

## **Fire of the Holy Spirit Part 1 – How to Receive the Fire of the Holy Spirit**

Today I would like to follow from the topic of the Holy Spirit. In today's challenging world we need the fire of the Holy Spirit in us to live for him in our work, family, school, community, ministry and all other places.

I am going to show you the fiery nature of the Holy Spirit and I am going to talk about the nature of the fire of God. I am going to talk about how to receive the fire of God, and I am going to tell you how to sustain the fire of God in part 2 of the sermon.

I pray that the word I am sharing today will help the believers who are struggling, those who are strong, and those who were once doing well spiritually and then fell away, and wondering how to get back to the place that is on fire for the Lord.

When I talk about being on fire for the Lord, I am talking about being influenced by the Holy Spirit, that they are living a life surrendered and that they are burning like a light. They are people burning with passion for the things of God. They are walking in holiness, they are living a clean life. They are living as a Christian should be. When we say someone is on fire for the Lord, we are describing the Christian life.

The fire of God is not revival. The fire of God is not a feeling. The fire of God is not a substance. The fire of God is not even passion. The fire of God is the person of the Holy Spirit. When you have the person of the Holy Spirit, His nature will burn through you, His light will shine through your life.

Let have a look in some of the scriptures that mentioned Holy Spirit as fire.

### **Acts 2:3**

<sup>3</sup>They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

Here we see the presence of the Holy Spirit being seemed to be flames or tongues of fire.

### **Exodus 3:2**

<sup>2</sup>There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

The presence of the Lord is often described as being fire or being like fire.

### **1 Thessalonians 5:19**

<sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit.

Paul the Apostle tells us not to quench the Holy Spirit. Now the way this is phrased is very important. Quench in Greek means to extinguish and it is the same Greek word used in Ephesians chapter 6, verse 16, where the Bible says

### **Ephesians 6:16**

<sup>16</sup>In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can **extinguish** all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 when the scripture says, “Do not quench Spirit” we are being told of the Holy Spirit is fiery nature. What a powerful truth. John the Baptist described the fiery nature of the Holy Spirit in Matthew 3:11.

### **Matthew 3:11**

<sup>11</sup>“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.

Again, we see the presence of the Holy Spirit being accompanied by fire.

### **Numbers 9:15**

<sup>15</sup>On the day the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant law, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire.

We see that God demonstrated the fact that his presence was with his people through a fire that hovered over the Tabernacle.

Now, in the New Testament, the fire of the Holy Spirit is still presence, the fire of God dwells in the New Temple, your body,

### **1 Corinthians 6:19**

<sup>19</sup>Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

In the Old Testament, that pillar of fire would hover over the temple to prove that the presence of God was with his people. In the New Testament the fire of the Holy Spirit, his presence dwells in you, God's new dwelling place, the Tabernacle, the temple of the New Testament.

What are the natures of fire? Fire purifies, fire brings light, fire can bring comfort and warmth, fire consumes. These are also the descriptions of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit refines and purifies. The Holy Spirit illuminates, the Holy Spirit brings comfort. The Holy Spirit consumes, our God is a consuming fire.

When someone is on fire for God, we are talking about a spiritual fire. We are talking about the person and presence of the Holy Spirit in their life that produces passion, righteousness, spiritual momentum, heartfelt worship, passion for the lost souls, and a lifestyle of prayer. The fire of God fuels all these things.

In the Old Testament, in the book of Leviticus, Chapter 6, we see something interesting.

### **Leviticus 6:12-13**

<sup>12</sup>The fire on the altar must be kept burning; it must not go out. Every morning the priest is to add firewood and arrange the burnt offering on the fire and burn the fat of the fellowship offerings on it. <sup>13</sup>The fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out.

A clear instruction was given to the people serving in the temple. There we see that fresh wood needed to be placed on the fire to keep the fire burning. The fire must be kept burning on the altar at all times, it must never go out.

Some tourists had a visit to Oral Roberts University. **ORU** is one of the largest, most influential Christian universities in the world. The tourist were given a tour of the place by some of the people there, and they were showing them all of the symbolism around campus. You can't go hardly anywhere without scriptures or biblical symbolism being built into the place. It is built into the university, but one of the things that really caught the visitor's attention was the fact that they kept this fire burning, this flame burning on the tower that could be seen from almost any point on campus. They told the visitors that the fire never went out. They kept it burning constantly to act as a reminder to the students about the presence of God, day or night, in every season, the presence is there. The fire doesn't go out.

This reminded me of what was happening here in the Book of Leviticus, where the priests were told don't let the fire go out. Those were God's instructions, "You keep the fire burning." It was their responsibility to steward the fire, but it wasn't their responsibility to start the fire.

### **Leviticus 9:22-24**

<sup>22</sup>Then Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them. And having sacrificed the sin offering, the burnt offering and the fellowship offering, he stepped down.

<sup>23</sup>Moses and Aaron then went into the tent of meeting. When they came out, they blessed the people; and the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. <sup>24</sup>Fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy and fell facedown.

God told the priesthood, "You keep that fire burning. Don't ever let that fire on the altar go out. You keep it burning continually. That's your responsibility. Your responsibility is to protect the fire."

They are the keepers of the flame. That's what we are as believers, we are keepers of the flame. We are given that fire, we are given that presence and we are to cherish that presence. We are to keep giving that presence influence in our lives, but only God can start the fire.

Notice in verse 24, the fire came from the Lord's presence and consumed the burnt offering. If you want to receive the fire of God, then you need his presence.

As I have shared with you previously how the fire of God touched my life at the ISCF Leader's Camp, it was out of that first encounter that everything you see God's work through my life was started.

You can probably look at your life and pinpoint key moments in your walk with God on the timeline of your spiritual journey. There are spiritual markers, certain events and instances, and encounters that stand out to you, and those encounters will mark you for the rest of your life. As you move along your spiritual journey, you can often look back at those moments and remember with joy the things that God did in you. It was out of the encounter with the presence of God that the fire was born. Fire is found in His presence.

Yes, the fire is the person of the Holy Spirit, but that fire does produce passion. The fire of God is not just passion. It is not just revival. It is not just the feeling. It is not just the desire to do things for God, but that presence. The fire of the Holy Spirit Himself can produce passion, can produce personal revival, which results in corporate revival, then regional, then national, and then global revival. It produces the results from within, it begins in the presence of the Holy Spirit.

If we want to see a breakthrough and the Holy Spirit to be in your business, work, study, relationship it needs to be an overflow of your relationship with the Holy Spirit. You need an overflow of your prayer life and personal time in the Word.

The title of this sermon is "How to receive and keep the fire of the Holy Spirit" because that's how people phrase their questions, but in reality, He is in you. So, I am talking about surrendering to the influence of that fire within you rather than asking for the fire to begin with. If you are born born-again believer, according to Romans 8 and Ephesians 1, you have the Holy Spirit

How do we do that? I am going to give you 3 things call it the Triple AAA way to receive the fire of God. It is just to help you remember, Ask, Acknowledge, and Act.

### **1. Ask**

You must invite the influence of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Remember that only God can set your soul ablaze. Only God can give you a love for Christ. Only God can give you a love for one another.

### **Romans 5:5**

<sup>5</sup>And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

### **Luke 11:13**

<sup>13</sup>If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

When we invite the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we are talking to a very real person who will respond to such requests. You can say to the Holy Spirit, “Holy Spirit, I want you to help me burn for Jesus.” You can say to the Holy Spirit, “Holy Spirit, I want you to give me a greater love for the Lord.” You can ask him for greater passion for the things of God. You can ask him to help you to fall in love in prayer and the word. All of that is birth out of his presence. Remember the fire of God is found in the presence of God, but first you must ask him to do it, you must invite that influence.

I am not just talking about speaking it aloud. I am talking about asking him, by way of surrender. I am talking about inviting him by humbling yourself before him and making room for him to do what only he can do.

## **2. Acknowledge**

Acknowledge God's presence in your life

Remember this, if your thinking, isn't on fire, your actions won't be either.

### **2 Corinthians 10:5**

<sup>5</sup>We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

This is talking about coming against those things in our mind that contradict the word of God. Whenever a thought enters my mind, that goes against what the word of God says, it is my responsibility to grab hold of that thought because you can choose your thoughts, because thoughts are the actions of the mind. You can pull that thought down by assaulting that deception with the truth of the word of God.

For example, if a lie comes to your mind that says God has abandoned me, then you take the truth of God's word, and say He will never leave me nor forsake me. With that truth, you disarm the deception. Another word you disarm deception through assaulting it with the truth. It is difficult to be on fire for God when You are constraining that fire with thoughts that contradict the truth.

I would say one of the main reasons why believers struggle in their spirituality is because they don't understand how to discipline their mind. They don't know how to discipline their thoughts and they think that someone is going to come and lay hands on them and discipline their minds for them. You have to realise that your thoughts are your responsibilities. You choose your thinking.

No matter how you were raised, whatever your background is, whatever your culture is, whatever your political beliefs are, whatever they taught you in school, whatever your mom and dad believe, whatever your pastor told you, whatever comes into your mind, it is your responsibility. Yes, I believe there will be some influence to your life but unless you take up the responsibility, you will not be able to have breakthrough.

How can you be on fire? For God, when you are still waiting for someone to confirm to you that you are forgiven for something very specific, that you did 10 years ago. How can you be on fire for God when you are still waiting for someone to tell you in your specific story and scenario that God still loves you and He is still with you. Stop waiting for someone else to confirm what the scripture has already told you. Stop waiting for your feelings to catch up, stop looking for someone to validate your obsession and get hold of your thoughts. It is a discipline: grab them with truth, cast down those imaginations so that you might think in a way that is liberated and therefore not restraining the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.

If you are thinking there is no Fire, your actions won't be either. You can't serve if you are battling guilt. You can't worship if you are battling doubt. I understand that we can serve and worship through these things, but I am talking about doing these things with passion, with momentum, with life, with strength, with vigour. You can't last long, you will get tired and in two or three years you will leave the church. Why? Because you were so weighed down by your thought patterns. You were so fixated on forms of religious obsessions that you weren't able to break free from it.

How can we expect to be on fire getting into God's word, reading God's word, thinking God has already condemned me? How are you supposed to serve in a ministry? Just constantly thinking you are not worthy of serving, or that people don't like you or that God overlooked you. These lies will keep you from receiving the influence of the fire of God. Don't overthink, just acknowledge God's presence is in me. Don't be distracted, just acknowledge God's presence is in me. Don't believe the lies of the enemy, just acknowledge God's presence is in me. Once you have come to embrace this truth, the truth will set you free. But you have to start thinking according to the truth. You have to acknowledge that God's presence is in you.

### **3. Act in faith.**

Do something with what He gave you.

#### **James 2:14-17**

<sup>14</sup>What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? <sup>15</sup>Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup>If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but

does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? <sup>17</sup> In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

You see here that faith by itself isn't enough unless it produces good deeds, faith without works is dead. If you have dead faith, it is probably because it is not a genuine faith. If faith is genuine, it is alive, because faith is from the Holy Spirit when it is genuine.

In the context of James, the few verses that I just read to you, this is obviously talking about saving faith. The type of faith that produces salvation and that true faith isn't created by works, but it is demonstrated by works. But we can have the principle applied to our everyday life and the principle is that faith without works is dead. There's something to be said of action, and I am not talking about faking it till you make it. That is not a healthy way to live, but you have to you find true peace with God, you have to find true breakthrough, spiritually, inwardly. I am not talking about faking it till you make it, but I am talking about the effect that failure to act can have on inviting the influence of the Holy Spirit in your life. You would be amazed at how on fire you would be if you just listened to God, just obey God. Do what he says and that ignites something in you.

So, how do you receive the Fire of God?

- 1. Ask:** You must invite the influence of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- 2. Acknowledge:** Acknowledge God's presence in your life.
- 3. Act in faith:** Do something with what He gave you.

When the person of the Holy Spirit is welcome to influence in your life, your life will be on fire for the Lord, there will be passion to live for Him.