

THE SPIRIT'S FIRE

The Holy Spirit in the New Testament

1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades

November 20, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

Introduction:

There's an old story about a church that caught on fire. Everyone in the town rushed to church to help put the fire out, even town atheist. In a line, passing buckets of water. Pastor looked up, surprised, "***I have never seen you at church before.***" The atheist replied, "***I have never seen this church on fire before.***" John Wesley said, "***Catch on fire and people will come for miles to watch you burn.***" Long to see the church on fire ... Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:3 "tongues of fire"

Instead of putting the fire out, we're going to learn how to fuel it so Holy Spirit can set our souls ablaze. Forget the Bucket – List ... once-in-a-lifetime experiences hope to accomplish before we die; instead, we are going to start making a different kind of list; not what we want to do before we die, but what God has already done and continues to do since the day we were born.

There are those ON FIRE who have paid attention to God's movements in their lives, who have begun to chronicle (take a serious inventory) of the gifts God gives. Ann VosKamp ... One Thousand Gifts

"in giving thanks for the life we already have, we find the life we've always wanted."

Rather than throwing a bucket of cold water on it; they've found the secret to fueling the Spirit's fire.

The Spirit's fire is fueled by three spiritual graces ...

Please open your Bible to 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19. Page 837

Written to believers who were battle weary, afraid, worried and focused on the negative. No fire, smoldering, desperately in need of attention ... in danger of being extinguished.

READ VV. 16-19

Every fire needs fuel or it goes out. Let it die, our put it out (pour water on it).

No matter how you start it, any fire not fed will die out. Same with spiritual fire. How to keep it going.

And in reading v 19, we can assume that these believers were responsible for letting the fire go out.

NO, EVEN WORSE, THEY WERE THE ONES WHO WERE DOUSING IT. Buckets of Water.

Do not put out the Spirit's fire ... quench. Instead, fuel it, feed it, fan it ...

2 Timothy 1:6 "... Fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you ... hearts ablaze?"

Follow three steps, obey three powerful commands, exercise the three graces that fuel the fire and keep the Spirit burning brightly.

A. PRAISE and ADORATION fuel the Spirit's fire ... REJOICE ALWAYS...

Commanded to praise God ... even when we don't feel like it? YES. Misconception that the feeling precedes the utterance of praise, in reality the reverse. Even when you don't feel like it ...

1. Praise God for who He is. Even in the midst of turmoil, God is always present; He will never leave us or forsake us, never condemn us, always welcome us, Son to rescue us ... Spirit to dwell in us.

2. Praise God for what He's done. What has He done for you, saved you, rescued you, blessed you, transformed you, redeemed you, restored you, adopted you, sanctified you ...

Conscious decision to praise and thank. That is what we do each week when we sing praises to God.

We rejoice in praising Him when we sing songs that declare His wonders, even in difficult circumstances.

Ill. Paul and Silas ... in a jail in Philippi. ***Acts 16:25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.***

They had been flogged, beaten and put into stocks. The others were listening, remarkable, ablaze.

Psalm 100

A psalm. For giving thanks. (FOR THANKSGIVING)

¹ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

² Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.

³ Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.

⁵ For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

We fan into flame the Spirit's fire when we express our praise to God. Rejoice Always ...

Fan the flame, fuel the Spirit's fire ... pray continually.

B. **DEPENDENCE and TRUST fuel the Spirit's fire ...**

ALWAYS, CONTINUALLY, IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. Talking to God is a way of life. Including God. Not just at meals, but at all times. Conversation all day long. Not talking to self (fruitless; that's what I do, very little value in that), instead, talking to God, fruitful.

He is always present whether we acknowledge or not. Fuel fire when we speak to Him.

Pray is an act of dependence, an indication of trust. Putting every matter into God's hands. Help me, save me, give me wisdom!

Trusting that God has noticed, and is not going to let anything go to waste. Live with confidence and courage, knowing everything has a purpose.

C. **GIVING THANKS in ALL THINGS fuels the Spirit's fire.**

Something happened this week in Susie's life that reminded her of how blessed she is, we are. Tell story.

Ill. Susie's broken crown and a chance meeting with Yolanda.

Give thanks in all things. Before you conclude that we are to "give thanks *in* all things," but not "**for all things**," let me remind you that Paul (same writer) say "give thanks for all things in Ephesians 5:20 Not just in some things, but for everything. **Even broken crowns ...**

CONCLUSION ...

You want to see the church on fire, a Christ-follower set ablaze? The fuel is readily available, it is up to us to fan into flame, fuel the fire ...

How? Through Adoration and praise, Dependence and Trust, BY giving thanks in all circumstances.

Assignment ... when you go out of today, share just one thing you are thankful for ... name it.

This Thanksgiving season I want to encourage us to join Ann Voskamp in discovering that "the life you already have is the life you've always wanted ... " **MAKE A LIST**

Food, tables, take the time to share ... tell your stories. We need to speak it ...

Thankful for you health, your wealth, your salvation, your education, your family, miracle, rescue.

May Calvary Church and each of us fuel the fire so that we can burn brightly with the Spirit's Fire.