

KEEPING THE FIRE ALIGHT

3/4/11

*In the Old Testament the priest prepared the offerings before the Lord. In the first instance, the Lord consumed the burnt offering with Holy Fire. **LEV 9:24** And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.*

*It was then the duty of the priest to keep the fire burning by putting wood on the altar. This was a daily duty, because the fire the Lord had started was not permitted to go out. **LEV 6:12** And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. **13** The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.*

The same principle continues over into the New Testament: Jesus Christ was our sacrifice once and for all. The fire that consumes the offering (our repentance), comes in the form of the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

MAT 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

*Just as it was in the Old Testament... they were not allowed to let the fire go out, nor were they allowed to substitute the fire of God with any other 'fire'. If they did, the fire of God would consume them, rather than bless them. **LEV 10:10** And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. **2** And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Also in the New Testament... **JOH 15:6** If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*

*One of the greatest challenges facing today's church is that it confuses the wood with the fire, because they are often not clearly taught about the anointing fire of the Holy Spirit. It is the job of God's people to reveal the difference between the two. Let's differentiate between the wood (our actions) from the fire (God's Spirit). **1COR 13:1** Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels (gifted in spiritual and natural speech and prayer), and have not charity (Godly service), I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith (reading and learning skills... the ability to get miracles happening), so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned (generosity and full commitment), and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. All of these positive and necessary actions are the wood that the holy ghost fire will feed on, but the fire won't burn if the timber is missing or unseasoned (if the spirit is not mixed with love)... then it is all for nothing.

Godly love is not based on how we feel, but on how we can benefit those we serve on God's behalf.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. None of these definitions are about us... they are all about those we serve on God's behalf... that is what keeps the fire burning properly.

A good example of keeping the fire alight can be found in the commitments in a good Christian marriage. Each member of the marriage does what they can, to show their love and build the love of the other. They are on their best behavior, trying to look good and doing good to keep themselves in their new found love... they hope will never end. After the exchange of rings and months of heart felt passion; then each partner begins to take the spouse for granted, slipping back into a self-absorbing relationship. Somewhere along the line, boredom can set in, and the fire risks going out.

This can happen to us in our walk in the Lord if we are not careful. We need to be putting in the good wood for the right reason... this keeps the fire burning. Remember, God's love is not about what we can get out of life... rather it's about what we can put into the lives of others... for God's sake. This is impossible if we don't use the power of the spirit that has been put within us.

Many are loading lots of wood on God's altar, but it will never burn if they don't know what the fire truly is. You know the difference between the wood and the fire... so go and make a difference.