

“Worship on Fire”

Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-28

Graphic: fire, worship, sanctuary, Mount Zion

Key Verses: 12:28-29 - Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

Theme: Nothing and nobody that goes into a fire ever stays the same. If our God is an all-consuming fire, then when we come into His presence in worship, we should be transformed – into holy, refined, and thankful people looking toward his unshakable kingdom.

1) Introduction

- a) Fire transforms
- b) Marshmallows
- c) Wood
- d) Metal...fine metal
- e) Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego...were not killed, but they went in bound and came out free...with a testimony of how protected them
- f) Worship fire...
- g) Turn with me in your Bibles to Hebrews, chapter 12, starting in verse 14...
- h) Pray...

2) Scripture

a) Read verses 12:14-17

- i) Holiness is faith refined
- ii) Quote?
- iii) Pursue holiness...this is the step into allow God to transform you with his fire...

b) Read verses 12:18-21

- i) No longer does God relate to us only through commandments and restrictions...
- ii) No longer does God come to us only on Mount Sinai or does he live in the Temple holy of holies...
- iii) No longer does God work through fear and trembling (although we often lose sight of God's awesomeness and Jesus becomes our buddy)...

c) Read verses 12:22-24

- i) BUT...to ALL OF THIS! This is yours!
- ii) Not restrictions, but freedom and joy – worshipping in spirit and truth.
- iii) Church is not a set of rules and regulations, it a way of boldly living out your salvation through Jesus Christ – the mediator of this NEW covenant, this forgiveness
- iv) With all the saints and all the angels and all the heavenly realm!

d) Read verse 12:25-29

- i) Don't reject that...don't downplay it.
- ii) And don't FAKE it either...this is genuine love...
- iii) Miracles happen and we're convinced...
- iv) Listen to God's voice speaking through preachers and leaders...through friends and mentors...don't reject that fire that wants to burn in you and give you passion...
- v) Some folks rejected Jesus b/c all they could see was Him as a human...he's just a man.
- vi) But we know Jesus lived...history proves that. AND we have the witness of the saints...AND we have the witness of the Holy Spirit...AND we have the witness of others who have been transformed.
- vii) God shook the earth when Jesus came...
- viii) And he promises to do that again...more fire is coming!

- ix) But remember, the only thing that doesn't get consumed in a fire is the fire itself...
- x) Everything else gets used up as fuel...
- xi) And the this world is being consumed and transformed into God's kingdom one person at a time...one heart at a time.
- xii) And God's wants to give that kingdom to YOU – the kingdom of joy and freedom in Him, not fear and shame and guilt and sin. Forgiveness and love and effectiveness and passion!
- xiii) This unshakable KINGDOM! The fire that can never be put out is waiting for us to burn with it...to be consumed IN IT!
- xiv) Verse 28 – our response is to worship
- xv) Verse 29 – for INDEED, our God is a consuming fire.
- xvi) Third Day song...

3) Application

- a) Worship in spirit and truth
- b) It's not about the projector and screen
- c) It's not about the praise team or the music
- d) It's not about the sermon or the readings
- e) It's not about me or you
- f) It's about Jesus...
- g) Make it about Jesus by:
 - i) Pursuing peace and holiness...get rid of sin
 - ii) Find how God is working in all things...lessons learned, joys acknowledged
 - iii) Fear God is a healthy way

- iv) Come to church and worship often – 3 out of 4 Sundays, discipleship, service.
- v) Prepare your hearts to listen and be changed...
- vi) Give thanks to God in all things...
- vii) Welcome the all-consuming fire into your life...loosen up and ask God to fill you...to come in more and more...

4) Conclusion

- a) We've been corrupted by Jesus Junk! "Christ has been moved off the cross and onto sandals," observes church-planter Jason Janz. "He's not transcendent. He's cute, cool and chic. After all, as one backpack boasts, 'He Rocks!'"
- b) True worship isn't wearing an "iPray" hat, according to Hebrews. It isn't a time to be funny, clever or cute but instead a chance for us to have an honest and awe-inspiring encounter with the God who comes to us in Christ. It's time to turn away from worship filled with Jesus Junk and toward an experience full of awe.
- c) Here is the cry of one young woman for some awe in worship: "As a young adult, I do not need flashy graphics, a loud worship band, projected images on a screen or a cool, hip and stylish pastor to evoke passion in worship. Passion isn't synonymous with loud, big and flashy. ..."
- d) "I want to worship a Creator who formed the universe with a word and molded my very being from the fibers of the earth. I long to sing praises to a God who shouts with excitement through the joys of life and holds me tightly, with mutual tears, in the pits. I want to surrender all I am to the workings of a Holy Spirit who guides my movement in ways I never dreamed possible for myself. I want to humbly bow to the most humble of babies who changed the course of history for eternity. I want to lay offerings before a God who offered his own Son to wipe away the distance I continually place between [us]. I want to meet this Jesus over and over again, so maybe someday I will begin to understand the magnitude of a Love so grand, so extreme and so passionate."
- e) Worship-On-Fire comes in all shapes, sizes and volumes. It can be experienced in an evening prayer service in a cool, dark cathedral. Around a campfire, accompanied by the music of guitars. At the start of a church

meeting, when Scripture and prayer are shared. In a particularly heartfelt sermon in a sanctuary on a summer Sunday morning. At a midweek service revolving around a meditation on a piece of art. Any of these experiences can be full of awe, but only if they provide an authentic encounter with the God who came to us in Jesus, to show us his grand and passionate love.

- f) Nothing that goes into a fire remains the same. Nothing that encounters this Jesus through worship-on-fire ever comes out unchanged.
- g) Our God is an all-consuming fire, ready to change you today. He's an unshakable force that will stay the same no matter what we go through.
- h) Open yourself to that fire today...
- i) Allow that fire to change you as we worship the God of truth and holiness...
- j) Turn up the heat of your heart today in worship...
- k) Let's pray...