

# Maintaining Ministerial Fervor

by Don Currin

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*Ministers must maintain holy zeal and genuine passion for Christ to effectively impact their congregations and communities.*

**Scripture:** Judges 18:7, Isaiah 50:11, John 8:12, Acts 18:25, 1 Thessalonians 5:19

**Topics:** "Ministerial Passion", "Spiritual Leadership"

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## Description

Don Currin delivers a powerful sermon on the lethal effects of clerical complacency, emphasizing the danger of passionless ministers contributing to spiritual deadness and formality in congregations. He highlights the importance of leaders having a burning zeal for God to impact communities for Christ, warning against creating self-induced zeal without God's truth. Currin stresses the need for ministers to maintain spiritual passion through consistency in their walk with Christ, drawing inspiration from historical spiritual leaders like George Whitefield who were known for their fervor in serving the Lord.

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## Transcript

### The Lethal Effects of Clergical Complacency

A story is told of a church janitor who was heard to say, "The blower still works, but the fire has gone out." He was relating a problem with the furnace, but the pastor of the church heard his comment and thought he was talking about him.

Unfortunately, the janitor's statement fittingly applies to many ministers today. Passion-less prophets have significantly contributed to the spiritual deadness and formality among their own congregations. Richard Baxter said, "...a sleepy preacher will hardly awaken drowsy sinners. A sermon full of mere words, how neatly soever it be composed, while it lacks the light of evidence and the life of zeal, is but an image or a well-dressed carcase."

Wesley Duewel in his book *Ablaze for God* exhorts, "If you as a leader lack a burning heart, few of your people will be known for their burning hearts, and they will make little impact on the world about them. Our communities are little impressed by our programs and manifold activities. It takes more than a busy church to impact a community for Christ. It must be a church ablaze, led by leaders who are ablaze for God."

Jesus Christ grieves over present day ministers who for a lack of fire in their ministry attempt to create their own. Isaiah 50:11 warns, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with

sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Void of holy fire, many have bowed the knee to the god of pragmatism and made "what works" lord.

Now the nature of the fire that I am speaking of is not fanaticism. A self-induced zeal without God's truth genders an emotion that leaves people "hollow" and disillusioned after the hype has died. Genuine passion is a burning zeal for God that constrains a man to live for Christ by desiring nothing but opportunities for promoting His glory, preaching His truth, and winning lost men to the Savior. This spiritual passion is maintained and cultivated by the consistency of the minister's walk with Christ.

Without exception, the spiritual leaders in church history who made a mark upon their generation for Christ refused to have their fervor for Christ quenched by the deadening effects of lethargy. It was said of George Whitefield that "...he knew no abate of passion. To the end of his remarkable career his soul was a furnace of burning zeal for the salvation of men."

What Bible-believing churches need today are ministers of holy zeal. Men who are unwavering in their devotion to Christ. How tragic that we live in a day when so many ministers who believe the Bible as the Word of God have fallen into a "maintenance mode". Planning for early retirement they live like the people of Laish in Judges 18:7, "quiet and secure". Absent of vision and vigor, they witness the effects of their own lukewarmness in the lives of the people to whom they minister.

Wesley Duewel warns, "A passionless Christianity will not put out the fires of hell. The best way to fight a raging forest fire is with fire. A passionless leader will never set the people ablaze." While Ian Murray admonished, "a dull, half-hearted, lukewarm preacher is no where to be found in the Acts of the Apostles."

Dr. John R. Rice rebuked the lack of fire in ministers years ago in one of his sermons when he said, "Listen, it is not the sinners that are hard. The trouble is it is the preachers that are hard. I find it easier to win a soul and get a drunkard or harlot converted than to get a preacher on fire for souls."

In this hour of complacency in the church may every minister that embraces the Bible as his creed, resolve to guard his heart against the deadening influence of self-satisfaction. May we stir up ourselves to take hold of our God that we may be a "burning and shining light" before those whom God has given us stewardship over.

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