

# **“Keep the Fire Burning”**

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Do you remember when you first came to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior?

- Are you just as “on fire” for God as you were then?
- Has the excitement decreased or has it increased?

God starts the fire inside of us when we are saved. The initial spark comes from Him – like the lighting of a match. But for the spark to grow into something strong and lasting, it needs fuel. It is up to us to add fuel to the fire to keep it burning bright.

## **TWO PRINCIPLES FROM GOD’S WORD**

There are two biblical principles that help us to stay focused and motivated so that we can continue to fuel the fire inside of us. Whether you have a little spark, or a roaring fire inside, you need to add fuel to keep it burning and growing. The brighter we burn inside, the greater our lights will shine on the outside. People will see Jesus when they see us.

### **“God is love.” (1 JOHN 4:8b)**

From the beginning of time, the Creator has loved His creation. He commands us to love. **The number one thing that will fuel the fire inside of us is love.**

### **FIRST PRINCIPLE: WE FUEL OUR FIRE FOR GOD BY LOVING HIM ABOVE ALL ELSE.**

“You shall have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6).

We are commanded to put God above everyone and everything. There must be no exceptions.

### **DEUTERONOMY 6:4-7**

God told His people they were to keep these words alive and in front of them every day from the time they get up until they lie down, and everywhere they went. He promised them if they put Him first, they would

have great success, significance, and victory over their enemies. We are His children and He promises us the same thing. When Jesus was asked what is the greatest commandment, He quoted these same Scriptures.

### **MARK 12:29**

Loving God must be our first priority. Loving Him should be the number one motivator for anything we do. Love is the fuel that constantly stokes our fire. Your love for God must be anchored in who He is to you personally.

- The more you know Him, the deeper you will love Him.
- God sent the Holy Spirit so we could know Him intimately – Spirit to spirit. The Holy Spirit is your Helper. He lives inside you and is with you always. If you allow Him to, He will teach you about the Father and “tell you things to come.” (John 16:13-15). Our part is to seek Him.

### **PSALM 119:2**

We fuel the fires of love for God by seeking Him. He promises us in Deuteronomy 4:29 "... you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul." The more time we spend with God, the more our love increases and our fire grows stronger. We do this in His Word, worship, praise, prayer, and listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit.

- When you awake in the morning do you think of God and express your love to Him?
- Are you aware of His presence as you go through your day?
- Do you think of Him as you lay your head on your pillow at night?

We build our love for God by seeking Him. As we seek Him, our love grows and fuels our fire. God uses this fire to build His Kingdom. The fire on the inside of us is displayed on the outside. We shine our lights for all to see.

### **MATTHEW 5:14-16**

**SECOND PRINCIPLE: WE FUEL OUR FIRE FOR GOD BY LOVING OTHERS.**

### **MATTHEW 22:36-40**

We are commanded to love our neighbors. In Matthew 22:36-40, a lawyer asked Jesus a question. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy to him. Then Jesus added something. In Verse 39, He said, “And the second is like it: You shall

love your neighbor as yourself.”

### **1 JOHN 4:9, 19-21**

- When you spend time with your family, friends, and brothers and sister in Christ are your thoughts toward loving them?
- Each day when you leave home do you look at the people around you and think of how much God loves them? Is this difficult to do?

### **MATTHEW 28:19-20**

You do not have to do it alone. Jesus is with you.

When love is your primary motivation, the fire keeps burning. Each time you display the love of God to someone, or make a decision based on love, you add more fuel to the fire. Determine in your heart that you will continue to fuel the fires of love in your heart for God and for others. It will cause you to shine for Him. It will also bring you great joy.

### **JOHN 15:10-12; JOHN 13:34-35**

We have to make a decision to crucify our own desire to do things our way, and yield to God’s will and do things His way. God is in absolute control. Romans 8:28 says that He makes “all things work together for good to those who love God.” Love and obedience work hand in hand. (Philippians 3:17-21; Hebrews 12:3; 1 Corinthians 15:58)

We must take care not to quench the fire in our hearts. Galatians 5:24 says, “And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us to run with endurance the race set out for us. We are to keep our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Jesus showed us the ultimate display of love when he went to the cross (John 19:1-6; 19:15-18). Crucifixion was the ultimate act of sacrifice fueled by love for God and love for others. He had the joy of knowing that because of His love and obedience to the Father, that salvation would be possible for all of us. We would be together with Him for eternity.

## **The Fire and Passion Comes from Inside Us**

Passion come from inside. For the spark inside of you to grow into something strong and lasting, it needs fuel. For this fuel to burn, it takes faith, discipline and courage. The more your fire grows, the stronger it gets, and the harder it is to put it out. Run the race with zeal, excitement and fire. Others will be drawn to you when they see your light shining brightly. Share the Good News with others so that they can catch fire too!

- In Leviticus 6:12-13, priests were commanded to keep the fires burning perpetually. We have a choice. Will we be like a match – one spark that burns for a moment and goes out? A bonfire that burns huge, and hot for a while, but eventually over time, without fuel, dies out, or an eternal flame that burning perpetually and takes us into eternity? The choice is for each of us to make.
- We are the ones who fuel the fires inside of us. Let us determine today that we will not be passive Christians who let their fire die. Make a decision today that you will be a child of God who is on fire and brightly shining for Jesus. All it takes is fueling the fire of love for God and others (Matthew 22:37-39). Open up every corner of your heart to God. Do not hold back anything. Love Him extravagantly!

The Apostle Peter tells us our faith will be “tested by fire.” We are to believe, so we may receive the end of our faith - “the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:6-9).

One day you will stand before God and hear “well done good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23). You are a winner and champion in Christ both in this life, and for eternity.

Perhaps you have never known God. Perhaps you have put off accepting this spark of divine love. The one and only true God is reaching out to you. He sent His son Jesus to die on the cross so that you could receive His love. His Holy Spirit is tugging on your heart this morning to put your life in His loving hands. He so loved the world that He sent His son Jesus (John 3:16). Jesus shed His blood for you so you can be saved, so that you can be accepted, loved and have a personal relationship with Him. That begins the day you become a Christian. You can spend every day with Him, in His presence today and throughout eternity- being loved by Him.