

Ablaze for God

John 5:33-35 (NASB)

³³ "You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

³⁴ "But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

³⁵ "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

Christian leadership demands our spiritual best, and more. To our best must be added His supernatural enabling touch. We must offer our best; then we must look to God to add His holy fire. Our best is never enough. We constantly need God's extra touch. We need His fire.

In the service of God we need more than ability and skill. We need the manifest presence of God, the consciousness and evidence of God's special touch upon us. We rely, not on our knowledge, training, and experience, but on God's transforming addition to our highest and best. **Charles Spurgeon** insisted, "**It is extraordinary spiritual unction, not extraordinary intellectual power that we need.**"

We are not satisfied with being faithful; we deeply desire the special awareness of God's blessing upon our faithfulness. We are not satisfied to work hard; we look to God for His empowering upon our earnest efforts. We seek for something more than busyness; we seek the evidence that God uses us.

God created you to be filled with and anointed by His Spirit. That fullness makes your personality complete, enables you to be Christ-like and radiant with God's presence, and your service to be Spirit-guided, Spirit-empowered, and used to capacity by God.

As a healthy Christian you can never be satisfied without that indwelling fullness, that divinely imparted Christlikeness, and that transforming enabling that makes you aware that God is using you for His purpose and glory. No Christian leader can be continuously and completely satisfied in his or her ministry without that divine enabling-----the glow, the fire, and the power of the Spirit. It must be present in us and active through us.

It is beautiful and challenging to see a life on fire for God, ablaze for God and an inspiration to others. It gives them faith to believe for God's work in the lives of those they love and the situations about which they are concerned. It gives them confidence that God will answer prayer, and makes others want to draw near to God and obey God. A life ablaze for God is always a much greater blessing than the same life without the flame of the Spirit.

Of John the Baptist, Jesus said, “John was a lamp that burned and gave light” ([John 5:35](#)). “He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light” ([John 5:35](#) (NASB) John Sung, called the greatest evangelist China has ever known, was termed “a living flame of gospel zeal.” Again and again some Christian has been so Spirit-filled and so used of God that discerning Christians have referred to that one as “ablaze for God,” “ablaze with God’s Spirit,” “a flaming servant of God,” “a fire-baptized leader,” or another similar description. Would the people who know you best, those under your leadership, speak of you in those terms?

Spurgeon spoke of the need for leaders “who live only for Christ, and desire nothing but opportunities for promoting His glory, for spreading His truth, for winning by power those who Jesus has redeemed by His precious blood..... We need red-hot, white-hot men, who glow with intense heat; whom you cannot approach without feeling that your heart is growing warmer; who burn their way in all positions straight on to the desired work; men like thunderbolts flung from Jehovah’s hand, crashing through every opposing thing, till they have reached the target aimed at; men impelled by Omnipotence.”

David Brainerd, mighty intercessor-missionary to the American Indians, exclaimed: “Oh, that I might be a flaming fire in the service of the Lord. Here I am, Lord send me; send me to the ends of the earth...send me from all that is called earthly comfort; send me the ends of the earth...send me from all that is called earthly comfort; send me even to death itself if it be but in Thy service and to promote Thy kingdom.”

God chose fire to be the earliest, most continual major symbol and manifestation of His presence. Throughout Old Testament times His Shekinah glory---a miracle glow and fire---constantly proved His presence, guidance, leadership, involvement, and seal of approval. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit fulfilled and spiritualized the Shekinah. God’s Shekinah was lost to Israel when they went into captivity and was not restored until its visible return at Pentecost. It was transformed from being primarily God’s presence in a place to His presence in His people. Its visibility was temporary at Pentecost, but its reality is abiding in those who are Spirit-filled.

Jesus wanted all His disciples to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire ([Matthew 3:11](#); [Luke 3:16](#)). He desires each of us to be so Spirit-filled that our innermost nature is cleansed as by fire and our life made radiant, filled with Spirit-given power and zeal, and aflame with the Shekinah glory of God.

The Spirit’s Shekinah-glory, His holy flame, is for all of us believers in this dispensation of grace. It is to make us beautiful in godly personality, radiant in disposition, and fruitful in life. This is God’s New Testament norm for His children. How much more it should be typical for all leaders in Christ’s church!

Every Christian leader should be an exemplar, should be a demonstration of Christ’s visible standard of Spirit-filled living. You as a leader should maintain your spiritual

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stature, fervency and consistency, and be so marked by the seal of God's Spirit that those you lead thank God for your leadership. They should be motivated to accept and follow your leadership wholeheartedly, and both consciously and unconsciously be drawn nearer to God under your leadership.

All of us as Christian leaders long to be more used of God, more marked by God's seal upon our lives and ministries. Be of good courage. God will satisfy that longing. You can be more ablaze for God than ever before.

O Thou who camest from above,
The pure celestial fire t' impart,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
On the mean altar of my heart.

There let it be for Thy glory burn,
With inextinguishable blaze,
And trembling to its source return,
In humble prayer and fervent praise.

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire
To work, and speak, and think for Thee;
Still let me guard the holy fire
And still stir up Thy gift in me.

Charles Wesley