

A Fire Baptized Church

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire, highlighting the transformation it brings in an individual's personality, power, purity, and perseverance. The speaker urges the congregation to seek a genuine encounter with the Holy Spirit to face the challenges of the 21st century with strength and endurance.

Scripture: Luke 3:16, Acts 2:42, Acts 8:19, Galatians 5:22, Acts 14:22

Topics: "Baptism of the Holy Spirit", "Transformation through Fire"

Description

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Transcript

Please turn with me this morning to Luke chapter three and then to the beginning of the book of Acts. I just want to read these scriptures this morning. We're in part nine of our series on the 21st century church and we have dealt with things it's lacking in and things that God is going to do in this hour.

I believe it's an utterly unique hour that we're living in now. The 2020s is a remarkable hour, an utterly unique hour. I'm so glad that I live in this hour.

It's a dangerous hour, but an exciting hour. It's a fearful time and yet a time to have your eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ. And I pray in these messages that we begin to see God's plan, not only of what he wants to do, but what he is going to do in the real church, the real body of Christ.

My message here this morning, a fire-baptized church. In the previous weeks, we looked at a praying church and then we looked at a holy church, but this morning we're going to look at a fire-baptized church. This is God's unchanging plan for the church of this hour.

I know God's plan for the church. I know God's plan for the church out there in the nations. I know God's plan for you as a church.

And a part of that plan is that you're a fire-baptized church. It's not an option. It's not a choice.

It's not a denominational thing. This is God's will. He doesn't change his mind.

This has only been his plan for the church. Read in first of all from Luke chapter 3 and verse 16. John, talking of John the Baptist, John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire, whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the weight into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And then reading from Acts chapter 1 and verse 4. And being assembled together with them, Jesus commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me, for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. And then lastly, Acts chapter 1, sorry, Acts chapter 2 and verse 1. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all in one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a Russian mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire. And it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Let's pray together. Father, I thank you this morning, my God, that you'd reveal unto us such as us your glorious, wonderful plan for the church in this hour, in this generation. You've turned our eyes to look upon that golden lampstand, that candlestick filled with oil, burning with the seven Spirits of God.

Lord God, thank you that you have an unchanging plan that you've never deviated from concerning the church. You are a determined God. You prophesy, then you bring the prophecies to pass.

And my God, we join with you right now to pray with this church, the 21st century church. We need an old-fashioned baptism of fire again. My God, we need holiness to be.

Restored to your church. We need the power of biblical preaching to come again. And Father, we're praying, O God, that you send the former and the latter reign in the last month in its season, O God, in an hour where it seems all the revivals are over.

We're asking that you send the greatest revival in world history. Lord God, would you have to meet the hour, transhumanism, the corruption, the control of this society. All we need is a fire-baptized church to function in this hour and to glorify your name.

In Jesus' mighty name. Amen. My message here this morning, looking at God's plan for the church and this local church in Limerick City, a fire-baptized church.

I'm not just thinking of individuals, but I'm thinking of what God wants to do to an entire local church and the church within a generation. We read in Luke chapter three, this statement, he's speaking about Jesus Christ. Shall, you can't get more definite than that, baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

I want you to notice here that put together with the baptism and the Holy Ghost is fire. The baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. You know what we've lost in the church? The fire.

You know what we've lost in preaching? The fire. You know what we've lost in our prayer times? The fire. In our worship, our evangelism, the function of the church and the leadership.

If you lose the fire, a thing becomes very cold, very dark, and it loses the power and the reality of God. The Bible time and time again, talks about fire from Genesis all the way through to Revelation. When it's dealing with God's work towards his people, he deals with fire.

Fire is an absolute essential. The church cannot function without fire. You as a Christian cannot be effective without fire.

If you have no fire, then you need to get on your knees, repent, and begin to pray and plead with God. Send the fire. I need the fire.

The fire will meet your every need. I want to assure you. In the Old Testament, when you go back into the house of God, whether it's the temple or the tabernacle, but certainly the house of God, you begin to see the place of fire in God's house.

It says in Leviticus chapter 6 and verse 12, and the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it. It shall not be put out. There is a command all through the Old Testament that the fire in God's house must never go out.

There was a clear instruction. You priests, you high priests are responsible. Keep the fire burning in the house of God.

Never let the fire go out. Fire in the house of God is so essential that it's given as a clear command, a clear instruction, not a discussion, not a theological topic. You are commanded without discussion, without opinions, make sure the fire does not go out upon the altar.

It is absolutely essential. In fact, in Leviticus chapter 6, three times within a few verses, he says, do not let the fire go out. Three chapters later in chapter 9 verse 24, we read that the fire to light the altar comes from God.

The fire is from God. It is his work. You cannot stir it up.

You cannot create that. You cannot manipulate that. Real fire comes from God.

And yet in Leviticus chapter 6 and 12, listen, it says you are to add wood every morning. The priesthood, the members of the church are to add the wood every morning. Just like gold always represents divinity in the Bible, it represents deity or the nature of God himself.

So wood in the temple always represents our humanity, our nature. When it says that to this fire burning, which you must never let go out, it comes from God. It's a divine fire.

It's a fire that he sends. But yet you are to add the wood every single morning. Do you know what the wood represents there? Your responsibility, the work of humanity, man's work in the sanctuary of God.

He lights the fire. He sends the fire. The fire is his.

But you are to be responsible for maintaining that. Do not think that you can live anyway, act anyway, speak anyway, treat one another anyway, treat the house of God anyway. Well, it won't go in this morning and the fire goes out.

You see, you do have a responsibility. If you so make it, all God and I don't need to do anything. I want to tell you that on you adding that wood, that fire either dims down or begins to blaze.

There is an absolute responsibility. When you go into the house of God in the Old Testament, you meet the brazen altar. That's where the fire is burning, representing Calvary.

When you walk on straight ahead into the Holy of Holies and go in there, you find another altar. It's not brazen, it's not brass. It doesn't represent the cross.

It's actually a golden altar of prayer. And there's fire burning there. We're told here in the scriptures that they are commanded to keep the fire burning in that place of prayer.

So you have so far two fires, the brazen altar of sacrifice, where they take the fire into the Holy of Holies. It all begins at Calvary. Do you want fire in your prayer life? Do you want fire to carry you into the Holy of Holies? You better come to Calvary.

That's where you get the fire to carry into the Holy of Holies. The source is at the cross in the blood of the Lamb. That's where you carry it in to a place of prayer and intercession.

Never separate your prayer life from Calvary and the blood of Jesus. It all flows out of that. But there's a third place of fire in the house of God in the Old Testament.

It was the golden candlestick. You see there the seven flames of fire as oil flows through that candlestick. Seven flames of fire that represent the Holy Spirit in the house of God, given light, given warmth, and given a fragrance in the house of God.

It is utterly remarkable. Listen to God's command in the Old Testament about the fire burning on the candlestick. Command the children of Israel that they bring unto thee the pure olive oil beaten for the light to cause the lamps to burn continually.

That candlestick was never to go out. That candlestick must burn. But you know what? You need a ministry in a local church.

If that candlestick is going to keep burning, if that church is going to have seven flames of fire, there's going to be a priesthood. And we by the blood of the Lamb, we the born again Christians have been raised up to be a royal priesthood to minister unto God. You have a ministry in this church.

Keep the fire burning continually. That is your responsibility. You have a task in this church.

We've got to keep the fire here. If there's fire in this church, then there'll be light that'll shine out into the darkness of this world. If we keep the fire here in the place of prayer, then you're going to have a warmth in the midst of us of the reality of God.

And so I'm showing you the importance of fire. What is true in the Old Testament is true in the New Testament as well. John the Baptist prophesied about the coming Messiah and all that he would accomplish.

He said the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, but he didn't stop there. And Luke chapter 3 says, you will know him, the Messiah. You will know the anointed of God, the Christ.

He shall baptize you. Notice it's not the Holy Spirit baptizing you. It is the Lord Jesus Christ is the baptizer.

Never make a mistake about that. Christ himself. It's a Christ-centered experience.

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. You know what we've lost in the church? Fire. We've removed the fire from the baptism in the Holy Ghost and we wonder why we've got problems in the church.

Notice here and notice this phrase that John the Baptist come out with. It is one baptism in the Holy Ghost. It's not two.

There's not a baptism in the fire. These are united together. You don't get a baptism in the Holy Ghost without the fire.

Where the Holy Spirit comes, you get fire. He cannot fill you without fire coming into you. He cannot anoint you for a task without the fire coming.

It is one baptism in the Holy Ghost, submerged in it, soaked in it, drenched in fire. If we only preach more so that the baptism in the Holy Ghost isn't an innocent, harmless, nice, comforting experience, but it's a baptism of fire. God wants to immerse you in fire that's going to consume everything.

Do you know the baptism in the Holy Ghost is dangerous? Do you realize it will change things? It can turn everything upside down in your life. This is the symbol of the Holy Spirit. We know in the Bible sometimes the Holy Spirit is symbolized by water, or a mantle that hangs around the shoulder, or a dove that flies down on the head of Christ.

Sometimes he comes as a wind. Sometimes he's depicted as oil, or rain that falls upon the ground to bring forth a harvest. Christ we see in the New Testament is both a lion and a lamb at the same time.

He is depicted as a lion to represent something, and as an innocent lamb to represent something. But it's the same person, and it's the same with the Holy Spirit. He is depicted as fire, but also as water.

There's no contradiction. But when we talk about fire, the fire of the Holy Spirit, or the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and fire, do you know it's depicting a work of the Holy Spirit? The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a baptism of fire. And do you know what fire does? It consumes what is perishable.

It purifies. It breaks things. It softens.

It can also harden. It inflames the heart. It warms the hands.

It gladdens the heart. It can fuse things together and join them together that otherwise would never be joined. It tests elements.

It illuminates or brings light. It moves at a great speed. Fire is uncontrolled.

I've told you before as a young boy, I went in the bales in the farm next door with my young neighbor. He took in a candle and matches. Never should have done that.

We used to build huts in those bales. And what did he do? He dropped those matches, lifted the candle to see where the matches went, and fire went up between two of those bales. We're right in the midst of all those bales, deep down in our hut that we had built there.

Well, I said, go out and see if everything's okay. We put out the fire inside. Well, I waited and I waited and I waited.

He didn't come back. I said, I better go out and check on him. Well, he should have been checking on me.

I stuck my head out and the whole top of that entire barn was on fire to such a degree there's no way out. I went back into my little hut inside the bales. I don't even remember what happens.

I can see it in my mind's eye, but I can't tell you what happened. Somehow I got outside and I'm standing looking at the entire thing on fire. From that day to this, I've had a healthy regard for fire.

Candice always complains if she lights candles in the house and she's out doing other things. And I go around putting out all those little fires. All you have is a bit of smoke left when I come through.

You know why? I know how dangerous fire is. You don't play with fire. Fire is essential for our fireplace, for our candles and everything else.

But I'm not going to play with this fire and neither should you. The baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire is the most life-changing and remarkable thing. If you throw out the fire and have a Holy Spirit who you can control, you can manipulate and who will accommodate to your life, it's not the real baptism in the Holy Ghost.

There's no fire in it. There's no personality in it. It is a baptism of fire.

That's why when Jesus said in Acts chapter 1 and verse 4, they were gathered together to seek for this blessing of God. And he reminds them of what John says, ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. This is not regeneration.

This is not the born again experience. You know all the reformed churches and there's some great men in amongst them and I love some of their books. But I tell you what, they've made a big, big mistake on this.

When they made the baptism in the Holy Spirit, regeneration, you get it when you're born again. You've got everything at that point. I tell you, they're doctrinally wrong and they departed from scripture.

Some great expositors, but they don't understand this. The charismatics have gone the other way and they've made the Holy Spirit something they give away by their own will. There are extremes in the church.

The reformed church that denies the reality of this for the church today. They don't expect to see a fire-baptized church. Then the charismatics on the other side of things that have no boundaries, no correction, they tolerate anything where this fire comes.

It is a wildfire. It's a fire that goes beyond scripture. I don't want to fall into either camp.

Church, I'm telling you, I want a fire-baptized church. I want what we read in the Bible. In Acts chapter 1, those that gathered in the upper room, they're called disciples.

They were already sanctified through the word. They love God because they kept his commandments. They were abiding in Jesus Christ.

They were partakers of the Lord's table and in John chapter 20, they had already received the Holy Spirit to indwell them in regeneration. All of these things were true of those that gathered in the upper chamber on the day of Pentecost, but they had not been fire-baptized. When this baptism in the Holy Ghost came the first time, it was to baptize the entire church with fire.

God had a plan for the church. This is the first church. This is the first preachers.

This is the first functioning members of the local body. There are women there. There are men.

I'm sure there are children. You had about 120 there. What was God's plan for that first church? What was his original plan? It was a golden candlestick, all on fire.

It was a plan for a fire-baptized church. God help us never change this. Never say that was for their day.

Church, that is for you in this place. God's plan for you in this church is a fire-baptized church. We read in Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, they're all gathered together in one place at the same time, in one accord, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a mighty Russian wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

What was the symbol that God chose for this experience? Verse 3, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as a fire, and it sat upon each of them. Notice this, that it was a tongue of fire. That's the only way they could describe it.

It doesn't say a tongue of fire. It says like as a tongue of fire. As you saw this, the only way you could explain it is it's like, it looks like a tongue of fire.

This is the symbol of the New Testament church, not the cross. I've never worn a cross around my neck in my entire life. We've never had a cross on one of these walls, never will do.

Poor Mary, come in from all of her idolatry, first meeting, she looked around, went, where's all the pictures? Where's the statues? They don't even have a cross in this place. I tell you, we had fire here. We had a tongue of fire that could change a life, I assure you.

And so God chose this symbol of fire as the emblem of being filled with the Holy Ghost of fire. Never desire, never seek after an experience of God that doesn't have fire in it. Please know when you pray to be filled with the It could change everything.

It could come and change all your pet loves, or secret sins, or things that you have established. Some of you, I believe if the fire came, you would make decisions right now that would scare you sitting in the seat. You see, you're holding on to certain things, but when the fire comes, you say, you've got it, Lord.

I release it. I leave it. I give it into your hands.

When the fire comes, everything burns upon the altar. This baptism in the Holy Ghost, and I've got four points here this morning, but I'm just laying a foundation. There are certain names for the baptism in the Holy Ghost in the New Testament.

It is called a baptism. That means you are immersed, completely soaked, nothing of you untouched. Six times in the New Testament, the baptism in the Holy Ghost is called a baptism.

Six times. Five times by John the Baptist, once by Christ. Sorry, four times by John the Baptist, once by Christ, and then once in the book of Acts.

Five of them are prophetic, speaking about what's going to happen. One of them is after the event, what has happened. And so we see that being filled with the Holy Spirit is a baptism.

You're to be immersed. I assure you, I do not believe in being sprinkled. I don't believe that.

I don't even believe in being poured. I don't believe in just bathing yourself. I believe in an old-fashioned baptism in the Holy Ghost.

You're going to get soaked. You're going to get drenched. No one's going to teach you to speak in tongues.

You need a real encounter with the third person of the Trinity. I want you to be immersed in Him. I want you to be immersed in fire.

Why would you settle for anything else? It's not only called a baptism. It's called a gift in Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10, Acts 11. It's called a gift.

It's called something that God gives. You can't earn it. You can't work for it.

You see, if you pay the right price for it, how could it be a gift? This gift, you've never worked hard enough. The night I got baptized in the Holy Spirit at the age of 13 years old in an old wooden building in Belfast, I assure you, I had not earned it. But it was a gift from God Himself.

In Acts 1, it's called the promise of the Father. And in Acts 2, in Galatians 3, it is called a promise. In other words, you receive it by faith.

Do you know God has promised you the baptism in the Holy Ghost? Do you know it is a gift He wants to give to you if you do not have it? It is a promise that you cannot earn and you'll never deserve. He says, are you born again? Are you washed in the blood? Have you been to the brazen altar? Then I want to take you into an experience of being immersed in the Holy Spirit of God. This baptism is also called an anointing.

In the Old Testament, only certain few people were anointed, kings, priests, prophets. But in the New Testament, it's for every woman. Aren't you glad, ladies? You're not left out.

And it's not temporary. It's for your entire lifetime. And it's not for the old prophets only.

It's for the young boys as well sitting in the church. It's an anointing of the Holy Spirit. Luke calls it an endowment.

It literally means a mantle to clothe you or to be thrown around you like Elijah's mantle was thrown around Elisha. It's just like that. That's what this is.

It's an endowment of power. It's also called a sealing. And the word sealing there means a mark of genuineness, ownership, or possession, or security.

So this baptism in the Holy Ghost, it's called different things. But listen for a moment. When you go on to the experience of this, we read different terms, how it comes to you.

In Mark 3, we read about it descending. Mark 1, Matthew 3, John 1, the Holy Spirit will descend upon you. It's a real experience.

It's a real event where the person of the Holy Spirit, he comes down and he descends. Also, we read in Acts 2, it's an outpouring like rain. Acts 10, Isaiah 32, Isaiah 44, Joel chapter 2, there is an outpouring of

the Holy Spirit.

Then we read about them receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10, Acts 19, et cetera. And then we also read about being filled, about him coming upon in Acts 19. Acts 2, shed forth.

Acts 8, he fell upon them. And last but not least, John 7, rivers of living water. All I'm doing is giving you a picture of this remarkable experience of the baptism in the Holy Ghost.

Different terms are used for it. When God speaks about it, he's either talking about your action of receiving it or his work of pouring it out. But it is a definite real thing.

Church, I'm looking in the 21st century, a church baptized in the Holy Ghost. You know where we lost the fire? It became a theological discussion. It became a doctrine of dispute.

It became the possession of a certain denomination. Why don't we go back to the Bible and say, give me what they had in Acts chapter 2. I don't care what you call it. I'm not interested in debating.

This generation is going to hell. Eight or nine billion people in the world, and the most of them are going to fall into an eternal hell. We need a fire-baptized church again.

Saints, you've got to pray for this. You've got to believe this. It doesn't matter where you are this morning.

I want to know, are you praying and saying, Lord, do what it takes? I need to be changed. I want the fire of the Holy Spirit. Not someone who comes to me to give me what I want.

Not someone who I can say, do this and do that. Not something I can manipulate in ministry to push people over or to give people nice little prophecies that come out of my own imagination. We don't want that.

We want the fire. You know, if you get the real fire, you'll never prophesy your own thoughts to someone. You'll be scared to do that.

You would tremble to do that. You're not going to push anyone over, or you're not going to mimic the Holy Spirit. That's strange fire.

And you know what? In the Old Testament, men died when they tried to create a fire that didn't come from God. I don't want false fire here in this church. I don't want man's fire in this church, but neither do I want a cold, lifeless, ash-filled altar.

I don't want that. God's will is that there's a fire burning in this church, and you're a part of that. Let me give you four marks, and I could give many more, but I'm restricting this to four.

Four Ps this morning of when a church is fire baptized, what I believe happens. Personality, power, purity, and perseverance. In the 2020s, we need these four things.

If we're going to function as a real church and fulfill the will of God, the 2020s, the era of transhumanism, the era where world government knows everything that you do, and the era where they're redesigning our entire culture, an era in which they're going to join man to computers. Do you know what the answer is? Fire. A fire-baptized church.

This first thing, when you get a church fire-baptized, what's the first thing you see? You see personality. Not preacher's personality, not super-apostle personality. I'm talking about the personality of the Holy Spirit.

When this fire really comes, you know it's a fire because a person is revealed in the church. He isn't just a part. Never think it's a net.

Never think it's a that. The baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire is not a power or an influence. Neither is it just an experience or a doctrine that we teach about.

The baptism in the Holy Ghost is a person coming to abide. It is God coming to fill. It is deity coming as fire.

Our God is a consuming fire. Do you realize that? I am tired of people having little meetings and no encounter with God. Just this morning, as we sung that song about God being a consuming fire, my mind immediately goes back to when I'm 21 years old, living in Germany, and I'm in a meeting.

I think it was Berlin or thereabouts, and I'm in a meeting where that song, God is dealing with me and the fire of God, and I've never recovered from it. It's a living thing. It changed my life.

I met God in that meeting as they sang that, and as I sang that, he came down in power upon me. You see we're talking about a personality. It is the baptism in the Holy Ghost or in the Holy Spirit.

You're being immersed. You're being baptized in a personality. It's not just an experience.

It's not just part of your past testimony. It is being immersed, filled, baptized, endued with a person, and that person is a consuming fire. Do you know when you look at the Holy Spirit, he has all the attributes of a person.

He has knowledge. He has feelings. He has motions.

He's got a will. He decides. You don't decide.

You don't tell him what you're going to do to him. You know, Holy Spirit, I've got all these gifts, all these talents, all these abilities, and I just need to inform you so you can use me in all of these areas, and I quite like a job in the church here. Do you realize how anathema that is? That when the person comes, it is his will takes control.

His personality is evidenced in a person baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. Show me someone who's been baptized in fire. I'll show you the attributes of the Holy Spirit.

I'm going to start seeing a personality that is more than a naïve. I'm going to see someone very different than a sooth. You see, when you're immersed in this person, I'm going to start seeing his working, his character, his nature, his voice, his feelings, his emotions, because you know what? When you're immersed in him, you'll feel how he feels.

Have you ever felt the grief of the Holy Spirit? Have you ever walked into a meeting and your spirit is so grieved that you go, this isn't natural. This isn't me. Once up in the north, I had a message from the Lord.

When I got in the car, it was a 30-minute drive. When I got in the car, I'm singing, I'm praising God, I'm worshipping, I'm filled with the joy of the Lord. I had my message and as I got closer, the grief, the grief, the terrible grief.

By the time I reached the church, I couldn't open my mouth. I began to weep. We began to worship in the church and I'd done my best.

That first song, I stood and I forced my hands up, but the terrible, I went, what's gone wrong here between the house and here? I'm all ready to preach and the terrible grieving of the Holy Spirit. I turned round at my seat, knelt down, and for the next 30 minutes just wept over the body of Christ. I couldn't understand it intellectually, but it was the grief of the Holy Spirit.

Little did I realize what was just about to happen. Men in that church were about to make a decision that would destroy the work of God. I said, I said, I cannot preach my message this morning until I communicate this.

I barely got out of my seat to break bread that morning. Have you had an experience of feeling what he feels? His personality is revealed by, he investigates all things. You can't stop him.

He knows everything. He speaks into everything. He reveals everything.

He is a witness. He reveals things that you need to know. He'll convince your heart.

He commands you. He contends with others. He moves you to do things.

He helps you. He guides you. He regenerates you.

He sanctifies you. He quickens you. He inspires you.

He intercedes through you if you allow him. He'll direct your life and he'll edify the church. There is a personality.

What is the baptism in the Holy Ghost? How do I know the fire of the Holy Spirit is here? Because there's a personality who's in control. Can I tell you this preacher isn't in charge of the preaching schedule. I've never had to sit down and think up messages for all the time.

Every year I go, I'm not going to think what I'm going to be preaching this year. It would scare the living daylights out of me. How would I plan that? How would I organize that? I may not even know a week ahead, but I know there's a personality in this church who will edify the church, who wants to reach souls through that camera.

I know there's a personality living in the midst. If only we realize with the baptism in the Holy Ghost, it is a person coming to take over. And that person is fire, consuming fire.

It's a fire that burns. And if you cultivate that, he will have his way within you. We're told in Romans 15 30 about loving the Spirit.

Do you know you're meant to love the Holy Spirit? Every Bible school we run, I always ask them, show me a scripture in the Bible that talks about loving the Holy Spirit and what it means. We live in an era where men speak to the Holy Spirit. They won't find a verse in the Bible that shows to do that.

They talk all about the Holy Spirit and set Christ aside. I don't like that. I don't like that.

Where the Holy Spirit is, he makes Christ to be at the center. Do you know what it means to love the Spirit? Go read it for yourself in your own time. Romans 15 30.

If you love the Spirit, then you're going to intercede for the church. That's what it means to love the Spirit. It's not having an emotion or saying, I love you.

If you really love the church, if you really love the Spirit, then you're going to pray for the body of Christ. Listen to all the things you can do or people can do against the Spirit. You can vex the Holy Spirit.

In other words, you carve him. You know what the word in the Bible means? You carve out an image of him. There's a lot of people in the church, they've carved out their own image of the Holy Spirit.

They are vexing the Holy Spirit. They've created a Holy Spirit they can keep in a box and bring out for a special meeting and they'll tell him what to do. And if they don't like what he's saying, they'll say, no, thank you very much.

That is vexing the Holy Spirit. It's a very dangerous game, I want to tell you. But there's also insulting the Holy Spirit.

You know, you can insult him, offend him. You can actually act in such a way. It'd be like slapping someone in the face.

You say, I'd never do that to the Holy Spirit. Is this person even real to you where he takes over your life? He's so real that you go, if I was to do that or to think like that or to speak to that person, it'd be like insulting the Holy Spirit. We read about grieving or quenching the Holy Spirit.

We read about resisting the Holy Spirit and even tempting the Holy Spirit. What's tempting the Holy Spirit? You want him to act in a way that the word of God says that he would never act. God, we want, Holy Spirit, we want you to do this.

Holy Spirit, do this. Holy Spirit, do that. Holy Spirit, do you realize how dangerous that we're no longer treating him like deity, like a person? You see, when the Holy Spirit comes as a person, it's a fire, it's a raging fire.

You're not in control of this fire. You cannot hem this fire in. He is a burning, consuming fire and you will not limit him.

He will change you. You can grieve him. Since the early church in the book of Acts, what I see is a church baptized in the Holy Ghost and fire.

How do I know that? There's a person there doing what they never could do. Peter denies Jesus three times with curses. I don't know him.

And yet when the Holy Ghost comes, Peter so recedes into the background. No longer a man that takes up a sword or that makes vows, but he's a man who stands up and preaches the gospel with power. Saints, this is a baptism of fire when the person of the Holy Spirit takes over.

That's my first point, personality. Second point, power. There's power.

There's nothing wrong with power. It's what is in people's hearts that's the problem. God promises power.

What is this baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire? What does that fire represent? It represents power. Listen, Acts chapter 1 verse 8, but ye shall, imagine being told that before it happens. You know some of you that are seeking for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and you prayed, Paul, I put him through the fires when he was saying he was near pulling his hair out.

I prayed, I've sought. I just smiled. I said, just receive brother.

Near killed the poor guy. He's a young believer. But I tell you, he received before the night was out.

Can you imagine Christ telling you, you will receive. You will be baptized. What I'm talking about here, you will be baptized.

It's a sure thing. If that grips you, ye shall receive power. When do you receive the power? After the Holy Ghost has come upon you.

When the Holy Ghost comes upon you, baptizes you, mantles you, you will receive power. It doesn't mean it's manifest immediately that power. It doesn't mean that miracles will break out all around you.

What it means is when the real baptism of the Holy Ghost comes, you receive the power. He is the power of God. He's not only the fire of God and the personality of God.

He is the power of God. That's why don't play with power. Do you know what the power of God is? It's a person who is a consuming fire.

When you receive the Holy Spirit, when he comes upon you as a mantle, you receive power. But why do you receive power? You know a lot of people, they want to receive this to have assurance of salvation. Never once is that connected to the baptism in the Holy Ghost.

I want to know I'm saved, or I want victory over sin, or I want... What does it say in Acts 1-8? Why does God give us power? He gives power, a power that you could never work up or create or you don't innately have, so that you will be a witness unto him. The word witness is the word for martyr there, where you lay down your life in order to bear witness to something. Your entire life is given over to say, Jesus is real.

Jesus... You know, some of you know that, you believe that, you live that, but you don't have the power to witness. You need power. You see, in the real baptism in the Holy Ghost, there's a power.

And this word power is dunamis. It's the Greek word dunamis, where we get dynamite from, an explosive power. The word dunamis also means a miraculous, unnatural, unhuman power.

There is a power. There is an influence that is not human, and it's not natural. And you know what that power does? It'll make you a witness.

Your entire life will be released. When you go to the Bible and see the effects of this baptism in the Holy Spirit, it releases the tongue of a genuine believer to be a witness for Christ. Are you sitting here and you're scared to talk for Jesus? Or are you there and you're ashamed of the gospel of Christ? Are you there and struggling to put your words together? Are you there with opportunities and you keep missing it? I want to tell you there is an answer, and it's power.

It's not your power. It's not your ability. Maybe you're baptized in the Holy Ghost, but you're a long way up being filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

You go, when He filled me, I went and told everyone. Now, here I am, cold, lethargic, holding back. You know what? You need filled again with the Holy Spirit of God.

You need a fresh encounter with Him, and power will come. I mean, you will get dunamis in Luke chapter 1, Acts chapter 2, Acts 4, Acts 6, Acts 8, Acts 10, and it can keep going. Every time the Holy Spirit comes and baptizes the church by fire, their tongue is released.

They go and evangelize. They go preach. They go and minister the things of God.

But notice a warning here with power. In Acts 8 verse 19 in Samaria, there was a man called Simon the Saucer who said he believed in the Lord Jesus. Then Philip the evangelist baptized him in water.

And you know what the Bible says there in Acts 8? It says that every time you've seen Philip, you've also seen Simon the Saucer, this new convert. Every time at the shoulder of Philip, Philip went over here. Philip's up early.

Philip's going out in the streets to minister. Guess where Simon is? Right by his shoulder. Every time you see Philip in that city, you see Simon the Saucer.

Man, what a convert. What a testimony. Oh no.

You see, Simon the Saucer began to reveal attitudes of the heart. You see, you could watch someone's outward conversion. Haven't we seen it? They profess Christ, get baptized in water.

They say, I'm born again. And yet with the passing of time, you realize their heart, their motive, their attitudes are utterly unaffected. Salvation is not a prayer or an experience you had a year ago or five years ago.

You know what? Simon the Saucer is there in a revival. Miracles, demons cast out, the power of God coming down. A remarkable evangelist used of God.

Listen to what happens when Peter and John come down and Simon begins to see them pray for folk to receive the Holy Spirit. Do you know, you can see people receive the Holy Spirit or hear because he's looking at all the people in the meeting and he's watching them receive through the laying on of hands, the baptism in the Holy Ghost. And he says, I'd like to do this.

Do you know what we count as lack of sanctification or lack of holiness is often lack of salvation in the church? And I'm not talking about us here, but if the hat fits. Listen to what Simon says. Give me also this power.

I want the power. I want the power. This is revealing his heart.

What's he after? Is he after the fire? Is he after the Holy Spirit? He's after the power and not the power to receive it. He hasn't received this. He has not been baptized in the Holy Ghost.

What he's doing is watching other men, apostles, ministering to others. And he said, I want to be able to minister like that. I want to be able to give this.

I want to see the manifestations of the spirit. So he goes to Peter, wrong person to pick. If you're ever going to do this, don't pick a spirit baptized man in ministry or else you're going to get burned.

Because believe me, we've seen an awful lot of things through the years. Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto them, thy money perish with thee, because thou thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

When you find people in the church thinking money can buy God, that money comes before God, that you can use money to create an environment. You know what it shows? You know nothing about this. Actually, Peter tells, one translation says, your money go to hell with you.

I like that. I don't like other translations, but I like that. Damn your money.

To hell with your money. You actually think that your money means anything to God and that you can use that. And you're after the power to minister to other people.

Don't you see your heart? That's dangerous power. That's a very dangerous thing about power. And the ministry of this generation is filled with people.

You know how often I've been shocked by men in ministry? I'm like, this is a good man. Very rare in my entire life. Where I meet someone in ministry, Dennis, Pastor Dennis is one that I met a few weeks ago.

And I went, I've met a man of God who understands this. That is as rare as hen's teeth within the body of Christ. Since this baptism of fire, it's personality being drenched in the person of the Holy Spirit.

It is power. There is power. You've got to believe this.

Maybe you've forgotten about the power. Maybe you're not on the knees saying, it's in the Holy Spirit. There's power to make me a witness, to speak out, to testify.

You're sitting here saying, I can't do that. Then I'm telling you the way. You need power through the Holy Spirit.

You need this fire to release your tongue. If your tongue gets on fire, you're going to evangelize. Third of all, purity.

There is a work of holiness in the midst of this. Now let's turn to your Bible, Luke chapter three. I really want you to see this before we close.

Luke chapter three and verse 16. And it says, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. And then notice the very next verse, he's going to explain something about the baptism and the Holy Ghost and fire.

After mentioning the fire connected to being filled with the Holy Spirit or immersed in the Holy Spirit. Verse 17, what does it say? Whose fan is in his hand. In whose hand? The hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The one who baptizes you in the Holy Spirit and fire. In his hand, there is a fan. And he will thoroughly purge his floor and will gather the wheat into his garner and the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire or fire unquenchable.

This is in the context of the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire. Never forget this verse. You see, he not only brings his personality and his power, but he brings his purity.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit, it is to be filled with his holiness. Show me someone filled with the spirit. I've seen it over the years.

Someone would lay hands, teach them to speak in tongues and then say, there you've got it. And the guy goes back and gets into his bed with his girlfriend. And I said, he didn't get it.

He didn't get it. And he certainly didn't get a net. And he didn't get him because the night I got filled with the Holy Spirit, the holiness of God filled me.

How can you be filled with the Holy Spirit and not be filled with his holiness? You're still jealous. You're filled with envy. You're filled with grief.

You're a selfish so-and-so. Do you know one of the greatest miracles in the church for me, if I ever, I seen it was for selfish and an altar called for selfishness. We're jealous people and selfish people, not drugs, not drink, not immorality.

What about selfishness and pride and arrogance? You see, that's the real mark of the Holy Spirit coming. If he can come with his fire, he is going to purge the entire floor. And so we see Jesus who baptizes in the Holy Ghost and fire.

Then he's got a, in his hand is the winnowing fork. It's the fan. And do you know what happens? It's talking about the winnowing of weight here.

And he says, it's going to happen on the floor. You know what the floor is? It's the church. And when God begins to work, an awful lot comes into the church that may not be good.

And you know what Christ does? He baptizes in the Holy Ghost. He begins to winnow. He's winnowing.

Do you know what happens with the wheat and the chaff? The wheat is covered in chaff. You can't get wheat without chaff. You can't get a revival without something of the false coming in.

You can't get a real genuine work in the heart without something having to be dealt with in your life or the church or false converts or some Simon the Saucer. It's utterly impossible where you get a real work of God. You're going to get a Simon the Saucer coming in and saying, I want that.

What have we seen here in this city? Some of the worst criminals, rogues, everything. And they go, this is real. I want this.

You know, that isn't a testimony that we've done something wrong, that they went back to that world. It's a testimony that they knew this was real. They're drawn in there, the chaff.

But what does Christ do? With the real baptism in the Holy Ghost, there is going to be a work of purifying the church. When the church is fire baptized, baptized in the Holy Spirit, he begins to purge the floor. He's going to cleanse it.

All of the harvest is sitting here. And he says, this isn't okay. This isn't okay.

There's a lot of stuff here. That isn't really born again. There's not pure heart and I'm going to begin to winnow it.

And you throw it up in the air. You know, the thing about the real weight, it falls to the ground. It's heavy.

And you know, the thing about all of the dross, it blows away. Go on YouTube and watch this happening. Some of them nowadays, they get a fan and they just start dropping the weight.

They crush it all, bounce it around and they start dropping it. And they just hold a fan and you get all of that, all of that trash, all of that chaff blown away. They've just got a wind blowing on us.

Do you know when God begins to work, what keeps the real will blow away the false. It always happens. Acts chapter five, you had Ananas and Sapphira brought in on a revival like Simon, the saucer.

And do you know what they're doing? They're sitting in their house and they're planning to lie to an apostle. They're planning to say they're given, oh, they're given a lot of money, an awful lot of money, but they're going to lie. They're manipulating the things.

They're saying Barnabas has been thought much of because he sold a field. We want that testimony. So husband, how are we going to do this? And they talk about it.

But you know what? You shouldn't walk into a real church or a real revival or deal with the real apostle when you're in this condition. We know Peter again said, did you say you sold the land for this? Yes, we did. Right guys, barrier.

What are we looking at when people die in Acts chapter five in the church? You're looking at Jesus Christ, the same one who baptized in the Holy ghost in Acts two. He is the same one in Acts five. He's got his fan out and he says, you know what? I'm going to deal with this.

There's fire in this church. Saints of God, can I plead with you? Keep the fire in this church. It's going to keep us.

It's going to purify us. It's going to protect us from so much. If you have the fire, you're going to have purity in the house of God.

You're going to have a pure fan of the hearts by faith. And you know what? You'll have the fruit of the spirit there. You're going to have love.

If you don't love others around you, you need to be baptized in the Holy ghost and fire. There's something wrong with your experience. If you've got bitterness and jealousy and envy and hatred and always annoyed, you know, before the day of Pentecost, Peter said about John, huh? What about him? Master? What about him? Never you mind.

I'll tell you about how you're going to die when you're an old man. No, I don't want to hear that. I'm going to tell you that.

You know what Jesus was doing was getting this winnowing fan out. So you're looking at others. Let's deal with your heart here a little bit.

When you begin to see the real baptism in the Holy ghost and the church, it's going to scorch sinners, hypocrites, Pharisees. I've been amazed. One guy coming in here, an old timer saved for 30 odd years.

And he was coming in this church and he was coming with an agenda. I'd never met him before. And he was coming in and he had a plan and he was going to educate all these young guys around the table.

I don't know he's coming, but on a Saturday afternoon, the Lord speaks to me very clearly and says, you know, after the morning service, I want you to speak in repentance and I want you to get your old notes off your computer and go in there. It's just a thought. I don't know what I'm doing, but I'll tell you what, there's a real baptism in the Holy ghost.

And when I go in there, do you know what his issue is? He believes you can have faith and be born again without repentance. He's got a whole doctrine of this. And before he opened his mouth or settled in this church, I'm standing up and I'm dealing with the air that dominates his entire life.

And he says, I'll see you Wednesday night, never come back in here. And I'm not sorry about that. If he ever comes back in here, I'll be on terms of you don't get in this thing without repentance.

It's not faith without repentance. That's heresy. That's an error.

That's a problem. Fourth. And lastly here, I hope you're beginning to see the baptism in the Holy spirit, the fire that's within it.

It brings personality, it brings power, it brings purity, but last of all, it brings perseverance. It brings perseverance. Do you know that in the, in Galatians chapter five with the nine gifts, sorry, the nine fruit of the Holy spirit, one of them is temperance.

The word temperance there means that when the Holy spirit comes, it's an attribute of him, which he reveals in an individual. If you get baptized in the Holy ghost and with his fire and you're immersed in him, or do you think you're going to be an intemperate person? You see, I believe in the power of Pentecost, but if you get gifts and miracles and healings and wind and fire, and yet you are not a temperate person, there's something wrong. This fourth and final point I'm dealing with is that when the fire of the Holy spirit comes in your life or entire church, it creates perseverance, just like purity.

You need perseverance in the church. The word temperance or self-control, listen to what it means. It means to restrain yourself, the ability to deny self.

This is a basic fruit of the Holy spirit or evidence that he's in your life. If you're someone who has no, and I'm not saying about wrestling against sin or failing or struggling, if you have no self-control, you follow the flesh, you do everything it says, you're not convicted, you don't rise up and fight. You need born again this morning.

You need born again because temperance is the mark of a spirit filled believer. It comes from a root meaning to have strength, power, dominion, vigor. To have temperance means you've got power over the flesh.

Listen to this definition, to be strong in a thing, to have inward strength. It is strength over your emotions, your lusts, your passions, your thoughts. It is to master all that is considered self.

It is self-rule, the ability to rule yourself. Doesn't the proverb say, a man who can rule and a man who can, sorry, let me just get that scripture. He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.

If you cannot rule your own spirit, well, I just got to get angry. I can't control that. You need fire.

Do you hear me? Where the fire of the baptism comes, you cannot say I'm uncontrolled. I can't control my tongue. You just tell everyone what you think.

You know what you need? You need some fire. You know in the Old Testament with the sacrifice that went on the altar, the fire's about to fall. Do you know what the priest used to do? They used to take a long surgical knife and they started to chop up the sacrifice.

That cow chopped off its legs, chopped off its ears, chopped off its tail, but listen to this, chopped off its tongue. You know why? You know why the priest was doing that? When the fire falls, I don't want that tongue hanging off. I want that tongue right in the altar.

I want the fire to hit that tongue. You know what the baptism in the Holy Ghost is? It's a tongue of fire, a tongue of fire. I believe in speaking in tongues.

I believe in the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. I believe in miracles. I've been healed in my body, but I want to tell you, people who speak in tongues and yet they gossip and they lie and they connive, there's something wrong with their experience.

It's no experience. You see, this perseverance brings, this fire brings perseverance or a control over the old nature. Temperance is self-control of the flesh and the body, but also of your thoughts, your affections, your mood swings, your speech, your conduct, your manners, what you believe, your habits, your friendships, your relaxation, your future plans.

We'll go a bit further. How you dress, sleeping, eating. Do you realize what I've just said? This is temperance.

This is temperance. Your conduct with the opposite sex, all this is temperance. Your body, your food, your clothes, your relationships.

Temperance. Let me finish with this last scripture. When we look at the New Testament at a fire-baptized church, Acts chapter two.

Do you know what you see about that church? Acts chapter two, verse 42, after being fire-baptized, it says they continued steadfastly. What is that? That's perseverance. It was the result of Pentecost that you had an entire church that remained steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer, all of these things, and in fellowship and together.

Do you know why? They'd been baptized in fire, and so that fire meant they're going to persevere. I'm going to stay with the preaching of the word. I'm going to stay in the prayer meeting.

You know why? I've been fire-baptized. The baptism in fire makes you to endure, but the church in Acts two that had to remain persevering over the internal working of the church by Acts chapter 14 is suffering persecution. Listen to what Barnabas said.

New converts, new churches, new believers, and he goes back preaching in them with his sidekick called Saul of Tarsus. Listen to what they've done. Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue, meaning stay in your place, to persevere, keep on going in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God.

What is perseverance? Do you know why we need a fire-baptized church in the 21st century, in the 2020s? It's because you're going to face some of the most horrendous things you ever imagined. Much of the western church never thought they would see what we're seeing now. It's okay for China to suffer, and the Sudanese beliefs to suffer, and the underground church, but all of a sudden God is shaking everything and changing governments, and he's allowing them to move in a certain way.

How are you going to persevere in this hour? How are you going to endure through this? How are you going to stand and preach the gospel? Are you going to be found compromising? Matthew 24, one of the marks of the beginning of sorrows is the brother will betray brother. The spirit of Judas will come again to the church of the 21st century, and that's people professing Christ will sell out their brothers and their sisters to either not suffer themselves or to gain a reputation. There's going to be a release and a widespread release of the spirit of Judas.

New loyalty, new faithfulness, new uprightness, and you'd save your skin. You'd sell out the church of Jesus Christ, and you know the person who does that will end up in eternal hell. Judas went straight to hell, hung himself because he knew what he'd done.

The devil drove him to it, and then he went to hell. I believe the answer for this hour is a fire-baptized church. The personality of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit, the purity of the Holy Spirit, and the perseverance of the Holy Spirit.

If I'm immersed in him, I can go through all hell and back. I can face any trial, any trouble in my marriage, in my life, in my workplace, in my nation, and you know what? When it all settles, I'll be found standing because I'm baptized in the Holy Ghost and fire. The baptism in the Holy Ghost will put a backbone within you that you'd stand against an entire nation and glorify the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Please stand with me. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Let's lift our hands here.

Lord Jesus, we need you. We need you. Have you been baptized in the Holy Ghost and fire? If ever you're going to need it, it's now, in this hour.

You must be baptized. You need to be immersed in the Holy Spirit and with his fire. If you're going to face this 2020s and all that is happening in our world, you need the fire of the Holy Spirit.

You need a mantle of fire. You need an infilling of the Holy Spirit. You need to hear the command of Christ.

This is not an option. We have come to an hour where this is no longer an option. It's not an issue of dispute in the church.

It's not a theological football that we kick around. We need to be baptized in fire. If we're going to stand in this hour and be witnesses with the power of God, if we're going to endure through very hard and difficult days, I want to tell you, we need fire from on high.

Pray with me. Father, we pray right now for their baptism of fire. Anyone who has not been filled, we pray right now.

Will you baptize them? Will you give on to them? Will you open their hearts that they might receive fire from on high to be filled with a person, to be filled with the power of God, to be filled with the very nature of

God? Father, I pray, O God, in our world and generation, raise up fire-baptized churches everywhere. We are tired of the debaters of religion. We are tired of men playing games of religion and doctrines.

We want a church on fire like the first century church. We need all of the endowments of the Holy Spirit, and we need the power of Pentecost now, in Jesus' mighty name. Hallelujah.

Amen. This altar is open this morning. You can come and stand.

You can kneel where you are, but saints of God, for one moment, turn your heart towards God. Do not leave this building without saying, baptize me with the Holy Ghost in power. I need an old-fashioned baptism.

If you're so leaky that it's all drained out of you, there is a second and a third and a fourth and a fifth filling with the Holy Spirit of God. It is so real when the power of the Holy Spirit comes upon you. Let's seek Him here in these minutes as we close.

Hallelujah.

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