

Climate Change - and the Fire of God

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[0 : 00] These are desperate times. I want to tell you this morning I do believe there is a dangerous! threat of climate change. Climate change. I know it's been said by one of our former Prime! Ministers, it's the greatest threat to humanity, climate change. I want to tell you there is a real climate change. I've seen it in my own lifetime. I believe we are seeing an ever more gloomy spiritual climate. Amen? A gloomy spiritual climate. And I put to you there's a dangerous spiritual climate forecast ahead. What lies ahead? What lies ahead of us? I tell you it's looking like it's going to be very dry. Very dry. Spiritually dry. In this driest continent, this driest state, this driest nation. And ever drier it will be. Colder, drier, gloomier, darker towards spiritual things. A spiritual climate change. And it's like we're living in a valley, isn't it? A valley of dry bones. Dry bones. You know, sometimes in the backyard we pick up the odd dry bone. An old sheep or kangaroo or whatever has passed away and you just kick it along the ground. That little piece of bone. Little hip bone or knee bone or ankle bone, whatever it be. It's just a bone. Dry bones. Spiritually, Australia is like a valley like that, isn't it? A bleached, dead landscape. Dry, dry as a valley of dry, dry bones. And Ezekiel saw that in a vision. He saw, he looked out and he saw this valley of dry, parched, bleached bones. Parched bones. And then yet he saw something change. There was a spiritual climate change. A good one. In Ezekiel's day. And he saw those dry bones come back to life.

And the knee bone was connected to the leg bone. And the leg bone was connected to the foot bone. And they all came together. And they rose up. A mighty army. As God put the sinew and the flesh back on them. And they rose up a mighty army. A reviving of the once dead. Dead. Ezekiel saw that. A coming back to life. And I believe God that we can see that in our time. In our day. In our lives. In our world. In our city. In our time. What will it take?

A stirring up. A stirring up. Don't you love to be stirred? To be stirred up. To be stirred up. God wants us to be stirred up. In a good way. A good kind of stirring. God wants you to be a good kind of stirrer. So you provoke one another. To love. You provoke one another.

To good works. That's a good kind of stirring up, isn't it? That's what we should have when we fellowship. We should get stirred up. Provoked. In a good way. What will it take? For this coming back to life. A stirring up. A stirring up. Those dry dead bones had to be stirred up.

[3 : 23] And a stirring has to happen as the breath of God breathed on those bones. Life came back in to those dead bodies. Those dead bones. And the sleeping giant that is the church of God today. Can be roused and revived. Made alive again. Awoken from spiritual slumber. And set back on its feet again. Now I was at the back of our place lately just tending a fire. Yesterday we were tending a fire. I should have been doing my sermon preparation. I shouldn't leave it so late really. And I was at the back of our place in the backyard. This little burning pile we have. And we have the last days of the burning season where I am. Where you can burn off some of your old garden waste. And we had some old burnt pieces of wood. Some dry green waste that we had gathered. And Julie used her girl guide training. She got her a match out and she lit the fire. And mind you, I know Brother Peter has got a much better way with his flint. Lots have. If I was out in the back of beyond and had to light a fire,

I'd like Peter with me. Peter O'Shea because he's got a flint. And it's just boom, just amazing to watch how it happens. We saw that at the youth meeting one night there. And he lit this bonfire from just striking this flint. But Julie lit the fire. She struck a match and she lit the fire to this pile. And whoosh! It caught fire. But then after a time, it died down. It started to die down. It just seemed to smoulder for a time. Just smoke. Lots of smoke. Until the wind came. The wind came and stirred it up. The wind came and stirred it up and revived that fire again. And it caught a flame again. It caught a fire again. And this is a picture we see Paul paints for us. He paints for young Timothy here in 2 Timothy 1. 2 Timothy 1 verse 6. Paul paints this picture of a spiritual life and of a firing up again. And 2 Timothy 1 verse 6. Paul says to Timothy, Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of

God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. I told Timothy, stir it up. Stir up the gift of God for you. The gift that God has given you. And God has not given you the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Here it says, stir up the gift. It's got a sense of fan it into flame. You know, just fan that gift into flame. Stir it up, Peter. Stir it up, Paul. Stir it up, Timothy. That's what he was saying. Peter was saying, sorry, Paul was saying, stir it up, Timothy. Stir it up. Fan it into flame. And my encouragement to you today, this morning, is fire up for God. Fire up. I'd like you to be set on fire. I'd like you to be burning brightly for God and his glory. To stir up the gift of God that is in you. So my encouragement to you is that. Fan it into flame. That spiritual life you have. That gift he's given you. Salvation. His gracious gift of his saving love. That inner fire. That you know him. That spark that you have. Let it be fanned into flame. And in the context, Paul is urging Timothy, don't be ashamed. Don't be timid, Timothy. Be courageous.

Be strong. You've got the spirit of power. You've got the spirit of love. The spirit of a sound mind. Stir up the fire. And the picture is of a dying fire here, if you like. A dying fire. Where this life has grown dim. This fire is smouldering. There might be just kind of just a little bit of a, the last spitting of that flame, as it were, as it starts to fizzle.

And how often we can be like that, can't we? Brother, sister, be honest today. That we can sometimes be like that dying fire. Where it looks like it's, our light is growing dim.

[7 : 54] As Christians, we're just sort of at that low ebb. Spiritually we're weak. And it's looking like we're really starting to lose that fire for God. Where our spiritual life can be at a low ebb. And our Lord wants us to be on fire. This is the message today. How can we be on fire for God? Spiritually.

And there's many pictures we'll cover through the word as we touch on this theme of God's abiding presence. As it were, as the abiding presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. That he wants to have full sway. He wants us to be set on fire. To be set on fire for his glory.

And our Lord describes John the Baptist in such glowing terms. John the Baptist. He says of him that John the Baptist is a man set on fire. A man set on fire. We see that in John 5, 35.

He was a burning and a shining light and we were willing to rejoice in his light. He commenced the witness, the testimony of the man, John the Baptist. He was as a shining light, as a burning light. How can we so burn? How can we burn brightly for God?

Stir it up. Stir it up. Brother. Stir it up. Sister. Stir up. The fire. How can we ignite such a fire?

[9 : 32] Two disciples were walking down that dusty road from Jerusalem to Emmaus and it was after the cross. It was gloomy. They would have been feeling lost. And then the risen Lord Jesus comes near to them, by them, and joins them, walking with them. But they did not recognise him. And he shared the scriptures with them. And afterwards they said, Luke 24, 32, they said one to another, did not our heart burn within us? While he talked with us, by the way, while he opened to us the scriptures. How we need this burning, this holy heartburn. Who suffers from heartburn? What about getting a holy heartburn? Don't you want that? Who wants that today?

That holy heartburn, as it were. When he talked to us, when he opened the scriptures, did not our hearts burn within us? How we need that burning, that holy heartburn, as it were, to revive and burn out the dross. To be set ablaze in our hearts. That he set a flame, our hearts, that holy heartburn, as it were. Our hearts burning within us. As he opened the scriptures.

Wow. There's the good news of God's love. There's the good news of God's saving grace, isn't there? We heard today. And the grace that changes us, that can make a spiritual climate change on the inside of us, such that our hearts will burn for God. As he opens the word to us, the word has power to do that. Jeremiah had the same experience. Jeremiah, of whom it says, as he speaks in Jeremiah 20 verse 9, he says, Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in my heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones. And I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. I could not hold it in.

Because his word was in my heart, as a burning fire. He knew that experience. As the disciples going to Emmaus did, Jeremiah knew that heart, that was ablaze, that was as a burning fire, the word of God. And the word gives us many more instances of a fire burning, as a sign of spiritual life and fervour. Of course, we know, as Peter talked about that example where the fire falls, as the disciples want the fire to fall and consume the enemies of God. We do see that too, in the scriptures, where the fire falls on the enemies of God. But we're talking here, as it were, of the fire falling in God's graciousness to his people, in God's presence amongst his people and for his people, in a good and godly and mighty, empowering way, in a blessing, a way of blessing his

people. For example, we see that the fire of the Lord in Leviticus 9. Leviticus 9, where it speaks of the fire of the Lord in the tabernacle, in that temporary meeting place, that tent of meeting, the tabernacle, and it was a tangible evidence of God with his people. God with us.

[13:06] Us. Leviticus 9, we see Moses and Aaron told to go unto the altar and offer up the burnt offering and make an atonement.

So the cross was there, back in Leviticus 9. The cross was there, the at-one-ment with God, at-one with God. That covering of our sin was there in that burnt offering, in that picture that it presented of Christ's cross to come.

Leviticus 9.23, Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation and came out and blessed the people. And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people.

And there came a fire out from before the Lord and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces.

It was a shouting meeting. Ever been at one of those? A shouting meeting. People shouting, Amen! Preach it! The people shouted! We need some shouting, don't we? Amen! Praise the Lord! Glory!

[14:19] No people shouted! Not that we need to be crazy about it, but crazy in a good way. But there was the shouting. There was the falling on their faces. They were overwhelmed by the power of God.

There was something going on there. The fire came from heaven, it says. The glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And it's a recurring picture too. The fire falling. David built an altar in 1 Chronicles 21.

Now the Lord chose the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. So, of all places that God would choose to send his glory for the fire to fall was this kind of simple, unadorned place.

It wasn't some great cathedral with coloured windows and icons and statues and decorations and garnishment.

It was a bare, unadorned, simple place. The threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. This is 1 Chronicles 21. So, you can imagine this was a place it might have smelled a bit off.

[15:34] It's where the oxen used to go round and around and thresh that wheat and grind it with the grinding stone or whatever it be. It was a kind of farm place. It was a barnyard, as it were. It wouldn't have been sort of a cultivated cultural place, some holy place that people would reckon that was holy because of what was adorned in it.

No, it was quite the opposite. It was a bare, unadorned, simple place, an ordinary place, an ordinary place. But it was the meeting place of God with man.

That's what made the difference about the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. Wow! It was a holy place because God was there. And when we think the meeting places of God with man, God met Adam in the garden.

Just an ordinary place. God met Jonah in the belly of the whale. Now, that wasn't so much of an ordinary place, but it wasn't some kind of decorated cathedral kind of place, was it?

It wasn't some man-furnished temple of a place. It was in the belly of a fish. And then we see, for example, he revealed himself to Moses in the bush.

[16:59] Just a garden-variety bush, as it were. Boom! God shows up. God meeting with man. It can happen in ordinary places. And so, brother, sister, God could show up at your desk at work.

He could show up at your counter at the shopping place. He could show up at your lounge room, at your dining room.

Wow! Doesn't have to be some fancy place. Fancy place. The threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite was not a decorated, ecclesiastical place.

They didn't have holy smoke burning there or, you know, you see in some places, as much as might be their culture or tradition, where they got candles all over the place and they got, you know, holy chancing going on.

It was just a simple, unadorned place. A place where oxen trot out the grain. And so, too, the Lord will commune with you in the ordinary places of your life, wherever you are at.

[18:11] However simple and humble that place can be, God shows up and meets with man.

However so ordinary a place. As 1 Chronicles 21-26, here is David in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

And David built there an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Again, a picture again of the redemption in Christ, of the atonement, of the cross, of the communion with God, around the reception of Calvary's grace.

The burnt offerings, the peace offerings. And David, it says, he called upon the Lord and he, God, answered him from heaven by fire.

God answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering. The fire fell. And David's sacrifice was accepted. Likewise, so, too, with Solomon.

It was the same place, again, as it had been built as a temple in 2 Chronicles 5, verse 13, at the dedication of the temple of Solomon, 2 Chronicles 5, verse 13.

[19 : 22] It came even to pass as the trumpeters and singers were as one, making one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. Now, don't you just love that when there's one sound?

Now, I'm sure you're such an angelic choir of singers together when you make that one sound unto the Lord. And they were thanking the Lord when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and the cymbals and the instruments of music and praised the Lord, saying, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever.

That then the house of the Lord was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord. You know, it might have set the smoke detectors off. Because the house is so filled. It was thick with this smoke, with this cloud.

As it were, the cloud filled even the house of the Lord. Verse 14. So that the priest could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud. For the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.

The glory was so great that the preacher had to shut up. And the glory just took over. The glory of the Lord just filled the house. The priest couldn't stand to minister.

[20 : 33] And then it goes, verse 1 of 2 Chronicles 7. Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven.

And consumed the burnt offering. And the sacrifices. And the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priest could not enter into the house of the Lord. Because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.

And all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down. And the glory of the Lord upon the house. They bowed themselves with their faces to the ground again. Upon the pavement. And worshipped. And praised the Lord. Saying, for he is good. For his mercy. Endureth forever. The glory of God. The fire came down from heaven.

Notice they prayed. And it was then. That the fire came down from heaven. God got the glory, didn't he? It wasn't about the singers singing. It wasn't about the atmosphere.

[21 : 30] It wasn't about the place. He prayed. And then the fire came down from heaven. God got the glory.

That's what we want, isn't it? That God gets the glory. It's not about any person. That it's about God getting the glory. As we pray. As we trust him. As we seek after his face.

In such an ordinary place as this. That God can show up and meet with man. With you. With me. Elijah is another one. Who started a fire.

He started a fire. Well really, God started the fire, didn't he? In 1 Kings 18. In 1 Kings 18. It was there at Mount Carmel. That Elijah faced off with 450 prophets of Baal.

And 400 prophets of the groves. Israel had been unfaithful to the true God. And was not wholehearted for God. And there was this contest. This competition. Between the false prophets.

[22 : 29] And God's faithful prophet. Who would be revealed. As the true and living God. The true God would answer. By fire. Strangely to prepare.

Elijah doused the altar. Not with petrol. But with water. Do it? Three times. They drenched it.

With water. At his word. Three times. This fire. Was going to be no man made thing. Amen. The fire.

The fire. Of Elijah's day. Was not man made. It was not man manufactured. It was fire from above. He doused it. To show.

This was nothing of flesh. This was nothing of man. Nothing of man's fleshly efforts. Or power. And then. He prayed. He prayed. We see in 1 Kings 18.

[23 : 26] 36. And it came to pass at the time of the offering. Again. The blood sacrifice. The blood sacrifice. Jesus. At the cross. That Elijah the prophet came near.

And said. Lord God of Abraham, Isaac. And of Israel. Let it be known this day. That thou art God. In Israel. And that I am thy servant. And that I have done all these things.

At thy word. Hear me. Oh Lord. Hear me. That this people may know. That thou hast turned their heart back again. Then. The fire. Of the Lord.
Fell. And consumed. The burnt. Sacrifice. And the wood. And the stones. And the dust. And licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it.
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. It was a consuming fire.
[24 : 22] The all consuming fire. Where did the fire fall? The fire fell on the altar. On the altar. In verse 30. It tells how Elijah had repaired.

The altar of the Lord. Because it had got broken down. Sometimes our altar gets broken down. Doesn't it? When we should be having prayer.
The altar is broken down. It's neglected. Covered with cobwebs. Disregarded. God's spirit gives revival.
Where? At the altar. At the altar. That time of prayer. That time of communing with God. And there is at the altar. The sacrifice there. There is a cost.
There is a cost. As the threshing floor had a cost to David. He said. I am not going to do something. It is going to cost me nothing. He was willing to pay the cost.
[25 : 24] As we see the burnt sacrifices. That was their livelihood. Their livestock. There was a sacrifice there. What is an altar? It is a place of surrender. Full surrender.

A place of sacrifice. A place of death. Romans 6.13 says. In part. Yield yourselves unto God. That's a good piece of advice.

A good direction from God. Yield yourselves unto God. We don't have to warm up the altar ourselves. Now. We see the false prophets. What they tried to conjure up. We don't have to manufacture this fire from heaven. We don't have to kind of orchestrate it. And make it happen by, you know, having some jazzy band or some, you know, smoke machines and strobe lights and some kind of, you know, some great evangelist from another country come.
And make it happen. Some spectacular signs and wonders. This fire of God, as it were. We don't have to manufacture this fire by our own power.
We need to douse the altar with water. And make it happen. And make it happen. And make it happen. And make it happen. And make it happen. And make it happen by, you know, having some jazzy band or some, you know, smoke machines and strobe lights and some kind of, you know, some great evangelist from another country come and make it happen.
[26 : 38] We need to douse the altar with water. And trust God. Amen. So that we're not engineering it by our own intent. But we're trusting in the power of God.

The power of God. The fire of God to fall. Elijah doused the altar and God showed up. And he burnt the sacrifice. And the people were amazed. It happens at the altar.
And brother, sister, we've got to repair the altar of the Lord. That is broken down. Amen. It happens at the altar. Place your family on the altar.

Place it all on the altar. There is a spiritual climate change, isn't there? A spiritual climate change. There's a lack of fire in the pulpit. And in the pew.
And what's more, we see the failed efforts of modern day false prophets. A time we see a conjured up effort of making fire. The prophets of Baal were all in a frenzy.
[27 : 39] There was a whole lot of shouting going on. A whole lot of frenetic activity. But it was all a sham. It was a put on. There was prophesying. There was excitement.

There was much noise and show and zeal. But no power. No power. No fire. 1 Kings 18, 28.
We see of the false prophets what they did. They cried aloud. Yeah! There was a lot of noise and activity. And carry on. They cut themselves.
After their manner with knives and lancets, the blood gushed out upon them. You see some religions today do that, don't you? They hit themselves till the blood gushes out over them and their children.

The blood gushed out, it says. 1 Kings 18, 29. And it came to pass when midday was passed and they prophesied until the time of the offering. Of the evening sacrifice.

[28 : 38] They were going at it full on. Hours. But there was neither voice nor any to answer nor any that regarded. And Elijah kind of had a bit of a laugh at their expense.

Maybe your gods are having a bit of a snooze. You've got to do it a bit louder. You know, carry on a bit louder. But of course their god had no ears.

He wasn't real. It's been said there's only two forms of religion in the world. Two. One is do. The other is done. One says man must do. Do something. Be good. Be really good. Try really hard to be really, really good. Do something. Do, do, do. So you can obtain eternal life by what you do. Even by what you don't do.

[29 : 38] Because you're really, really good. Trying really, really hard to be really, really good. Do. To obtain eternal life for divine forgiveness. The other says there is nothing, nothing, nothing that you can do.

Nothing, nothing, nothing. Nothing. Nothing. That you can do by yourself to gain eternal life. Rather, we must rely upon the one who has done, has done everything.

Done all that needs to be done to save you. Done all that is necessary for your salvation by dying in your place at the cross. Do or done?

Which one? Trust him that he has done everything to save you. Trust him and what he has done for you. Receive his gift. It's done. We must not settle for a substitute.

But we need the real. And not some man-made effort of the flesh like these false prophets carrying on. There was lots of blood and noise and excitement and zeal.

[30 : 42] And they were perspiring and prophesying and lots of hoo-ha. But there was no touch of God there. It was empty. There was no true sense of the Almighty, of Calvary.

There was no true grasp of spiritual power there. The power of the blood sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour, our precious Lord and God. We must have the real sense of our great God and Saviour. The fire is not man-made. The fire fell from heaven. Let the fire fall. In your heart and life, we need the fire to fall a spiritual awakening that will stir us up again.

Stir up the gift of God. Let the fire fall. Pray for revival fire. Let him have full control. Let him have the glory. Drench the altar so the work is his, not yours.

Drench the altar so God gets the glory, all the glory. And get out of the way so God can do his sovereign work. Elijah prayed.

[31 : 49] Someone has said, nothing is born without travail. Sometimes you have to travail, don't we? As believers, travail in prayer. We hear, as Paul talked about some, that he was kind of like a spiritual nursemaid.

A spiritual, a midwife, that's the word. That he brought them to that travailing, as it were. He travailed for them. Now, one day, while on vacation, an evangelist called Moody visited a church in London.

And it was known to be a dead church. Dead. Dead as a dodo. The pastor prevailed on him to preach. He was just on vacation, having his holidays, but Moody didn't really want to, but he agreed to anyway.

He preached, and later, after that first time, he said they were so unresponsive, and was all he could just to get through the morning message. Then it occurred to him, he'd have to endure the same thing that night.

And he was supposed to be on holidays. He dreaded it all afternoon. But behind the scenes, something was happening. Something was going on. This older woman went home to her invalid sister and told her about Moody being there, the evangelist.

[33 : 10] And her eyes lit up, and she had been praying that God would send Moody to England. He's from America, Moody. And she said to her sister, put lunch away. We'll spend the rest of the afternoon in prayer and fasting.

And she did. And they did. And Moody said, he stood up that night before the people, and he could tell something was different. He could tell something, the place was alive.

There was a sense of God, present. A power of God, present. You could feel it in the air. And he preached with this unexplained liberty, and he gave the invitation to rise if they wanted to be saved. And 500 stood to their feet. Shocked, he thought, maybe they had misunderstood. Surely they mustn't understand what I'm saying. Surely they must largely be saved here tonight.

But no, he said it again. He repeated it again with more detail. And he said, now I'm saying stand up if... And they all stood up again. It was the beginning of what became one of the greatest revivals that ever swept England.

[34 : 16] The fire fell. The fire fell. Why? Because these two faithful older ladies, one of them bedridden, had said, we don't need more organisation or activities.

We need the power of God on this place. And they paid the price in prayer. Now God says he will look to certain ones.

Certain ones. In Isaiah 66, verse 1, it says, Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house that ye build unto me?

Where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made. And all those things have been, saith the Lord. But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and contrite, poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

But to this man will I look. But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. To this man will I look.

[35 : 25] Will you be such a man? Will you be such a woman here? That you will be of a poor and contrite spirit. That you will tremble at his word. You'll take this book seriously and act upon it.

The message of this book will transform your heart and soul. And the saviour of this book will save your glad heart. God will take heed of such a one who will take heed of his word.

He will overlook others. But to this man, to this man, make sure you're one of those men, one of those women that God will look to you. The one who will quietly seek after God in those simple places.

That you can meet God in the simple places of your life. Might be just like the threshing floor. Just where the oxen tread out the grain. That God will meet with you in the ordinary places of your ordinary life.

And he will do extraordinary things with your heart and soul. He will set you ablaze. He will set you on fire. The one who will quietly seek after God. Trust in God. That you'll douse the altar.

[36 : 33] That it won't be any of your works. It won't be any of your flesh. It won't be any of your intellect. As it were, that is centre stage there. That it is all to his glory.

Because the altar will be drenched. It won't be any works of yours. That there will be that spirit of prayer that will engage you. That revival of godliness.

How is that flame today? Spiritual climate change. How is that flame? Your spiritual life. Stir it up. Stir it up brother. Stir it up sister. Fan it into flame. Sometimes our spiritual state can be like a dwindling flame. Like that smoky dying ember in my backyard.

Fan it into flame. I know there's one night after a day of burning. And I doused the pile of this backyard rubbish. And then some hours later I happened to take a walk down to where the pile was.

[37 : 35] And it was after dark. And I took a look. I took a good look. And there was glowing embers there. Because the wind was fanning it into flame.

What seemed like a dead fire was still alive. Could have started a bush fire. And the wind was blowing upon those little glowing embers.

Sparks started to come. And flames started to come. And sometimes we think I'm so dead spiritually.

I'm just fizzling out like a little dying ember. The Lord can breathe on you again. Can't he? Yes he can.

By his spirit. And set you ablaze again. Even those ever so small sparks of spiritual life. Where we're feeling spiritually low. And it's hard. Fan it into flame again.

[38 : 32] Let God fan it into flame. The gift is given to you. And we can be a people endued with power from on high. It speaks of the Holy Spirit as being a light to the breath as a wind.

That blows upon, as it were, blows upon those dry bones. And upon those glowing embers, as it were. Now there was a British preacher that went to the USA.

And there was a dread moral climate change that was impacting the nation. And this British preacher visiting the US. He says, you know what your own country is like.

I'm a visitor. I wouldn't presume to speak about America. But I know what Great Britain is like. I know something about the growing dishonesty, corruption, immorality.

The violence. The increase in abortion. Whose fault is it? Let me put it like this. If the house is dark at night, there is no sense in blaming the house.

[39 : 34] That's what happens when the sun goes down. The question to ask is, where is the light? And if the meat goes bad, there's no sense in blaming the meat.

That's what happens when bacteria is allowed to breed unchecked. The question to ask is, where is the salt? And if society becomes corrupt like a dark night or a stinking fish, we don't blame society.

Where does the fault lie? Where is the salt and the light? It's us. It's the church. Where is the church? Where is the church?

Where is the church? Pray. Pray. Seek after God. Turn back to God again. Fan it into flame. Brother, sister, seek after God.

To this man will I look. The one who is poor, contrite in spirit, who trembles at my word. Maybe it's time to turn back to God again. That we will be a church on fire.

[40 : 36] On fire. Not conjured up or manufactured or generated by some kind of cajoling of a preacher. But that we will be moved upon by him.

That the fire will fall from heaven. It will be God's work. And what will a church like that look like?

There was one church that had a slogan, we major on evangelism.

Now like someone observed, that's like a doctor saying, he majors on healing. Because evangelism is our business. We are a soul winning station in a world hell bound.

Going to hell in a hand basket. We are his missionaries in this city. And we should be a church that cares for souls.

And we should be a church that seeks God's face. In a nation that's under God's judgement. To pray for our nation.

[41 : 38] You know, people gave their lives for this nation. We should pray for this nation, shouldn't we? Pray for our city. Get some holy heartburn.

That the scriptures will be burning in our bones. As he speaks to us. As he opens the scriptures to us.

There will be a burning in our hearts. We want to know more. We want more of God. More of God. And there will be a humble heart. A contrite spirit. A rebuilding of the altar.

That will let go with what's threatening. To snuff out the fire. And it talks about how do we say the Holy Spirit can be quenched. Snuffed out.

The spiritual fire can be snuffed out. Smothered. Exhausted. Put out. Snuffed.

[42 : 34] What's threatening to snuff out our spiritual fire? Could it be unforgiveness? Sin? Pride? Whatever cools our affection for God.

And maybe we need to get ready for some heat. Because the heat can be applied in other ways. We know the fire. The picture of fire. Talks about the trial of your faith. As it were. As in that fire. That's going to try us.

Maybe it's the fires of persecution. That's going to have to set us on fire. That we're going to have to get ready for some consuming fire. But whatever the case. Let the fire fall. Amen? Let the fire fall. And when the fire falls. Fire spreads. Again back to our backyard fire. Julie had to. I was having a nice little rest on the seat there. And Julie said. Look. The fire is spreading.

And I had to jump off of my seat. And deal with the fire. Because it was spreading on the grass. And it was like. Phew. You could just see it. It was just moving. Like a. I don't know. Like an animal.

[43 : 32] Across the grass. As the fire was starting to build. And spread. And when the fire of God falls. The fire will spread. And it will spread quickly. Maybe. You catching on fire.

Will set. This one on fire. And then this one. Catching on fire. Will start this one on fire. And then. We'll all be ablaze. Amen? Wouldn't that be wonderful? And as God fires you up.

And that you are a burning and shining light. You're going to set other Christians on fire. So just watch who you're sitting next to. You might catch something. You might catch something good. Amen?

It might be contagious. That spiritual life. Rather than cold and lifeless. That we can have a spiritual climate change. On the inside.

Amen? So fan into flame. The gift of God. Be that living sacrifice on the altar. And then the fire will fall. That's a picture isn't it? A living sacrifice on the altar.

[44 : 30] And the fire of God falls. We're going to catch fire. In a good way. Amen? Amen? And be those burning and shining lights. All for God's glory. Let's pray.

Lord we thank you that you are our great God and Saviour. And Lord we know there's some we need to snatch out of the fire as it were. The fire that would damn them.

But we know that your fire that helps us catch a fire. And to be those burning and shining lights we need to be. That we will be the light of the world.

We will be salt. We will be impacting and contagious Christians. That others can likewise be catching that fire in that good way.

In Jesus name. Amen.