

When the Fire Fades

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining a relationship with God, living a life of holiness and purity, and being separate from the world in order to experience the presence and power of God in our lives.

Duration: 15:06

Scripture: Psalm 24:3

Topics: "The Presence of God", "Holiness and Purity"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the importance of maintaining the fire of God's presence in our lives, urging believers to cultivate a deep hunger for God. He reflects on the Old Testament's symbolism of fire as a reminder of God's presence and challenges the congregation to examine their relationship with God, highlighting that holiness and purity are essential for experiencing His divine presence. Idleman encourages a return to a lifestyle of worship, prayer, and humility, asserting that true strength lies in being broken before God. He calls for repentance and a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit, reminding everyone that God's presence is a gift that requires our active pursuit and surrender.

Transcript

They're just going to keep playing on the keys a little bit, because what I want to do is just continue that worship environment and not give a long message, but just something that God just began to pour into my heart about this topic of when the fire fades. How do you stop that fire from fading? Many of us have come all week and there's a fire. It's burning.

It's evident. There's hunger. There's desire.

There's a wanting to pray more. I'm going to church every night. I'm going to church on weeknights.

And there's a desire there. And I believe the fire of God is an incredible gift. An incredible gift.

And even as I'm speaking, this is what's different. Even as I'm speaking, if something really stands out, you can come to the altar. This isn't a message and we're trying to do things properly.

You can come to the altar and just give your heart even more to the Lord and fully surrender. And I'm not going to be up here long, but I do want to talk about the presence of God, the fire of God. It's an incredible gift given to us.

In the Old Testament, the fire of God would fall upon the altar. And when it fell, the people, the priests were actually supposed to keep that fire going. It was a continual reminder of the presence of God.

And A.W. Tozer said, why do some find God in a way that others do not? Have you ever asked yourself that question? Why are some people so hungry for God and they find God like others do not? Why does God reveal Himself and reveal His presence to some people, but He lets the multitude of others struggle? Of course, the will of God is the same for all. He has no favorites within His household. All He has ever done for any of His children, He will do for all of His children.

The difference lies not with God, but with us. And so, how do we keep this fire burning? I just want to look at Psalm 24 briefly. I think we do have it up there.

This is so powerful. Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? So this question is actually provoking an answer. He's saying who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? And Isaiah said, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? They would call God the devouring fire.

Who shall dwell with the everlasting burnings? In other words, who is worthy to be brought into contact with God? The magnificent presence of God that words cannot describe. Even the sun beholds His glory. Psalm 27, verse 4, one thing have I asked of the Lord.

One thing have I asked of the Lord. Is that the desire of your heart? One thing I've asked of the Lord that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That I want Your presence.

I want Your power. And Tozer goes on to say, I want the presence of God in my life, or I don't want to have anything to do with religion. I want the manifold presence of God.

I want the fire of God. The anointing of God that comes with that brokenness and humbleness and being used of God and the tangible presence of crying out, Abba, Father, and you feel that power and presence of God. And I understand what people are saying.

Well, don't get caught up in the feelings. Did you know it's okay to feel God? Taste and see that God is good. Taste and see that God is good.

Now of course, who may ascend into the hill of the Lord and who may stand in His holy place? Number one, we know this has to do with relationship. If a person doesn't have a relationship with God, they can't claim this. And it's pointing people to salvation.

Nobody can ascend into the hill of the Lord without the blood of Jesus Christ. But for the believer, it has everything to do with His presence. You see, there is no plan B. So who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? It goes on to say, He who has clean hands.

Remember that old worship song? Maybe not old to some of you, but give us clean hands. Give us a pure heart that we might not lift up our soul to an idol, nor shall we swear deceitfully. And there's something that God honors, the clean hands and a pure heart and those who have not given their heart over to another, nor have they sworn deceitfully.

Holiness and purity. Guys, take away something from this. Holiness and purity pave the way of His divine presence.

We've got to get back to that holiness. I remember when the church would cry out for holiness, for more of God. There was a separation.

Yes, you look different. You look different. You listen to different things.

You go to different places. Your whole life is just embraced in the presence of God. Not perfectly and we make mistakes, but there's a desire.

I must come out from among them and be separate. My movie choices, who I hang out with, my time, my calendar, it looks different because there is a separation to come out from among them and be separate. Holiness being set apart and used by God.

And we also find that compromise, compromise quenches and grieves the presence of God. Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord, He has clean hands. A pure heart, and if you don't have that tonight, repentance needs to take place.

Where have our hands been? What have our eyes seen? Where has our mind wandered? Keeping that fire of God going. And the presence of God is a gift. There's even kids, a lot of kids here, obviously tonight, and we want to remind them that the presence of God is a gift.

Don't be embarrassed to come to the altar. Sometimes it's led by the little child, leads sometimes, and motivates the parents. And I want to go encounter God, and I would read books on revivals 50, 60, 100 years ago, where kids would be woke up at night at five in the morning, and mom, dad, we need to go to church.

Where does that come from? The Spirit of God, the presence of God would hit those children, and they would lead, they would lead their family to the altar. And I find it ironic that when Samson had his eyes removed, and his anointing was gone, but his hair began to grow back, and the anointing of God began to grow back, and Samson began to just call out on God again. And he said, the Bible says a young lad, a young boy took Samson, this mighty man, this mighty man of God, Samson, he took him by the hand, and he led him, and he said, young man, show me where the pillars are.

If I could just put my hands on the pillars. And I said, oh God, avenge me for my eyes. Avenge me on these Philistines.

And I pushed with all of my might, and the anointing of God came down, and the Colosseum fell, and the Bible says he slew more in his death than he did in his life. And the young boy, the young lad led him there. How many strongholds could we break down if we would look in the eyes of our children and see the preciousness of life there, and wanting that presence of God.

I don't know about you, but I need the presence of God in my home. I need the presence of God in my marriage. We need the presence of God in the church.

Listen, in these dire times, this church as we used to do it is not gonna cut it anymore. Positive sermons, quick services, where we get in and out, where is the hunger for God, and the desperation for more of God, and falling on our faces, and thank God, you've got to hear the cries of your people. I said this morning, why do we want to go to Jerusalem, but not see the King? Why do we want to go to church? Sit in the pew, but have no power? The presence of God is a gift that very few experience, often because of pride.

Did you know that God's presence in your life is directly related to your hunger for more of Him? His presence in your life, in my life, is directly related to our hunger for more of Him. When you enter God's presence with praise, He enters your circumstance with power. Let me say that again.

When you enter God's presence with praise, He enters your circumstances with power. See, it's not just the presence of God to feel better, that's great, but it's the presence of God to do great exploits. It's the presence of God to be able to discern a demonic type of influence on someone versus a genuine sickness, or the presence of God to be able to pray for people and to actually see them delivered and to be in tune with the Holy Spirit.

And how much, well that's shame, that's great for you're a pastor. Yeah, but you're a parent. How much more do we need the presence of God in our lives as parenting, as leading, as you having your own business, your own workforce, being, whatever you do, how, we need the presence of God in all aspects of life.

It doesn't say in the Bible, you need the presence if you're a pastor. All Christians are given this mighty gift of the Holy Spirit. And that's why I say often, you have all the Holy Spirit, but does He have all of you? So if you're led tonight to get to the altar and fully surrender your life and feel that mighty filling of the Holy Spirit and say, God, I'm bored with church.

I'm not experiencing you. I've been a Christian 20 years or 30 years. I read the Bible, but I do not have the power of God in my life.

Where can I go to flee the presence of God, David said. Where can I go to flee the presence of God? If I go to heaven, He is there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, He is there.

If I go to the other parts of the sea and go all the way as far as I can, even there, He is there. He upholds me with His right hand. He strengthens me.

He encourages me. I cannot flee from the presence of God. It's that living water that Christ says, drink deeply from this well, woman, and you will never thirst again.

There's a desire. There's a consuming passion for God's presence. And I wanna just meditate on this verse as we continue worship here in a little bit.

Isaiah, Isaiah 57, for thus says the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is holy. God tells us, here's what I'm saying to you, to all of you. I dwell in a holy place.

I dwell in unapproachable fire. I am a consumable fire. I dwell, but guess what? I dwell in the high and holy place with Him, or her, of course, who has a contrite spirit, has a contrite and humble spirit.

Here's what I do. I will dwell in the life, in the heart of those who are broken and contrite and teachable. See, in God's economy, in order to go up, you gotta go down.

In order to be raised up, you gotta go down low. In order to experience the power and presence of God, you've gotta humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Do time.

He will exalt you. And when Jesus said, bless her, the poor in spirit, that word is a beggar. Oh, when was the last time you begged for the presence of God? I don't know about you, but I get up in the morning, say, God, I need your power.

I need your presence. How are we gonna make it through these dire times? 60, 70% of those who go to prayer meetings are women. 60, 70, 80% of those contending and praying in their homes are women.

Where are the men? You think you're Mr. Tough Guy because you don't have to go to church very often? You don't have to go to the altar? You know what a tough guy is, biblically speaking? A man who's broken before God, whose eyes have seen the Lord of glory. And when you have that vision of God, when you truly meet God, you will be forever changed. The prophet said, I saw the Lord high and lifted up.

I saw Him, there it is again, I saw Him high and lifted up. The train of His robe filled the entire temple. And the angels were crying, holy, holy, holy, holy is our God.

Holy, holy, holy is our God. And that place shook from the very voices thundering out, holy, holy, holy is our God. And God said, I dwell in a high and holy place, but I will dwell with those who are broken, who are contrite, who are humble, and I will revive the spirit of the humble.

I will revive the heart of the contrite ones. If you need revival, you better humble yourself. You better humble yourself before Almighty God.

That's how you keep the fire burning. You keep that flame alive in your heart. Well, I'm done.

It's now it's up to you to live it out. So we're gonna open the altar for this last night. And this is truly a time to just come forward, humble yourself before God.

And if you need that fresh filling of the Holy Spirit, let's just keep that verse up too, if we could, on Isaiah to reflect on that until we go into worship. And I only preach like this because I was a very prideful man. Of course, pride is still in all of us.

But in my 20s, I thought I had it all, and go to church, that's for women. I don't really need God, even though I said I'm a Christian. And that before God lifted me up, I had to go down.

I had to go down onto the carpet and begin to cry out for God and get that hunger and that presence and that power of God like never before. See, that's when the Word of God comes alive. It literally does.

That's why Jesus said it is your daily food. The Word of God comes alive. Prayer comes alive.

Worship comes alive. Doesn't mean you don't have problems and issues sometimes, but you get through life with the presence and power of God. We need to surrender everything on the altar and experience that presence tonight.

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