

The Fire of God

Text: Acts 18:24-28

Introduction: I want to start today by speaking about this great preacher of the early Church. He is probably one of the most outstanding preacher of NT times. This preacher was the “complete package” in a lot of ways:

- Eloquent
- Mighty in the scriptures
- Fervent in spirit (v.25)
- Taught accurately (v.25)
- Spoke boldly in the synagogue (v.26)
- He greatly helped those who believed (V.27)
- He vigorously debated the Jews to prove that Jesus was the Messiah (v.28)

His credentials were amazing. No other Apostle or preacher in the NT has such detailed description of attributes. Today, I want to focus on the most important ingredient he possessed: the fire of God in his life.

*V.24: This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being **fervent in spirit**, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.*

I

1. The spiritual fervency of Apollos

The word for “fervent” in Greek is the word “zeo” (which is also the root word for “zeal”).

Zeo means: living fervour, fiery hot, something boiling over. One dictionary describes it like this: “*in a Christian concept it signifies high spiritual temperature, inflamed by the Holy Spirit.*”

2. Fire is God’s will for your life too

Romans 12:11 – “*not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*”

Amplified Bible: “*be aglow and burning with the Spirit*”

John said that Jesus was going to come and baptize His people with the Holy Spirit and fire! (Luke 3:16). On the day of Pentecost there appeared like flames of fire that came upon those in the upper room (Acts 2:3). The promise of a life filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit is “*to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.*” (Acts 2:39). Jesus started His church ablaze with power from on high - He never imagined a church absent of fire or prayers absent of power.

James 5:16b - *The effective, **fervent prayer** of a righteous man avails much.*

3. What does the fire of God mean to you and me?

In the Scriptures, fire is associated with 5 crucial things:

- Power (“You shall receive power” Acts 1:8)
- Purposes of God

Exodus 3:1-2 - *Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.*

Moses had an encounter with the fire of God. From that point onwards he became ‘Moses the deliverer’ and lived the extraordinary existence we all know.

- Guidance

In the scriptures, fire is associated with guidance. God gave the people in the desert a cloud and pillar of fire to follow (Exodus 13:21).

- Protection

Zechariah 2:5 - *For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.”*

- Answers

Fire is associated with answers to prayer. God answered with fire in the days of Gideon, David, Solomon and Elijah. Fire is God’s signature!

Judges 6:21 - *Then the Angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the Lord departed out of his sight.*

1 Chronicles 21:26 - *And David built there an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called on the Lord; and He answered him from heaven by fire on the altar of burnt offering.*

2 Chronicles 7:1 - *When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the temple.*

1 Kings 18:24 - *Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” So all the people answered and said, “It is well spoken.*

When we walk with God’s fire in us, we walk in power, in purpose, in divine guidance, in divine protection and with divine answers.

II

Apollos was fervent in spirit. Fervency of spirit is not the result of culture, youthfulness, personality. It is a spiritual ingredient. It is a spiritual force. We see this ingredient even in the life of Jesus when He said in Luke 22:15b “*with fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you*”.

How do you ‘acquire’ the fire?

1. It comes from the Holy Spirit
2. It comes from walking with Jesus

Luke 24:32b - “*Did not **our heart burn within us** while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”*

3. It comes from His word

Jeremiah 23:29 - “***Is not My word like a fire?**” says the Lord, “**And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?**”*

Jeremiah 20:9 - *Then I said, “I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.” But **His word was in my heart like a burning fire** Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not.*

4. It comes from association

2 Timothy 1:6 (AMPC) *That is why I would remind you to stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning) the [gracious] gift of God, [the inner fire] that is in you by means of the laying on of my hands [with those of the elders at your ordination].*

Timothy received this spiritual gift from his association with Paul.

5. It comes from a deliberate effort to keep the fire burning

... “*stir up (rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning) the [gracious] gift of God, [the inner fire] that is in you*”

Don’t succumb to a sub-standard, cold or lukewarm relationship with God. Stir yourself up, fan those flames and determine to be on fire for God!