

John Baptist , the Fire of God - Part 2

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of experiencing the power of the Holy Ghost in our lives, which is evident in apostolic success, and encourages believers to seek a heart on fire for God.

Duration: 37:52

Scripture: John 1:6

Topics: "John The Baptist"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the experience of conviction and the response it elicits from individuals. The sermon emphasizes the need for personal introspection and a cry to God for guidance on what to do in the face of conviction. The preacher encourages the congregation to surrender their own plans and desires to align with the mind of God each day. The sermon also highlights the importance of gratitude for God's blessings and a plea for continued mercy and guidance in the future.

Transcript

But get hold of this, this, this tells me every day of my life. Here is a man without any backing, except the praying of the greatest bunch in the world at that time, and while he preaches, it's, it's, it's as though he's got a blowtorch in his hand. I pray that for you preachers, you came here with icebergs in you, go home with a blowtorch in your hand, because our God is consuming fire, and the only answer to hell fire is Holy Ghost fire.

So the people cry out, what shall we do? The publicans cry out, what shall we do? And these people have never heard a man preaching their lives, say, what shall we do? You say, well, that was unique to John the Baptist, forget it. Let me prove that to you. This is Pentecostal preaching.

Brother Bickle wasn't here last night, was he? No? Was he here last night, the night before? I told him that the Catholics in our country always shouted at me on the street meeting, you're not ordained properly. I went to see a Church of England big shot in the, in Sheffield Cathedral, and he said, Mr. Raymond, we do not recognize your ordination. I said, well, Rome doesn't recognize your ordination either.

Oh, we're in the apostolic succession. There's only one way to prove whether you're Pentecostals, or hyper-Pentecostals, or apostolic Pentecostals, or what. There's only one way.

You tell your pastor, take that notice outside the church, because you're not Pentecostal. Okay, but apart from that, there's one way to prove you're Pentecostal, or that you're in the apostolic succession, just one noted apostolic success. You're all asleep except Bobby, he said yes.

Apostolic success is the proof of apostolic succession. The very shadow of Peter healed people. The whole of St. Peter's could fall on somebody, it wouldn't heal anybody these days.

So here you have, look in Acts chapter 2, is it 2 or 3, I forgot now. There's a word here about Peter preaching. Oh yes, in chapter 2 of Acts.

Listen, here is a man who ran away from a girl's finger, and he's sticking his finger in the eye of the high priest. Listen to what he says. He doesn't merely mouth about it, he says, you crucified the Lord of glory.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said Peter and the rest of the apostles, what shall we do? So the fire of the Holy Ghost gets to people, it gets to publicans, it gets to soldiers, and it gets to these rebellious theologians that have put Jesus to death. And when they hear Peter with that same anointing, they say, what shall we do? That preaching has to come back. What happened on the 24th of May in 1738? I don't remember.

24th of May, 1738, about a quarter to nine, John Wesley says in his diary, my heart was strangely warm. That was the first move of God in his life. He didn't stop there.

He read the Word of God. He said there's something more than a warm heart. I don't want a warm heart, I want a heart on fire.

And so he preached entire sanctification, the very God of peace, sanctify you wholly. Listen, you can give Jesus a lot of joy this morning, for the simple reason he's coming for a bride, he's not coming for a widow. He's not coming for a church in its lousy condition, which is poor and wretched and naked and blind.

I don't care how rich it is. I don't care how popular it is. It is not the true church.

The true church is a minority within a minority. It's people who walk in purity. It's people who love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength.

And when we get there, we'll prepare the way for the bride to come. So John Wesley, at 20 foot the record down, somebody's reading an introduction, just the introduction of Martin Luther's, what do you call it, exposition on Romans. He hasn't even got into Romans, he's reading the exposition.

And suddenly Wesley feels this transforming power. My heart was strangely warmed. He's loaded with scholarship.

He wrote four dictionaries in four different languages. He's one of the most gifted men on earth. He's high up in the scale.

Everybody in the Church of England says, we've got Wesley and his brother. We're going to shake the world. Well, they shook the world, but not by being again in the Church of England.

The Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple. And that's how he came to Wesley. He came and he put the date down, the 24th of May, 1738, about a quarter to nine, did not happen.

He got up and came to a country called America. He heard about the Indians and the need. He got off a boat in Georgia, walked into a forest, went to sleep.

He was tired out. Woke up in the morning, frozen to the ground. He couldn't get his arms up.

So he pulls one arm out. Then he pulls the other arm out. And then he gets one leg free.

Then he gets the other leg free. Okay. But this is what he said, Lord, I want to be on fire.

Listen, I'm going to ask this. I don't care whether we go through the meeting or not. Why is it that fire is so attractive? Listen to Charles Wesley and John Wesley singing a hymn together.

O thou who camest from above the pure celestial fire to impart, kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart. There let it for thy glory burn with inextinguishable brave, and trembling to its source return with constant prayer and fervent praise. Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work and speak and think for thee.

Still let me guard the holy fire. He got a new baptism of fire. And if you don't keep fire going, it goes out.

He says, still let me guard the holy fire and still stir up thy gift in me. Ready for all thy glorious will, thine acts of faith and love repeat till death, thine endless mercy seal and make the sacrifice complete. Then he says this awesome thing enlarge in flame and fill my heart with boundless charity divine.

So shall I all my strength exert and love them with a zeal like thine and turn them to a pardoning God. You see, he's not asking for a theological definition. He says, I want a fire.

Listen, if our God is a consuming fire and he is, if he takes a residence in you, you'll burn to the dying. God won't die in you. And all he's asking you this morning is to let the walls down, let the fire in.

Isn't that awesome? That a man with such a colossal intellect and background, he said day by day enlarge and fill my heart with boundless charity divine. I can't live in coldness anymore. I can't live in blindness anymore.

I can't be indifferent to a dying world. Every preacher who has lost the fire, you should be on your face down here. You used to burn, but you got so busy with organizing, the fire has gone out.

Come on. I believe God's gonna breathe on us this morning. I believe you're going from this place.

I believe you're gonna have to say, I'm in the valley of decision. Remember again the word of Jesus, I would that you are either hot or cold. So because you're neither hot or cold, I'll spew out of my mouth.

God isn't gonna beg at your door. He's been begging all week. He's not gonna keep knocking, knocking, knocking.

It's merciful he knocks this morning. Say God, consume in me everything that's un-Christ like. Consume in me everything which hinders, like David says in that wonderful poem there.

Consume me. They're crying out now, what shall we do? That's what they're crying out. Come on now, let's join this people or else kneel where you are.

And you cry to God, what shall we do? What shall I do? You've been repenting during the week. This is a day to receive. He's coming in now.

He's coming in with vision. He's coming in with power. He's coming in with revelation.

God is brooding over us. Don't insult the Holy Ghost. You see, this is the last day for some people.

Yes, Father, come, come afresh, come in power. Let me remind you right here as we're bowing in prayer. For many of you, you'll be going home tomorrow.

So this is the last day of the feast. And it was the last day of the feast. Jesus said, if any man will come.

He stood at the door in revelation, said, if any man will come, I don't care how baxter you are, how disobedient you are, there's enough fire in the Holy Ghost to burn up every bit of dross in you, every bit of unbelief, every bit of failure, every bit of coldness. God wants to put that fire right now. Say, God come in fire on me.

Not on Vinyard, but on me. Not on John Wimber or Jack or Todd, but me. God needs a torch of holy fire in your house.

He wants a fire in you to read the Word of God to your family. He wants the fire of God your neighbors will know. This church is turning the corner this week.

We know that. It's having a new birth. It's not gonna be like the Vinyard of last year or last week.

Every man that stands up will have an anointing. I've claimed this from God. I'm sick of theology and words.

We need God to move in our midst like he moved in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. What does it matter? Surrender everything. Either stand up and raise your hands and say, Lord I surrender everything, or get down and kneel there and believe God.

That's great. Isn't that wonderful? Glory to God. Thank you, Father.

Yes. Yes. This is music to God.

Yeah. Praise the Lord. Pray for each other.

The walls are coming down. The walls are coming down. The walls of unbelief.

The walls of fear. The walls of materialism. The wall of the fear of man.

The wall of the fear of the church. The wall of the fear of tomorrow. Oh you say.

To some of you I'm sure at this moment. To some of you this is chaos. I'll tell you it's music in the ears of Jesus.

At this moment Jesus is seeing of the travail of his soul. He's purging you and stamping you and claiming you for his own. You'll never be the same after this morning.

I won't. Glory. Glorious.

Glorious in holiness. Fearful in praises. I'm believing at this moment prophets are being born.

Soul winners are being born. Evangelists are being born. Apostles are being born.

Oh Lord. Lord I agree with Jack and Todd now. Lord at this moment send all hell into pandemonium.

Lord let demons have to mourn that they've lost their captives. Lord I'm praying this. At this moment I'm praying to God with my dear brothers that right at this moment there'll be pandemonium in hell because the devil's losing his captives.

Bondage. Bondage is going. Bondage is being broken at this moment.

Eyes of the blind are seeing at this moment. See the glory of God. Then Lord take us out and give us a vision of a lost world.

Lord we're yours at this moment. I say for this people we're your spirit, soul and body. We don't want any ownership of anything we have in our mind, in our affections.

Our plans will tear them up. Show us the mind of God each day. Lord I think of that old hymn that says out of my bondage sorrow and night Jesus I come.

Out of my sickness into thy health. Out of my poverty into thy wealth. Out of my sin into thyself.

This is where we're going from here. If you believe at this moment with us having therefore these promises dearly beloved live on the Bible as you've never lived on it before. Eat it.

Tell God every day make the book live to me. Make the scriptures become alive. Let them captivate my mind and my interest.

Let them become first. Let business become second. Let friendships become second.

Get deep into the word having therefore these promises dearly beloved. Let us cleanse ourselves. You have to do it.

I can't do it for you. You just say any unclean thing in me dear God at this moment purge it with holy fire. Fire is the greatest cleansing agency that there is.

Having these promises let our cleanse from all self of filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. It's continually progressing in holiness. It's letting God do a little bit of pruning every day.

Something has to be cut. The branch that bore fruit last year will not bear fruit this year. It's to be cut off.

It's done its job and borne the fruit. What you've known up to this moment much of it's dead wood. He'll cut it off.

He's going to bring in you his life and fruit is not the result of life. Fruit is the result of overflowing life and if you say fill me to overflowing fruit will start coming there. Fruit to the spirit as you've never known them before.

God says out of you. I nearly preached on this this morning. I'll preach this week maybe.

Out of him shall flow rivers. Out of who? He didn't say out of me. He said out of the Holy Ghost.

When the Holy Ghost takes up residence in you out of him there'll flow rivers of mercy, rivers of love, rivers of peace, rivers of joy, rivers of wisdom, rivers of strength. It's all in the Godhead. It's not in vineyard theology as somebody's preaching.

It's in God. Wesley said thou of life the fountain art freely let me take of these spring thou up within my heart and rise to all eternity. Those rivers are going to flow out but God's going to test us to see if we mean business.

He'll give you some situation where if you didn't have a river of mercy you'd cack up. If you didn't have a river of joy you'd fall down overburdened. If you didn't have a river of peace he's going to put them all there because Christ is our peace.

Christ is our joy. Christ is our wisdom and as I submit daily to him I think one of the greatest hymns ever written there is trust and obey there's no other way just simple obedience, simply trusting every day, getting some new mandate from God every day. This is what he wants.

Lord I pray now as you bring it to my mind seal every commitment or crucifixion that's here stamp your name on it now. Brand us like the Apostle Paul said I bear in my body the brands of the Lord. Brand us.

Brand our heads so we think spiritual things. Brand our feet so we walk in the ways of God. Brand our hands that we won't handle anything which is undesirable by God.

Every shepherd brands his sheep and God wants to brand you this morning he just whispered that to me. I want to brand every one of these as my sheep and whether a sheep or a wolf but he'll protect you he's a good shepherd. You'll start living Psalm 23 the Lord is my shepherd not a shepherd.

I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He restoreth my soul.

He leadeth me even in the valley of shadow death but he leads me by still waters and you can write on the whole thing the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. I shall not want for peace. I shall not want for joy.

I shall not want for strength. I shall not want for adequate material to face the issues we're in. Christ is all in all.

All things are in him and through him and for him. I tell you with all my heart Jesus is rejoicing this morning. Some of you are held out on him for five or ten years and this morning he's got right in your life and he's gonna keep it.

You're not gonna go back tomorrow. This is a one-way road and the path of the justice is a shining light that shineth more and more and more until the perfect day. He's gonna lead us into incredible beauty, incredible majesty, incredible, incredible authority.

Yes it's easy to smile when I say that the only proof of apostolic succession is apostolic success. I pray this morning every one of your churches where you represent whether you're a pastor, a deacon or what will be in the apostolic succession you'll have victory over the devil. Victory over everything that's obscured you until that every barrier you backed away from it's too big.

No, no, no it is not. Today I'm gonna move you all up by the grace of God. He tells me to say I can do all things through Christ, not by my zeal, not by my resolution.

I can do all things through Christ. I'm claiming that for the vineyard here, for Jack and the others who've gone that trip with John Wimber. It was the best trip they've ever had.

That everywhere they go they leave a fire behind. Not a blessing, not just a blessing but a fire. Dear God if there's a city in the world needs a fire it's Hong Kong and they're going to Hong Kong.

Lord let me pray and you agree with me will you? Lord as this team goes to Hong Kong go before them, go behind them, be with them. May they say things they've never said in their lives. May they see things they've never seen.

Lord we want to move right now into the harvest field. Lord let people in Hong Kong that's mourning and in dope, those 60 year old prostitutes and others. Lord let these men bring life where there's death.

Bring freedom where there's bondage to drugs and prostitution. Lord you get hold of some of the mafia there. The Chinese mafia I understand are there.

Lord I pray bless Jackie this morning give her a double portion of your spirit. Lord I pray for Jackie and her staff. You'll give them a new expectation.

They've already said it's getting more dangerous there but Lord greater is he that's in Jackie than he in the world. Lord the devil's held that city captive so long. Again I pray for them Lord you put it on my mind so much this morning.

I pray Lord evening Hong Kong the walls will come down. I pray the men who are plotting daily daily plotting how to grab little girls and make them prostitutes. Lord let the fear of God come on them.

They don't fear men. They don't fear sin. They don't fear death.

The devil's got them where he wants them. Dear God many of our people go to church every Sunday. It's only a custom.

They don't want God. Find some people that want God. Find some young men in Hong Kong who've been to hell and back.

They're just about worn out but Lord you lift the beggar from the dunghill and make him a prince unto God. Put a wall. You remind me of that scripture.

I don't know where it is Jack. What is it? Be a wall of fire around us. There's a scripture that says be a wall of fire around about us and the glory in the midst.

Lord do that for Hong Kong in a new way. Be a wall of fire around that wall city and be the glory in the midst. More than Jackie has ever seen.

More than we've ever seen. More than church history has ever seen. Lord you God you see it now.

You said in Hebrews 7 25 he's able to save to the uttermost. Lord do it there. Send your shock troops.

Send your angels if need be. But again Lord I just pray for your glory first. For John and his team.

Keep them healthy as they go from there. There are dangers. Dangers of diseases.

A stinking hole. Lord keep them pure in the midst of impurity. Give them extra light in the midst of extra darkness.

Give them extra authority over demons and satanic power in a city that's one of the capitals of the devil on earth. And Lord what you do there doing in Australia and New Zealand. But Lord we come back.

You told the disciples go but begin at Jerusalem. So Lord I look next week this place will blaze with the glory of God. People will get on the phone and say get to the vineyard quick the fires are burning.

Lord let people come here and get destroyed. Spoiled forever for God. Spoiled forever.

Their eyes will never look in anything else. Their hearts will never desire. Put birth in us.

Put birth in me my dear Martha, David and his precious wife. Put something in us Lord. It's a late hour.

Lord your eyes will come in mercy or come in judgment. Lord Lord God we pray like the man in the Bible. When he heard they're gonna cut my tree down he says please just give me one more year to dig around it and fertilize it.

Lord give everybody in this room at least one year. Give every pastor in this room one more year to get serious with God. One more year to get closer to God.

One more year to share the burden of God. Lord make us worthy of carrying your burden. You said my yoke is easy my burden is light.

We are a billion years in eternity to carry no burden. So Lord make us adequate for the burden of our day. There's never been a day like it.

The devil has never gone as crazy as he has. Thousands of young men dying. We're told nearly 10,000 in California alone dying of AIDS.

We think of Frisco which is not the capital they say now of AIDS. They claim New York is the worst. It's transferred over there.

I pray for Wilkerson and his ministry there. I pray for Bill Watson the young man with a Sunday school of 8,000 kids. Most of them born illegitimate.

Most of them have never been a kiss from their mother. They don't know a thing about human love. They don't know about human comforts.

Lord give the people who minister to the youngsters the spirit of angels to comfort them. Give people the spirit and the reality of adoption to adopt them. Bless that young man don't let him get spoiled by success.

Bless Wilkerson he needs help too. But Lord God I pray again as you told me six months ago keep praying and I've done it by your grace every day for the vineyard ministries. It's either going forward or backward after this.

We refuse to go backward. We refuse to let the devil throw the dust of time in our eyes and blind us to eternity. Lord I pray at this moment bless every vineyard palace.

Bless St. Newport. I thank you you've given them a building. Bless it.

Lord I pray put a pillar of fire there in the person of a pastor. Lord I want to be a John Baptist blazing with holy fire. Blazing with indignation against the devil's monopoly of our day.

Blazing with love to reach out to these people who are going to a lost eternity forever. Lord show us more of the awfulness of sin and the eternity of hell. Show us Lord as you show me one morning at 2 o'clock there hell has no exits.

There are million roads into it no way out. If people get out of there and come in this meeting this morning there wouldn't be one of them on a seat they'd be prostrate on their faces. Lord many of us have been near death the last year.

Almost in an accident you snatched us from it. Some other situation here we are. Lord kill unbelief in us.

Not only kill unbelief kill ingratitude in us. We take so much for granted. Half the world is starving and our refrigerators are full our bellies are full.

Half the world is naked and most of us have two or three suits or dresses. Lord we've forgotten our blessings. Lord this morning we say thank you Lord not just for saving our souls.

I thank you for bringing me to old age in your infinite mercy. Lord I pray spare me at least five more years. Give me five more years for your glory.

Lord I pray the prayer of Isaiah after you cleansed him. After you said Lord this has touched thy lips. He didn't talk nonsense he cried.

And immediately who touched his lips to fire he said all that thou wouldst rend the heavens. Lord that's it we can't rend them. You have to do it.

We don't deserve it but do it afresh. As these people go home bless them. May this be the most glorious weekend they've ever had in their churches.

Lord don't any contrary spirits come in here. It's been beautiful for three weeks. I pray for those who speak tonight.

I pray for the prayer meeting tomorrow night Lord. It will be on all our expectations that you'll just drop a ball of fire in the midst. Drop that ball of fire in every heart here this morning at this moment because our God is consuming fire.

We want you to take residence in us. Not just bless us. Take up residence in us.

That's what you said in Ephesians too that we can be. Was it the temple? Is it the temple of God? Yeah well there's there's that again but there's there's one in Ephesians says we are oh the habitation of God. Lord I pray in every shape and form of our lives people will know God is in residence in us.

The love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost. Lord if you love us you'll share your burdens. If you love us you'll chastise us for being careless.

If you love us you'll just correct us like a loving parent but with infinitely more love and patience. Lord don't let one of us miss the supreme blessing of God. I pray for every home here bless the daddies and

mummies.

Give them a new love for their children. I love to love them and care for them and watch over them and pray for them. There are thousands of wolves outside want to tear our children up.

I plead the blood over them this morning. Lord don't let one of their children get in drugs. Don't let one of their boys get messed up.

Don't let one of their girls get pregnant. Lord let these people say to their children you're not your daddy's property and mine your God's property. You said young men shall see visions old men dream dreams.

I think of the revival back in 1727 when the Holy Ghost came on the Moravians. We're told the prayer meeting lasted a hundred years and little boys and girls prayed with tears for the lost. Lord bring this back again.

Lord maybe they'd have to do it to teach some of us. Lord I just remember the word you say of Samuel you let none of these words fall to the ground. Lord there have been hundreds of inspiring words given by different speakers this week.

Lord don't let any bird steal the seed away. Lord you reminded me this morning at conference I went to and I admired that one beautiful woman there an old lady with a bible and taking notes. And in a prayer meeting at two o'clock in the morning she jumped up and yelled at the top of her voice I did commit that murder I did commit that murder.

Shocked everybody. We thought she was the most charming woman but Lord when conviction comes like that it's always me I'm undone. It's me crying out as the people cried out what shall we do or the people cried out or the republicans cried out or the soldiers cried out.

Lord give us to see this more and more and more. We don't have to sing a moving sentimental chorus at the end of preaching but the word will live.

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