

Where's the Fire?

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[0:00] I'm driving down the road and suddenly I hear the wailing siren behind me and I see the lights flashing in the rear view mirror.

! I pull over and I see the fire engine come racing past. And I wonder that natural question that we all can ask, where's the fire?

We're heading home and we ask that question, where's the fire? Then we see ahead the road filled with smoke and we wonder, where's the fire?

That happened to me not that long ago when there was some bushfires and it's scary, doesn't it?

You wonder, where is that fire? And when you hear of a fire it gets your attention, doesn't it?

It makes you wake up. You wonder, where is all that smoke coming from? And you hope it's not your house burning down. We're going to talk a bit about fire today. Fire. And about people getting fired up. Fired up.

[1:19] We wonder at times what it is that gets people fired up. To find out this, sometimes we might ask a question like this. What is it that you are passionate about?

People can get fired up. Passionate. Fired up about all kinds of things. Some people get all passionate about a footy team. A football team.

They're so passionate, they can get obsessed with their team. They've got to get the latest beanie, the latest trappings, the latest scarves, the latest blazers and shirts.

And it means everything to them. Everything to them. And they will be barracking for their team.

Rain, hail, sleet or shine. And they will drive hundreds of kilometres to go and barrack for their team.

And spend great expense. Because there's a fire there. And this recent footy tragedy that we've heard about in the news, it hits many footy fans hard.

[2:22] It hits them hardest. It's almost like they've lost a member of their family or a close friend. We see that as we drive around, you see some displaying their scarves in a kind of commemoration.

There's a certain passion there. A certain passion. A certain fire, as it were. Some folk can get passionate about the latest Hollywood movie. They just can't stop talking about it. They want to rave on about it.

And all the special effects. And who's starring in it. And some of the theme, the story behind it.

Because it's important to them. They're fired up. Fired up with a passion.

Passion can drive people to do amazing things. When you have a passion, it motivates you, doesn't it? It motivates you. To love. To serve. To spend. And be spent.

Look at the champion athletes that make it to the upper echelon. They're fired up to train. They get out of bed early in the morning and they train right through spending many hours, through many days of training. To keep on improving.

[3:31] In that elusive object to improve on their personal best. You know, you see some people when they go jogging, don't they? They've got these little bands around their arms and they, you know, pair along and they think, Whoa! I've got my personal best today.

I'm going to see if I can get better tomorrow and better the day after. I just want to improve on my personal best. Why? Why do they do this?

It's because they want to. They want to. Not because they have to. They have a fire. They have a passion that makes them want to. Where's the fire?

What about spiritually speaking now? What about spiritually speaking now? Do you strive to improve on your personal best? Your personal best.

Do you serve God because you want to? There's a fire in your bones. You want to serve God. You want to please God with your life. And when you become a Christian, it's like something happens on the inside of you.

[4:37] A new motive, a new purpose, a new fire in your belly as it were. And sometimes it's good for us as Christian people for some honest self-reflection.

Some honest self-evaluation. What am I passionate about? Am I on fire for God? Am I? When was the last time you were on fire for God? Have you ever been on fire for God? We can all look back at times when, well, my personal best was a bit better than it is right now as it were. And in case you haven't noticed in this land, this fair land of Australia, there's a famine in the land. A famine. And our easy going Aussie culture is pretty dry and dead towards God. And it gets cold and lifeless in this land. This dry land. And it tends to rub off on you and me. Let's face it. Let's be honest. It can be hard to be on fire for God in Australia.

[5:47] It's too easy, isn't it? In this culture. This culture that is bent on mocking Him. In this land where those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are daily scorned and hated.

And the media feeds that. And Bible preaching churches are not generally crowded with worshippers. For some sadly deceived people in our land, they are so easily caught up in popular culture that has no fear of God before their eyes.

It affects us. It affects me. It influences us, doesn't it? This culture. Not that the culture per se is necessarily bad all the time.

But there's that general trend, that general influence that is not good. And so we see that we're in a land that mocks God. They mock Him while at the same time denying He exists.

Kind of weird, isn't it? I know people like that. They call themselves atheists and yet they're constantly mocking God. It's weird. There's something wrong in their head and in their heart.

[6:58] And in the church world also we could pose the question, where is the fire? Where is it? Who seeks after the face of God?

Where's the fire? Where's it gone? Where's it gone? I want to urge you today to get fired up. Stop chilling out and get fired up.

Amen? Get fired up. God wants our fire burning. What does the Bible say about fire? It's right through. It's a theme through the word.

Fire. We see fire. Fire. It often symbolizes God's presence with His people. When Moses met with God at the burning bush, it was just a bush, but it was burning.

And God was there as a flaming fire. In Exodus 3, verse 2 it reads, The angel of the Lord appeared unto him, unto Moses, in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush.

[7:57] And he looked, and behold, the bush burnt with fire, and the bush was not consumed. Moses met God as a flame of fire in the burning bush.

And then at Mount Sinai, the presence of God came again upon the mountain in Exodus 19, verse 18. We read, And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire.

And the smoke thereof ascended, as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. God met with His people on the mount, symbolized by fire.

As Solomon dedicated the temple in 2 Chronicles 7, Solomon prayed at the temple dedication, and the fire fell from heaven, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

It says in 2 Chronicles 7, verse 1, Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, and the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering, and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

[9:06] Wow! When Daniel caught a vision of the Lord, he saw God's throne, and he saw a fiery flame, and a river of fire coming forth.

Daniel 7, we read, from verse 9, I beheld, till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit. You could picture him as a Christophany, as an appearance of Christ, prior to His coming in Bethlehem.

His garment was as white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool. His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him.

Thousands, thousands ministered unto Him, and 10,000 times 10,000 stood before Him. The judgment seat was set, and the books were opened. The fire of God was evident there with Daniel too.

So we see, the point I'm making is that often through the scriptures we see fire as representing, as symbolizing God's presence with His people.

[10:11] What of our church today? I put it to you that we need the fire. We need the fire. A church without fire will fail.

A church without the fire of God will fail God. We must have the fire. We must pray and seek the fire of God. As it were, His overwhelming presence to lead, to guide, to fill us.

We must have the fire. And if we have lost it, we need to regain it. Brother, sister, if you feel like the fire isn't as bright as it used to be, your personal best is maybe, you've fallen quite a bit short of that. Regain the fire. Regain the fire. Regain it. Ask God to help you. Without the fire, we can all get a bit laid back and lazy. We can get cold and inactive. And when the fire goes out in the church, the church will die.

The church will die without the fire. It will sleep and slide and fail and fall away from God's plan and purpose for it. A church can get lukewarm. And we know what God's view of such a church is.

[11:22] As we see how the Lord Jesus rebuked such a church in the book of Revelation. Church, people of God, we can get slack.

I'm speaking of myself. This is the number one person I'm talking to today. That I can get slack. And it's not good when we get slack.

When we lose the zeal of God. And when the church, by and large, it seems, worldwide, it's lost its fire. There's a lot of talk about fire and revival and there's a lot of smoke machines, but there's not a lot of fire out there.

The church has lost its fire, I believe. And that's why we see lukewarm commitment, lukewarm service, lukewarm giving, lukewarm evangelism, lukewarm praying.

We must have the fire. We must seek God for a fresh touch, as it were, of that igniting of God's power, that igniting of God's glory.

[12:26] To be set ablaze as his people. Why do we need the fire? Let me look at fire just in a picture form again, just to illustrate the point. When we think of fire, what do we think of?

Fire does some things. Fire does some things. And I'll just list a few of those and talk and compare those spiritually speaking. One thing that fire does is that fire purifies.

Fire purifies. And the fire is found at the altar. It's on the altar.

When we come to the altar, there's a consuming that goes on. There's a burning up. And fire burns out the dross. I like to tell the story how I was at a place where there was smelting going on.

And there was this pouring out of this molten stream of metal. And it was purified by the heat. And so too, God wants us to be a pure people. To be purified.

[13:27] He wants the dross burnt up and got rid of. And the Bible says our God is a consuming fire. Our Lord is spoken of as one who examines metals and melts them.

Applying fire to purify the molten metals. We see in Malachi 3, for example, it reads, But who may abide the day of his coming? And he shall stand when he appeareth.

For he is like a refiner's fire. And like full of soap. It's like very strong soap. Like laundry soap. And he shall see it as a refiner, as a purifier of silver.

And he shall purify the sons of Levi. And purge them. Make them clean. Purify them. As gold, as silver. And that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Fire purifies. And God's fire burns up that which is unholy. We must get that on the altar, as it were. And lay out all on the altar.

[14:27] Don't hold anything back. We need the fire that purifies us. God does his work in us. There's a cleansing work. There's a purifying. You know, as a Christian, when you first become a Christian, it's just the start.

And gradually, things drop off you as you go through. You know, some people still hang on to things. It takes them a while to drop off. I know, with my dad, I think it took him a year to give up smoking, for example.

It dropped off him. It took a while. But God was working on him. And eventually, that was one thing that he felt before God. It wasn't something that was honouring to God. And it dropped off him. That's what happens when you become a Christian. It can take a while for some things to drop off. It's like you're getting purified. Now, smoking is just one example. There's many other things we could talk about, much more significant.

We need the fire that purifies. That's the point. And as God does his work in us, we can then be those pure vessels that are fit for the master's use. Fire purifies.

[15:32] Let me tell you a story. There was a bleak time back in history when the so-called Black Death wrecked havoc and destruction across the land.

In 1665, the residents of London were dying by the thousands as the bubonic plague spread from house to house because of the unsanitary conditions.

It was because of his uncleanness that the disease spread from one to another. And rats and fleas then spread the germs throughout the city. And almost 30,000 people died.

Almost one third of London's population at that time. And so the plague was so bad that the experts of this time say that the entire population of London would have died if it had not been checked.

On 2nd of September 1666, something happened. The Great Fire of London. It broke out and burnt throughout the city uncontrollably for five days.

[16:35] Most of the structures of medieval London were wooden and almost the entire city was reduced to ashes. But when the fire finally died, the people discovered that many of the rats and fleas had been killed in the fire.

And the epidemic of the Black Death was halted. The fire cleaned the city out of the impurity that was killing its people. The fire purified the place.

And we need the fire of God, as it were, to purify us. As we know God by faith, as we know the cleansing blood. As we know God purifies hearts by faith.

As we know the refiner's fire as he takes us through some things. Maybe some testing things. It's always pleasant being in the refiner's fire. I know there's some people going through some physical suffering at the moment who are with us.

And it's hard. It's hard going. When you're going through something that's tough. When you're going through some struggles in your family, in your health, in your situation at home.

[17:42] Maybe it's the refiner's fire. And you're going to get a better personal best as a result of it. You've got to go through the pain barrier like the athletes do, as it were.

And that refiner's fire, there's a purifying that happens in us. By God's power. And it happens as we burn up everything on the altar. Lay it on the altar.

God wants to purify us. He wants his people to be a people who want him, who need him, who rest on his working in them. And God might take you through the fire for that to happen.

So don't shy away, but trust him when you're going through it. Fire does some things. Fire purifies. Another thing that fire does is fire lights. Fire brings light.

And how in this world of darkness will this world of darkness see the light? It's through you and me. Ye are, ye plural, are the light of this world.

[18:40] God has called us to be lights in this world of darkness. To shine through us. And that means God wants us as his servants to be set ablaze. To be set on fire as a flame of fire.

In Hebrews 1 we read that he makes his angels, spirits and his ministers a flame of fire. A flame of fire. Who's feeling a bit hot? Yeah. Maybe we just need to turn that cooler down a bit.

Yeah. Or, yeah. But, you know, we want to be on fire, don't we? We want to be hot. Not cold. And we are all as ministers, as servants of God, set ablaze as lights in the world.

In Philippians 2 we read that we should be as sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. When there's fire, there's light.

You know, you go to the youth camp and there's a campfire and it lights up a place. And we should light up a place. Amen? As God's people, shouldn't we? We should be light.

[19:38] John the Baptist was called that in John 5. It says he was a burning and shining light. And you're willing to rejoice in his light for

a season. That's what we're meant to be, shining brightly, ever brighter for God.

And bringing God's light to this darkened world in which we live. Now, let this little light shine.

There's truth to that song. So God purifies rather, the fire purifies, the fire lights.

And another thing about fire, and this one's not so nice. Fire kills. Fire kills. It's not wise to play with fire. Fire can be deadly.

He's got those little kids, you can watch them around the matches. You know, fire kills. You don't play with matches, kids. Or adults. 1 Kings, we read that Elijah called for a test between the prophets of Baal and the Lord God.

And the prophets of Baal, they were there jumping and diving and slashing and cutting and wailing and whining and screeching and going crazy.

[20:43] They were going absolutely nuts for their God. A bit like some of these footy fans you see sometimes, isn't they? They just go raving loonies. These prophets of Baal.

Going through all the motions of religion. But they didn't have the fire. They didn't have the fire. This is 1 Kings 18. Where there's that contest. Elijah and the prophets of Baal.

The contest was that the one who answers by fire, he is God. And so Elijah poured on the water on his offering. And it seemed like, wow, that doesn't make sense.

But he wanted to show that God was greater than anything else. And so the fire of the Lord fell. And it consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood and the stones and the dust.

And it licked up the water from the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and they said, The Lord, he is the God. The Lord, he is the God.

[21:44] And Elijah said unto them, take the prophets of Baal. Let not one of them escape. And they took them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slew them there. He killed the prophets of Baal.

He didn't say let's have a ministers for eternal or an ecumenical meeting with these guys. He said, no, kill them. Kill them. The prophets of Baal, they had no prayer, no power.

Sorry, they had prayer but no power. They had fervour but no fire. They had an altar but a God who was absent. And Elijah did what he had to do to kill the prophets of Baal.

He had to kill them. And fire kills. The carnal must be put to death in us, in you and me. There was a fiery old revival preacher called Peter Cartwright years ago who was a preacher who was known for telling it like it is.

And he was preaching one time near Washington DC and the people of his church had heard that the president of the time, Andrew Jackson, was going to be there. Coming to visit.

[22:48] And they pulled Cartwright aside and they said, listen Peter, the president is going to be here on Sunday. And we know that sometimes you can get a bit kind of offensive. So would you tone it down?

Tone it down. We don't want to upset the president. So Peter got up in his pulpit the next Sunday and his first three sentences were these. I understand that the president of the United States is here.

Andrew Jackson. And I've been asked to be guarded in my remarks. Andrew Jackson will go to hell if he doesn't repent. He was straight out, straight shooting.

The church was appalled. But when the worship was over, Andrew Jackson grabbed the preacher's hand and shook it and said, Sir, if I had an army of men like you, I could whip the world.

Whip the world. We cannot tone it down. We dare not tone it down. If anything, we need to ramp it up. Ramp it up. This is no time to pussyfoot around. We must expose sin and confront error with truth.

[23:53] We need straight shooting preaching. We need that. Preaching that pulls no punches. Hits hard and says it like it is. Fire kills. The prophets of Baal had to be put to death.

The president's pride had to be put to death. Some things have to die. Some things need to die in you and me. Some things need to be killed. The old fleshly man has to die.

You know, every once in a while the old Andrew Craig pops up his head. And I've got to give him a bit of a thump or two. The worldly appetites need to be killed.

Paul relates how he was crucified with Christ. As a believer, we want the Lord to put to death the old sinner man. The old sinful nature. And bring to life the new man alive in Christ.

Living for him. Galatians 5:24 it says, And they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. And we need that. I need that. To die to the flesh. To die to the self.

[24:57] To die to the world and its attractions. It's time to get fired up. Isn't it? Isn't it about time? When you are truly on the altar, you are a living sacrifice.

And you will gladly see God put some things to death. So that you can live more strongly to him. When you truly will get on fire for God, you will step outside of the comfort zone.

You won't be afraid to tell it like it is. So we've seen. Fire purifies. Fire lights. Fire kills. Also fire warms. Fire gives warmth. Who likes to cosy up to a roaring log fire on a cold winter's night?

Who's got the log fire at home? Oh, I have to come and see you lady. On one of those cold winter's nights, I'll come and pay you a visit. It's just nice to cosy up to that roaring log fire, isn't it?

Or maybe that campfire at the campsite. When it's a cold night, just to get around the fire and get warm. Fire warms us up. It did so for Peter as he warmed himself at the fire.

[26:01] But he was in the wrong company there. Mark 14 says he warmed himself at the fire. Then he denied Christ. He got too cosy with the worldly company. A fire is something we want to get around.

We want to get warm. And as an on fire Christian, there should be something about us that there's a warmth there. There's a warmth there to our faith. There's a glow there.

There's a joy within. There's a heart overflowing. And it shows. And others will be drawn to you. To want this same saviour. To want this new life.

That new hand. It's God's plan for us to be a warm Christian. I want to be on fire for God. I trust you too have that same deep desire.

To be on fire for God. On fire. So much that others will want that fire as well. So much that our cold hearts will glow and burn with his love.

[27:04] And be those burning and shining lights in this world for his glory. That the fire of God will fill us. Touch us and warm us. And warm others through us.

And so as we gather with other like-minded Christians too. We'll get around people who are warm. We'll get around people who have that warmth. That same devotion. That same desire.

That same love. And there will be a warmth of fellowship as we get around such people. You know I was saddened to hear a friend saying that they got drawn away to smoke some marijuana.

With someone that was nearby. I thought you know I wouldn't know where to get the marijuana around here. You don't hang around the people that can tell you where the marijuana is. You don't hang around them do you?

I mean you might want to go and witness to them. But you don't hang around them such that oh I know they've got drugs down on that corner there. I'm going to go and get some when I'm tempted to.

[28:00] If you walk with foolish people you'll be unwise. You walk with people who are God's people. Walk with people that are warm towards God. Not those who are cold towards him.

And that's not to say we divide ourselves off from them. But that we are an influence on them. Not them being an influence on us. That's the point. And so the fire of God as it were is a warmth to us as God's people.

And we want to gather around where we can warm each other up and encourage one another.

There's that picture as some have put it of describing the importance of fellowship. That it's when Christians gather together they can be stronger together.

You know there's the picture told of how there's a log fire. And if you take one of the logs out of the fire and put it on the cold floor it starts to fizzle out.

And it just peters out. But you put it back where the logs are burning and the flame will grow. And it will not go out. And it's like that with fellowship.

[29:02] As we're around God's people. As you make friends with God's children. That he will help encourage you. And there will be a warmth of fellowship when that happens. And it will help keep the fire going. So we

see fire purifies.

Fire lights. Fire kills. There's a warmth to fire. And another one is fire spreads. Fire spreads. You know when you get fired up for God.

There's going to be an effect. There's going to be a spreading of your faith. It's contagious. In a good way. You know it's a contagion that is a good contagion.

Something that's you want to spread this. And others will be blessed as you do that. And we can't keep this message to ourselves. It's too important. Fire has this characteristic of spreading.

As it can get passed on. You know go out into the forest. And strike a match. And before you know it. There's a bush fire. There's a raging blaze goes on. Fire can spread.

[30:04] You know the great fire of London was started when someone knocked a lamp over. And mass destruction. And as an on fire church. We want to have a spreading influence.

That's why we've got trunks. That's why we've got people that God is using. To give out trunks. And to go witnessing to people. Publicly. And leaflet dropping.

There's different ways we can all spread the message. Being on fire church. That's got a spreading. Far reaching effect. We don't want to keep this message to ourselves. It's too important. And you know.

Something might actually happen. And we might lose some good people from this church. We might lose some good people from this church. Because God might actually send them.

As missionaries to other places. Amen. And that's what happened to Adam and Bethany. They got so fired up.

[31:03] They didn't want to stay in the USA today. They wanted to come and bless us right here. The fire spread. There was a spreading effect. And you know. I'd like to think that we can have a dramatic influence.

On this city. On this state. On this nation. On this world for God. As the fire spreads. That's what God wants for us. Isn't it? To be reaching out. To pray.

To be that kind of people. Not ashamed. To stand for God. To stand for the right. To stand for God. To stand for the right. To stand for God. To stand for the right.

And when you're on fire for God. You'll get so in love with Jesus. That you can't contain it. People in your workplace will think. He's one of those. They'll know.

They'll know who you are. Let's pray that we be such a people. Not ashamed. Not ashamed. On fire. And you will be unstoppable.

[31:59] Unstoppable. Unstoppable. No little offence is going to stop you. No disagreement is going to hinder you. No hardship will deter you. When you're on fire, wild horses wouldn't drag you away.

Because you're on fire. On fire. On fire for God. Where's the fire? How do we get the fire? Let me try and answer that. Who's ever suffered from heartburn? Heartburn.

You know, there's a good kind of heartburn. It's called holy heartburn. Holy heartburn. A good kind of heartburn. In fact, I pray that this sermon will give you some heartburn today.

God wants to set our hearts on fire. To set us ablaze from within. From the inside out. For his glory. The fire should be in our hearts.

And how does it get there? In Luke 24, some disciples were walking with our Lord. Our risen Lord. In Luke 24, 32. And they said one to another. Afterwards, did not our heart burn within us?

[33:02] While he talked with us. By the way. While he opened to us the scriptures. Did not our heart burn within us? Holy heartburn. That's what we need. As the Lord opens the scriptures to us.

As we hear his voice in his word. There's a burning that goes on within our hearts. God talks to us. His voice is here. Here in his word. And the word of God is spoken of as a fire in our bones.

Jeremiah the prophet in verse 9 of chapter 20 says. Then I said, I will not make mention of him. Nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in me. In mine heart as a burning fire.

Shut up in my bones. And I was weary with forbearing. And I could not stay. The word was like a burning fire. Shut up in his bones. Hallelujah. His word is described as like a fire.

Jeremiah goes on in chapter 23 of how is not my word like as a fire. All around us are red flags today.

[34:03] We see this kind of term red flags. Where we see things are starting to heat up in the world situation. And we see secular values being imposed on us.

And ultimately they will be imposed on us. Why is there so much sin? Churches all around us don't seem to care what the Bible says.

They just seem to go through the motions. You know, it's astonishing what's going on. Saw Justin Bieber with his weird t-shirt.

And you just think, what is going on? And he's in the Hillsong Conference. You think, what is going on? Church is going through the motions. And you wonder, why is this going on?

I pray for Justin Bieber. I hope he gets saved. It would be wonderful. Apathy abounds. There's an astonishing ignorance of Bible doctrine.

[35:03] And many Christians don't seem to understand what is sinful. They seem uncaring about offending a holy God. We've lost our way, people. Where's the fire? We've lost our discernment.

We've lost our modesty. We've lost sound judgment. We've lost the fire. We've lost the Bible. How do we regain the fire? It's by regaining the Word. Regaining the Word.

Now, there was a time back in history when the Word was lost. And they had to scratch around and find where it was hidden. And when they found it, there was revival. There was revival when they found the Word of God.

And we need the Word implanted in our hearts. Psalm 119, Why is there so much sin? I might not sin against them.

Why is there so much sin? Maybe we don't have enough hiding of the Word in our heart. We must stand fast with the Word of God. It's the message we must deliver. We desperately need the Bible.

[36:03] God's holy Word. And we need to hide it in our hearts. People today, I urge you to do this. As a young Christian, I know I've said this numbers of times, that as a young Christian, one of the most important things that I did was a Bible teacher encouraged me to memorise Bible verses.

And he gave me a list of them. I think there's a hundred to start with. And he gave me this list. And it was the most important thing that I can, looking back as a growing Christian, one of the most important things that I did.

Amen. And I want to encourage you. I can give you a suggested list of Bible verses to memorise if you'd like that. Just come and see me later. And it's a simple way of doing this.

Just write the Bible verse on a little card. Keep it in your pocket. When you've got those spare moments, look at it, read it, then recite it and check and recite it and recite it until you don't need to look at the card anymore because it's in you.

It's in you. The Word of God. And it's amazing how quickly you can, with just a little bit of effort, memorise some important Bible verses that then you can use with others as you can help others and apply it in your life.

[37:15] We need the Word. We need the Word. It's that fire in our bones. It's the Word of God. It's as He speaks to us, there's a burning in our heart. That holy heartburn.

And as we're a faithful Bible-believing church, a Bible-preaching church, we'll have that preaching that stirs us, unsettles us, that spurs us on. Isaiah 30 tells of a time where there's rebellious people. They will not hear the Word of God. They say to the preachers, prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things. We don't want to be like that. I'd rather offend than lie to you.

In the midst of a depraved, hell-bound world, we are witnessing the destruction of a generation.

We're seeing a destruction going on, the destruction of morality, the destruction of marriage.

And Christianity just seems to have been diluted such that it's scarcely Christianity anymore. The sacredness of marriage has been soiled and fouled up and made a mockery of.

[38:19] Marriage has been so dishonoured and degraded. I don't want to get married by the government. If that's what marriage by the government is, I don't want it. I want to be married before God in a holy covenant with the spouse of my life, with the one who I commit my life to before God.

Marriage has been desecrated and dishonoured and degraded by this world we live in. And I firmly believe we're being desensitised every day to sin. Souls are going to hell and it seems like no one cares.

No one cares. The gospel has been diluted and lost. Truth is abandoned and trashed everywhere. Christianity has become a laughingstock. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Will we stand faithful? Will you be fired up? I pray you get some holy heartburn this morning. I pray that you'll get fired up for God. Fired up to where you were. Fired up more than you ever were. Bettering your personal best day by day by day for God's glory, not for your vaunting of it, but that you will achieve your personal best today.

[39:29] And tomorrow you'll do better still. Better still. And the faithful will be such a people they will not bow down to Baal. How about you today? We need a reality check.

Are we fired up or fizzled out? It's time to call people back to the true God. And may the fire fall on us as it fell in Elijah's day.

Where's the fire? Of course there's a danger of false fire. We don't want that either. Whether some men in the Bible in Leviticus 10 they manufactured some false fire.

You know, they didn't wait for God or follow God's direction. They wanted some strange fire manufactured by men. It was out of order. It was the wrong time. It was the wrong method. It was the wrong fire.

It wasn't the fire taken off the altar. We need the right fire. You know, there's people that have got zeal without knowledge. We don't want that kind of zeal. We want zeal with knowledge. With God's word.

[40:25] And so we recognise there's a false substitute, corrupt kind of Christianity. We want to avoid that. And seek after the real. Seek after the real thing. We need the real.

We need to get real. It's time to stir up. Brothers and sisters, I want to encourage you today. This is not to put you down, to make you think, oh, here he goes again. I'm going to leave church and I'm going to feel like a total failure.

No. It's about your personal best. You can do better. I can do better. And I know you can do better. I've got confidence that you can do better. So this is to encourage you to aspire to better.

To repair the altar that's broken down. Where's the fire? We will find it when we get real with God. When we love Jesus more than anything else. Where's the fire?

It's when Elijah prayed the fire came. It's when Solomon prayed the fire came. It's as Moses communed with God the fire came. It's in the upper room at Pentecost as the people with one accord and in one place praying.

[41:26] And God showed up in fiery tongues sitting on each of them. Where's the fire today? It's where the people are praying. It's where they're depending on God. It's where the weeping and the travail is.

It's when we get out of our comfortable queues. It's when we give out from the heart and live fully for the Lord. As we go out after souls and care not about the cost. Let me quickly recap where we've covered.

Fire purifies. Fire kills, fire warms, fire spreads but also fire dies. A fire can get snuffed out. How is your fire today?

Are you fired up or fizzled out? Some Christians can act more like fire extinguishers. Oh there's a Christian on fire let me go and gossip to them. Let me go and tell them something bad about the church.

Let me put that fire out they're getting a bit too hot for God. They get the fire extinguisher and they quench the spirit. Oh you're getting a bit too radical there. Just settle down there. You're giving out too many tracks.

[42:27] You're getting too excited in the meetings. You're saying too many amens in the meetings. You know settle down a bit there. Cool down. Cool it off. Chill out. Quenching the spirit.

We want to avoid that don't we? We don't want to quench the spirit. We don't want to be half-hearted. We want to be full-hearted. We don't want coldness and deadness. We want life. Fire.

Fire. Fire. What is it that's stopping you?

Stopping me. Someone has said a preacher of old time said worldliness is anything that curls my affections towards God and draws my heart away from God.

Worldliness is anything that curls my affection towards God and draws my heart away from God. what is it for you that you could put in that sentence?

Something that's cooling your affections towards God. You know as a young man growing up I had this idol where I wanted to be a pilot and I was just obsessed with it.

[43:36] I had books and books and books about planes I had flying lessons from someone and I was all bent on that and it was just an obsession for me. and it wasn't particularly a sinful thing but it became something that was curling my affection towards God and I had to say no I'm going to get rid of it.

And I got rid of my collection of all sorts of things I have a whole superior collector of all sorts of things and just got rid of it just took it down to the op shop and just got rid of it because it was curling my affection towards God and whatever it be for you there might be some things you've got to put on the altar and say it's taking me away from God it's taking me away from what God wants me to do and I encourage you today there's hope for you there's hope for me to stay on fire to keep the fire burning in your life Romans 12 it says not slothful in business fervent in spirit serving the Lord we want to burn for God don't we not like a fire cracker that's a big lot of noise and then fizzling out but a fervency in spirit that stays the distance a zeal for serving God to fire up but fire means fuel to be fueled up we need the word keep yourself in the word and press on in prayer get on fire for

God stoke the fire rekindle it these are desperate days a world hurtling towards hell a church swallowed up in apostasy masses seem like lambings going to their destruction and the world is heading helter skelter to destruction God wants our fire to be burning ever brighter Leviticus 6 it says the fire keep it burning keep it burning it shall not be put out fire dies but we can stop it going out what's stopping your fire today don't let discouragement put the fire out don't let the busyness of life put the fire out don't let your excuses put the fire out don't let unforgiveness put the fire out don't let bitterness put the fire out don't let worldly desires put the fire out don't let anything put the fire out but rather get re-fire today God wants his church on fire on fire fervent fervent in spirit fervent in prayer fervent in love

How can we get the fire of God? Pray. O Lord, let the fire fall. Fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Hear His call. Let Him fill you. Empower you with His gifts.

In 2 Timothy 1, we read how the Spirit of God is the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. And Paul says, stir it up. Stir it up.

[46:30] In other words, fan it into flame. Get the bellows out and get some oxygen in that fire and let's stir it up. Fan it into flame. He's talking about the gift of God which is in you.

Stir it up, he says. So let's pray that God will help us stir it up today. Be stirred. Be stirred up in a good way. I like to be a stirrer in a good way. Provoke unto love and to good works.

And let's stand resolutely in this bitter fight against the hosts of hell. Let's not hold back. Let's pull out all the stops. Let's get that fire roaring and raging as an inferno for God's glory.

Let's get hungry for God. On fire for God. And to be that church, a church on fire that preaches the Word and lives the Word. It's not just words.

It's real. It's lived down. And to be that people. Man of God. Woman of God. That you will rise up and honour Him. And be set on fire.

[47:32] And ignite others too. It spreads. You might affect some people this week ahead. Wouldn't that be good? Amen. That you are so on fire for God that you rub shoulders with someone and the spontaneous combustion.

Hallelujah. Wow. I didn't realise that could happen. The spontaneous combustion. As you influence others around you, you'll set others on fire for God.

And so where's the fire today? What happened to it? Now I'd like to think when I'm coming to church next time that I'll see a fire ahead.

As it were, spiritually speaking, as it were, the fire engine will be racing past me to get ahead of me to this place to be here before I'm here. Because the church will be on fire.

