

Fire of the Holy Spirit Part 6—How to Sustain the Fire of the Holy Spirit

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By Pastor David

For the last few months, I have been talking about how to sustain the Fire of the Holy Spirit after you have received the Fire. It has been a long and good journey on the topic of the Holy Spirit. I have received much good feedback from those who have come to the church, saying that the messages have encouraged them. I pray that what has been said has changed the way you live and that the message has stayed with you.

Today is the last session for the series. I am going to share the last two things we need to do to sustain the Fire. If you remember I mentioned the 7 spiritual basics and today we look at numbers 6 and 7. Number 6 is that we need to practise how to immediately respond to the Holy Spirit and number 7 is to surround ourselves with people who are also ablaze with the Holy Spirit.

6. We have to make a practice of responding immediately to the Holy Spirit

John 10:27

²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

Here it says, “My sheep listen to my voice”, who are the Lord’s sheep? Those who listen to His voice. That implies those who don’t listen to His voice are not His sheep. Listening does not just mean hearing. The word “listen” means to act out what you have heard and being obedient to the instructions given. So, we need to act out or do what the Lord says.

Secondly, we need to learn sensitivity to the voice of the Holy Spirit as delaying would be seen as being disobedient.

Hebrews3:7-9

⁷ So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, ⁹ where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did.

The verse here says “Today”, it requires an immediate response from us.

If we as believers make it a habit of delaying when the Holy Spirit speaks, we are in danger of hardening our hearts. That is not the right way of the Christian life.

We often hear people say things like, “Oh, God is dealing with me” or “You know, God has been speaking to me about that” or, “You know, the Lord has really been nudging me in that direction”, etc, but they do nothing about what they have heard from the Lord. Why then do we not move in obedience to the Lord? Why do we say things like that but do nothing about it? Might it be because He is not truly the Lord of our lives? We need to ask ourselves, is He truly the master? Why do we say things like that if He truly is the master of our lives? You say, “God

has been wanting me to step out and...”, well, why haven't you? We need to learn to be responsive to the voice of the Holy Spirit if we are going to stay on fire.

Last year after the pastor’s retreat in Queenstown I and Angie drove to a place, a small beautiful lake where most people did not know about. When we got there, it was as if God was inviting us to sit with Him for a while.

At that moment, I had to make a choice: should I ignore the Spirit’s prompting and explore the place, or should I accept His invitation and stop.

I decided to listen, I sat down on the mat we have prepared. My first response to God was to stop doing what I was doing and be still. But the invitation from God to stop wasn’t simply about stopping. There was more He wanted.

As we sat there, it seemed to me that every bird chirp and leaf rustle was magnified in my ears. My heart was warm with wonder. God’s deeper invitation seemed to be: “Sit with me, and let my love restore you.”

In that place, I was strengthened and felt God’s love in a stronger way. It was a powerful moment in my life and in my walk with God.

Responding with head, heart, and hands

People normally would think when we respond we are to respond with our body, but through moments like this one, I have come to realise that God is often inviting me to respond with more than my behaviour.

I have found it helpful to consider that my thoughts (my head), emotions (my heart), and actions (my hands) are all part of my being. These are deeply integrated, but reflecting on them separately helps me respond holistically to God. The point is not to artificially categorise them but to connect more fully with the Holy Spirit.

Your head: Very often, the Holy Spirit is working to change your thinking. Perhaps there is a lie about yourself, God, or the world that you need to let go of. Perhaps there is some new truth to reflect on and bring into your library of faith.

Your heart: Jesus’ most common question was “What do you want?” He understands that your affections drive your actions, at least as often as your rationality.

As I’ve spent more time reflecting on my heart, I have been surprised by how often God is inviting an emotional response from me. Often, He invites me to exercise gratitude, or share in His sorrow, or to linger in His love, or be restored by His delight.

Your hands: Finally, the place that often seems like a starting point: What is the Holy Spirit leading you to do? For example,

- Might he be inviting you to extend an apology or to give forgiveness?
- Perhaps He is inviting you to be present in some brokenness?
- Or to pursue something beautiful?

Commented [MOU1]: I am unsure as to what it is that you wanted to convey here.

Commented [DY2R1]: In your brokenness

By breaking it up like this and reflecting on how you might respond to God with your head, heart, and hands, you can respond more holistically to the Holy Spirit.

Of course, before responding, we need to first pause to let the Spirit help you hear God's voice.

Then remember the true story of being loved by God.

Commented [MOU3]: These two paragraphs need to be better connected. The points you are making seem to be rather disjointed.

7. Surround yourself with others who are on fire for the Lord

1 Corinthians 15:33

³³ Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

You want to stay on fire for the Lord? Then you must surround yourself with others who burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Every church will have some troubled people. There is no church that is completely made up of perfect people, but there are people in the church who will burn with the fire of the Lord.

The best way to stay on fire for God is be around people who are zealous for God.

Fire is contagious. You can catch the fire simply just by being near someone who enthusiastically serves God. If you hang out with people who are always talking about reaching out to the lost and about worshiping God, you will be motivated to act like they do.

On the other hand, if you keep company with people who use bad language and watch unpleasant movies, you will begin to imitate them. Your life will become a reflection of the people you spend time with.

Do you want to be around people who light up your fire or who weaken your fire? You must make a choice!

But in saying this, I also believe that God will remove people who are bad influences from your life. I am not talking about disconnecting from everyone who is struggling because there are people who preach like that, but I don't really like that sort of a message. There are people who says, "Don't hang around people with the loser's mindset or don't hang around with negative people". I understand what they mean, but if they are not affecting you, then it might be good to stay around them so that you can influence them positively for the Lord. Of course, don't ever give anybody who has such a mindset any place of influence in your life, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't have them around.

Hebrews 10:23-25

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Sadly, today we are seeing a lot of Christians not attending church. I understand people have their reasons and I want to be sensitive to the people who think that way, but we are not to give up meeting together.

I understand that we are dealing with a very real issue. You might have been hurt by someone. I understand that there are real threats out there, but at what point are you going to start living your life again? No longer bound by sorrow and bitterness but live a life of freedom.

We should realize that not attending church is not going to stop the possibility of facing danger or solve the problem with people who we are at odds with. So, we must choose to meet with other Christians. There are some who say, "Oh I will just attend an online ministry" but when you isolate yourself like that, it is very dangerous for you, because you can become an easy target for the enemy.

We know what Scripture says, and the Holy Spirit would not tell His people something that is different from what is in the Scriptures. Either the Holy Spirit said don't gather or the Holy Spirit said gather together. He would not tell different preachers different things. And you know what? I know the Holy Spirit wants us to meet with other Christians, I know that, not just from the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to me, but through His word.

This phrase, "not giving up" could mean that there might be a sense of struggle. Becoming lazy or being accustomed to not attending church can be the force that try to stop you coming to church also. Yes, it does need effort, it means we can't sleep in. Yes, it requires sacrifice as it means we miss the opportunity to do what you would like to do, but it all worth it, because in verse 23, it talks about the fact that we need to hold fast to hope without doubting. What is a better place than churches or cell groups to do that? It is in these places that our fire is stirred up and kept burning.

I will say it again, we must gather with the Lord's people who are on fire if we are going to stay on fire in the last days. We need to be with people who are committed, who are sold out to Him, and who are active, not passive in God's service. Things are changing, the end is drawing near. And as we draw nearer to the end days we must not neglect our meeting together.

Allow me to remind you of how we can stay on fire for the Lord. Number 1, Live a lifestyle of repentance. Number 2, Protect your purity. Number 3, Evangelise and serve. Number 4, Cling to Jesus. Number 5, Stay in the word. Number six, Have an immediate response. Number 7, Surround yourself with others who burn too.

I pray that the Holy Spirit would begin to speak to us. His word act like a mirror in which we can see our spiritual reflection. May the Lord help us not just to be hearers of God's word but also that we would be doers of the word. Say it with me, say, "Holy Spirit make me a doer of the word."

I pray that God's anointing would flow. May His power and His presence be made known to us. May God help us to steward that fire, to sustain, to protect that which God has entrusted to us.