how deceptive the flesh is, because the flesh likes to cooperate with the enemy. The flesh will cooperate with and succumb to demonic deception. The flesh will lie to you, then you lie to yourself, and you will actually believe that you have no intention of making it more than just a conversation. But hidden behind the responses to the message there is this deep buried desire for something more. And so you send the first message, and then another and soon it takes the form of a full blown conversation.

Then you start to share information about your life, your feelings, and you start to become emotionally attached and involved, and then you share secrets and sooner or later that Facebook message turns into adultery and you lose your reputation, you lose your marriage, you lose your family, you lose so much more than you ever thought you would when you first sent that message. That is how temptation works, it starts as a spark, as a small fire.

If you saw a little flame in your living room, you wouldn't say, "Oh, it is just a little fire. Who's that going to hurt? It is not going to burn anybody." No, you would attack that little flame as quickly as possible, and you would put it out. That is how we have to treat sins in our lives, even if it is just an ember, we have to put out that fire as quickly as possible. Don't even allow any opportunity for the little embers to become a raging, devastating fire.

The Bible says in

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

This is to believers. This is to those who fall into sin. If you happen to fall into sin, we need to confess our sins to Him. We are not talking here about confessing our sins to Him daily so that we can be saved. We are saved because of the finished work of the cross, but we confess our sins to Him so that sin might not gain influence in our lives.

There is a lot of debate as to whether we are once saved, always saved, or that we are not. But this debate is for another time and whether you believe in once saved, always saved, or you believe that you can lose your salvation, it doesn't really matter. What we need to do is to strive to live holy lives, period!

So, whatever you think about how sin might affect us in the end, let's not even get to that point. Let's just look at it from the very beginning and ask, why do we even have to go that far to where there is a debate if someone sins too much, would they lose their salvation? Instead, our attitude should be, "I won't even let it get to that point where I start to question my salvation." So, many believers ask how close can I get to that line of sin before it is actually sin? How much of the world can I participate in before I actually become compromised? But honestly, if that is the angle you are coming from, you are already starting from the wrong place.

The verse here says, "**If we confess our sins to him,**" and this is something that is to be consistently done. How do we know this? Because the scripture says, "**He is faithful,**" meaning He is willing to forgive again if we repent.

The original meaning of the word 'confess' is to "assure" to "promise" to "admit". So, confession is not to be taken lightly, but with a real intent to change but in our struggle, if we do sin again, "He is faithful"

"And just to forgive us our sins." So, He is faithful to forgive us our sins continually. He is just to forgive us our sins in that, He does it legally because of what He had done on the cross, but we must live a lifestyle of repentance. Stop waiting for it to become a bigger issue and start addressing it now. This may be God's warning to someone here, and if it is, address it now. Man of God, woman of God, address it now. Brothers and sisters address it now, before it becomes a major issue, before it destroys your marriage, before it causes you to become a stumbling block to the gospel, address it now.

King David

He sinned against God by taking Bathsheba, Uriah's wife.

2 Samuel 11:2-5 (NIV)

²One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful,

³and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite."

⁴Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home.

⁵The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

To cover his wrong doing, David thought if her husband somehow died on the battlefield, then king David could legally take her to be his wife, so he deliberately sent the man to be killed in the battle.

He thought that no one would ever know what he had done, but God did. God sent Nathan the prophet to point out his adultery, his murder. David's response was...

2 Samuel 12:13

Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die."

What did his repentance bring? It brought Life. Your spiritual life will be reconnected again with God, it will also bring you eternal life.

This experience made David to write psalms 51

Psalm 51 (NIV)

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

²Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

⁵Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

⁶Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

⁷Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

⁹Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

¹⁰Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

¹¹Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.

¹⁶You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

(If we have sinned, the sacrifice, the work we do for the Lord will not please the Lord.)

¹⁷My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

¹⁸May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem.

¹⁹Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous, in burnt offerings offered whole; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

When we are right again, then our sacrifice, what we do for the Lord will be pleasing to the Lord.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins **and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

After we have done our part through confession, our promise, and our determination to come out of our sins, He then will do His part, He will purify us from all our sins. We can't do the purification part but He can, He will give us a new heart.

Let us live a lifestyle of repentance. Do you want to keep the Fire of God? Then stop allowing those little things that take away the influence of the Holy Spirit in your life. Let our repentance bring back the connection with the Holy Spirit again, let the repentance bring life and joy to our lives again.