

FIREPLACE 2 – Becoming Fire Ready

‘We must become a FIREPLACE that is WILLING & CAPABLE of HOSTING the FIRE.’

- * WE = PEOPLE not PLACE
- * MUST = NEED not WANT
- * WILLING = PREPARED & EAGER to open the door wide
- * CAPABLE = What needs to be IN PLACE, so God can ENTRUST us with FIRE?
- * HOSTING = PROVIDE a place or environment where something can be RECEIVED, ACCOMMODATED & CARED FOR

Is this version of the original quote an improvement? If so, why?

WHY Fire?

- * One of the biblical METAPHORS for the HOLY SPIRIT.
- * The Holy Spirit has FIRE-LIKE QUALITIES.

Why is fire a suitable metaphor for the Holy Spirit & His work?

The FIRE INCIDENTS

1. Moses & the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-5)
→ Divine INITIATION, TIMING & LOCATION
2. Moses on MT Sinai (Exodus 19:3,10-11,16-18)
→ God extends an INVITATION; the people told to PREPARE
3. Elijah on Mt Carmel (1 Kings 18:24,38-39)
→ Elijah PREPARES the ALTAR; God PROVIDES the FIRE.
4. Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)
→ Before the fire was AROUND them; now it FALLS UPON them

Of the four biblical fire incidents, which one speaks to you most strongly & why?
What do you think the difference is between wanting God to send His fire and being ready to host His fire?

“Elijah prepares the altar; God provides the fire.” What does that teach us about the relationship between our responsibility & God’s initiative?

The ANATOMY of a Fireplace

- * FUEL = Our SACRIFICE, SURRENDER, WORSHIP
- * OXYGEN = HOLY SPIRIT BREATH
- * HEAT = FAITH & HUNGER to receive fire, maintain fuel & fan the flames
- * Prepared HEARTH = A place DEDICATED, CONSECRATED
- * CHIMNEY = Our MISSION ... Fire needs an OUTLET

Which part of the fireplace analogy – fuel, oxygen, heat, hearth or chimney – most challenges you personally? Why?

What do you think it means practically for our sacrifice, surrender and worship to become ‘fuel’ for God’s fire?

What might it look like for us to give the Holy Spirit ‘unrestricted invitation & access’ in our individual lives ... & in our church?

From WILLING to CAPABLE

Willingness says, ‘Lord, SEND the FIRE’

Capable says, ‘Lord, PREPARE ME to CARRY it’

Which of these two prayers comes more naturally to you?

“Lord, send the fire.” OR “Lord, prepare me to carry it.” Why do you think that is?
What might God need to do IN you in order to do what He wants THROUGH you?

How to BECOME that Fireplace

1. CLEAR the HEARTH (Josh 3:5, Matt 5:8, Heb 12:14)
→ Lord, do whatever you need to do IN me ...
2. Lay down the FUEL (Rom 12:1, Heb 13:5)
→ The first prayer isn’t, ‘Lord, will you USE me,’ but ‘Lord you can HAVE me.’
3. Open the AIRFLOW
→ Offer the Holy Spirit UNRESTRICTED INVITATION & ACCESS
4. Keep the CHIMNEY clear
→ Not a spiritual RESERVOIR, but an OUTLET for the fire
5. ASK God for FIRE (Luke 11:13, Matt 3:11)
→ We’re INVITED to ASK for it with strong, confident expectation

CLEAR THE HEARTH: What kinds of things can become ‘ash’ in our lives, that is, things that need to be removed so there is room for God to do something fresh?
LAY DOWN THE FUEL: How would you answer the question: ‘What am I actually putting on the altar?’ Is there anything you find particularly difficult to surrender?
OPEN THE AIRFLOW: What can quench, restrict or resist the work of the Holy Spirit in us? How can we become more receptive to Him, individually & collectively?
KEEP THE CHIMNEY CLEAR: If we’re not meant to be a spiritual reservoir, but an outlet for the fire, where might God want what He is doing in you to flow through you?

ASK God for FIRE: Do you to ask God for His fire with strong, confident expectation?
How do you ask? How should we ask? What might make you hesitate to ask?