

September 2002: Catching The Fire

by Aaron Greenway

In an information-saturated society, we often become numb to almost everyone and everything. After all, for some of us who have an extensive, Christian background, the whole experience can become “humdrum.” What happened to the fire in our lives? What happened to the passion? However, in many situations, it is not that we don’t desire to love Jesus, but we have allowed the cares of this world, the discouragements, and the repetition in our lives to make us unresponsive to the Spirit of God. Sounds like vicious cycle, a pattern that is impossible to break.

“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mark 12:30-31)

These words are very familiar to some of us. These are the words of Jesus when the Scribes of his day tempted him by asking “Which is the first commandment of all?” The problem is that this group of people themselves had no clue as to what it meant to love God completely. They were bogged down with their legalistic practices. They were too busy worrying about the obedience of everyone else in society that they forgot about themselves. The thing is, it is very easy for us, as well, to look at the spiritual lives of others and not realize that we are just as bad...or worse!

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**Do you remember
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So, let me present a question: If we know what God’s Word says, why do we have such a hard time putting this into practice? The Apostle James recognized this problem when he said, “Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:22) It is easy to give lip service or an “Amen!” to something and then forget about it the moment we step outside the

church doors. Somehow, for many of us, there is a breach between the head and the heart and this is how we can attend service after service, Bible study after Bible study, (or read newsletter after newsletter), hearing about commitment and consecration, hearing about that deeper relationship with the Lord and yet no changes are made. We walk out the same as what we were when we went in. The tragedy is that we are “fat” with knowledge but do not know how to apply it to our lives (or we are too lazy to do it!). This is the difference between head knowledge and heart knowledge. This is the difference between being a Christian in name only and being a Christian who makes a “dent” in our world. Paul spoke of a certain group of people when he said, They “have a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away.” (2 Timothy 3:5) Are we denying the power of God in our lives?

Do you remember what your life was like when you first gave your heart to the Lord Jesus? Do you remember that incredible relief in your life from the guilt of your sin, that eagerness as a new believer to serve Jesus, to do anything for Him? A better question is this, where did it go? This causes us to begin questioning whether or not what we experienced with God was real. For many of us, it was real! But there is a continual dependency that we must have on God in order to live vibrant, Christian lives. The Apostle Peter said that God has given us everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). God has not hidden anything from us that would keep us from living lives full of passion and obedience. He has not held anything back.

So how does the Word of God become more real in our lives? How does God begin to work again in a stagnated heart? It is only when we humble ourselves again. Solomon said that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34). What is grace? Grace is unmerited favor. It is also the power to do what is right? We have the power in the Holy Spirit to do what is right once we tell God, “Lord, I am tired of living life in my own strength. Do what you have to do in my life to break this cycle. Bring revival to my life!!” A prayer like this will have to be prayed daily as we stayed fixed in the Word. There must be a determination if we are serious. We cannot get discouraged.

Paul was serious about it when he said that “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge

of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” (Philippians 3:7-8)

Let us leave a fireless life behind. Let us seek God passionately, committing ourselves more deeply. Let us not walk out our church without being impacted for the Kingdom of God. God is near. He is ready to take our lives, to do miracles in our lives that we have never seen before. He is ready to have intimate communion with us and to make our lives something that we could only dream of. I do not speak necessarily of the physical, but of the spiritual. This is when we will catch that fire and make an impact in our world. Have you caught the fire?