

A Church On Fire

2 Chronicles 7:1-3

Scripture Text: 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:”

Introduction:

“Many of us love an open fireplace. The flickering light, the crackle of fire, the smell of burning wood, the heat on a cold night. God has always had His fireplaces. The burning bush, the brazen altar of the tabernacle, Mount Carmel, and His Pentecost people. The only fireplaces He has today in all the world are the hearts of His people.... We are to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The fire of the Holy Spirit is to burn in the fireplaces of our own hearts.”

“There is nothing more pathetic than a drowsy and lethargic church. When a church loses its fervor for Christ, it ceases to be an organism and becomes merely an organization. Lacking the spiritual strength to operate as a true church for God, ... (it) will rely more and more upon mechanics and machinery.

“Our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb. 12:29), and He desires to have, and will have a church that is “on fire” with His Divine Presence and Power.

Fire consumes -- burns out the sinful and unnecessary “stuff” in our lives.

Fire purifies -- makes us clean and holy before God.

Fire prepares (as in food) -- makes us tasteful and pleasant to each other.

Fire cheers -- when we are caught in the cold grip of despair and discouragement, He cheers us on to victory.

Fire softens -- the Holy Spirit softens the heart of the sinner and he repents.

Fire unites -- (as in uniting different kinds of metals) the Holy Spirit brings unity to the people of God.

Fire empowers -- “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” (Acts 1:8).

I. A Church On Fire Will Fast And Pray.

A. It will see the need and the value of earnestly seeking God with the whole heart.

1 Cor. 7:5 that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer;

1. Reward is promised.

Matthew 6:17-18 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;[18] That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

2. Examples.

a. Moses received the Ten Commandments (Ex. 34:28).

b. Elijah received direction from the Lord (1 Kgs. 19:8).

c. Hezekiah received healing for his body.

B. When we are on fire for God, we will respond to the needs of our day with prayer and fasting.

II. A Church On Fire Will Be Uncomfortable In The World.

1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

B. The fire of God burning in the heart will burn away our desire for the

things of this world.

2 Tim. 2:4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

III. A Church On Fire Will Care For Souls.

A. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because He cared for their souls.

1. Psa. 142:4 ...no man cared for my soul.

B. The early church was on fire and

Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.

IV. A Church On Fire Accomplishes Great Things For God.

A. The power of God is manifested in many ways to His glory.

1. People Getting Saved

2. People Getting Right

a. With God

b. With Each Other

3. Prayers Answered