

Sermon ~ Sunday, May 16th, 2021 by Pastor D Benoit

Text: Acts 2: 3, 4

Title: "The FIRE Within!"

There is a big difference between "*charisma*" and **CHRIST!**

Charisma is the quality of *being* able... **CHRIST is Able!** *Charisma* is quality of '*charm, confidence and influence.*' **CHRIST** is "*conviction, connection and compassion.*" *Charisma* can encourage someone to ask, "What must I do?" **CHRIST** *inspire* one to "*cry out,*" "I believe. I confess my sin. I repent and desire to be saved; I accept **JESUS CHRIST** as my **LORD** and **SAVIOR**. Now what shall I do?" How?

"The FIRE Within!"

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it (**HE**) 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."

Fire... see it in the *fireplace...* flickering light; cracking in consuming sounds; singeing an odor burning smell; sending out a direct heat of cheerful flames, with therapeutic help. Most of us do not have *fireplaces*. But **GOD** has always had **HIS** *fireplaces*. "The burning bush, that would not be consumed." "The Brazen Altar in the Tabernacle of **GOD**." "The *Fire* that fall from Heaven and licked up four barrels of water, on Mount Carmel." "**The Church** at *Pentecost* that started out with 120 members and by the end of the day, three thousand more were added, burning with "**FIRE** on the *inside*."

The only *Fireplaces* **GOD** has today in all the world are "the *hearts* of **HIS** *people*—**The Church**." **The HOLY GHOST** appeared "like as of *fire*." Hebrews 12: 29 declares, "Our **GOD** is a consuming *fire*." Isaiah spoke of "**The SPIRIT** of burning" (Isaiah 4: 4). We are to be "filled with **The SPIRIT**." The **FIRE** of The **HOLY GHOST** needs to burn in the *fireplaces* of our hearts! **CHRIST** is all the **FIRE** we need, in times like these.

"The FIRE Within!"

CHRIST FIRE *consumes*. That *bonfire* in Ephesus (Acts 19: 19), *consumed* all those 'bad books.' When Abram and Lot his nephew *obeyed* **GOD'S WORD**, 'to *get out* and *don't look back*,' all of Sodom was *consumed* by **FIRE**. Moses said to Israel, "Understand therefore this day that **The LORD** thy **GOD** is **HE** which goeth before thee; as a *consuming fire* **HE** shall destroy them (enemies), and **HE** shall bring them down before their face—not your righteousness." (Deuteronomy 9: 3) When the *sin* of Achan was discovered, the people stoned him and burned him with *fire*." (Joshua 7: 25) **Church**, if we would but let **The FIRE of The HOLY GHOST** fill us, all that is undesirable in us, would be *consumed*. You see, no one has to worry about what to do with what has already been burned up!

CHRIST FIRE purifies. Can you testify as Isaiah did? When **The LORD** found him, “The house (the car, the ditch, the jail, etc.) was filled with smoke (where ever there is smoke, there is *fire...*” (Isaiah 6: 4). After Isaiah (you, I) *confessed*, one of the seraphim came to him (me, you), “having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon [his, my, your] mouth, and said, ‘Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.’” (Isaiah 6: 6, 7)

Church, the presence of so much that is impure about us is surely the result of the truth that **The FIRE** does not burn *within* us. The way to get cleaned up is to get burned out. And **The HOLY GHOST** is **The Divine** conflagration without, which we shall remain cluttered and polluted *within*. Oooh, let **HIM** *in!!!*

CHRIST FIRE prepares. Following **The Resurrection**, our **LORD** appeared to **HIS disciples** by The Sea of Galilee. One of the sweet verses from the text states that “as soon as they were come to land, they saw a *fire* of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.” (John 21: 9) The food was made ready with *fire*. We push back a good many ‘*spiritual groceries*—Prayer, Devotion/Meditation, *Giving* into **GOD’S KINGdom**, Bible Study...’ and label them as ‘*inedible*’ simply because we do not allow **The HOLY GHOST FIRE** to make them savory. The intolerable becomes delightful following **The FIRE**. Could it be that we ourselves are *raw* and *repulsive* because we have not been made ready with **The FIRE**?

CHRIST FIRE cheers. Coming in from winter experiences to an open *fire*, brings *cheer*. Without **The SPIRIT**, we are caught in the cold grip of despair. With **The SPIRIT** we are *cheered* on to Victory. One of the unique ‘word pictures’ of **JESUS CHRIST** declares, “**HIS EYES** were as a flame of *fire*.” (Revelation 1: 14) The flame brought terror to the enemies, but it brought *cheer* to **HIS people**. **The HOLY GHOST** *cheers* us!

CHRIST FIRE softens. The Psalmist David declared that “as the wax melteth before the *fire*, so let the wicked perish at **The Presence of GOD**.” (Psalm 68: 2) Isaiah prophesied, “As when the melting *fire* burneth . . . the nations may tremble at **THY Presence**. (Isaiah 64: 2) If anyone can melt a heart of stone, **The HOLY GHOST** can! **The HOLY GHOST** melted my *sinning* heart. **HE** *remolded* me. **HE** *remade* me. **HE** *regenerated* me.

CHRIST FIRE unites. You can take, Copper, Aluminum, Stainless Steel, Zinc—all hard and heavy metals. The only thing that can *unify* them is *fire*. Much of the *unity* of ingredients in our food comes because of *fire*. Likewise, **GOD’S people** are *united* by **The Power of GOD’S fire**. It does not matter, black or white, Asian or Caucasian, whosoever... **The HOLY GHOST fire** can *unify* us. Those two *disciples* that walked on their way to Emmaus were *united* as their hearts burned within them by **The FIRERY Presence of JESUS**. (Luke 24: 32, they testified, ‘Did not our hearts burn within as **HE** broke bread with us!’) *Fellowship* is dependent on **The FLAME!**

CHRIST FIRE empowers. We fail to get up much steam in many of our endeavors because we do not have enough *fire* under the boilers. In our 'do-it-yourself determinism', we insist on our *programs, promises* and *cliches* of flameless cooking. Let me remind us, **JESUS WORDS** are clear, "But ye shall receive power, after that **The HOLY GHOST** is come upon you..." (Acts 1: 8)

CHRIST FIRE—**The HOLY GHOST** burns only in our *hearts!* The *consuming, purifying, preparing, cheering, softening, uniting, and empowering* of **GOD'S Holy FIRE** is ours! Let us pray earnestly crying, "**LORD**, set my soul *afire!* **LORD**, set my soul *afire!*"

WHO is this, that I feel deep *inside?* **WHO** is this, that keeps setting my soul *afire?*
WHO ever **HE** is, **WHO** ever **HE** is, **WHO** ever **HE** is,
HE won't let me hold my peace!

WHO is this, that makes people say I'm mad and strange?
WHO is this, that makes me want to run on in **JESUS' NAME?**
WHO ever **HE** is, **WHO** ever **HE** is, **WHO** ever **HE** is,
HE won't let me hold my peace!

HE makes me love all my enemies. And **HE** makes love my Friends.
And **HE** won't let me be ashamed, to tell the world that I've been *Born Again!*
Ooh! **WHO** is this!
WHO is this? That makes do right when I would do wrong?
WHO is this?

I know **WHO HE is, HE is The HOLY GHOST...**

"The FIRE Within!"