

# OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

Phil O. Waldo  
*Lead Pastor*



1224 Hancock Drive  
Boone, Iowa 50036

Phone: 515 432-3329

Website: [www.booneopenbible.com](http://www.booneopenbible.com)  
E-mail: [office@booneopenbible.com](mailto:office@booneopenbible.com)  
[pastor@booneopenbible.com](mailto:pastor@booneopenbible.com)

**SERMON TITLE** Free the Fire

**SERIES**

**DATE** 5/21/2023

**KEY SCRIPTURE** Luke 12:49; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

**SYNOPSIS** We need the fire of God burning in us to bring warmth and light to this cold, dark world.

**HIGHLIGHTS**



## 🔥 Free the Fire

Last week the sermon was titled “All Fired Up.” We talked about Elijah challenging the prophets of Baal to see whose god was the *real* God. In the end, God responded to Elijah with fire from heaven and burned up the sacrifice and all the area around it. To catch fire for God, we need to repair the altar of hearts, making prayer and humility priorities again. We need to arrange the firewood of our minds to align with God and to be unified with other believers. We need to cut the bull and get serious about our walk with God, preparing our hearts and minds for his presence. We need to make a sacrifice of time and effort and especially of our sinful tendencies. And, we need to step up and do something different in our walk with the Lord. Keep moving forward with God. Then, we can catch on fire for God and be the living sacrifice he desires.

🔥 **Luke 12:49** (Jesus)

**I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!**

The bible has a lot to say about “fire.” The word is used nearly 500 times in the scriptures. Fire is an aspect of God’s presence appearing to his people. In the bible, it was a sign of his approval, a sign that he lived and dwelled with his chosen people.

- To Moses, the fire of God appeared in the bush, but didn’t destroy it. That got Moses’ attention and jumpstarted his calling in life. Exodus 3:2
- To the children of Israel, God lived above them as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, leading them in the wilderness. Exodus 13:21–22.
- When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, God descended on the mountain with smoke and fire. Exodus 19-20.
- In the tabernacle when the Glory came, the fire of God consumed the offerings, which showed God’s favor. Leviticus 9:23–24.
- David built an altar and God answered him by fire from Heaven. 1 Chronicles 21:16
- When Solomon prayed, the fire of God came down from heaven consuming burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house. 2 Chronicles 7:1
- With Elijah, his cry to the people of Israel was, “let the God who answers by fire be God.” 1 Kings 18:24.
- With Jeremiah, God’s word was like a fire shut up in his bones. Jeremiah 20:9.
- On the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit came, it was described as tongues of fire that rested on each of them and empowered them for ministry. Acts 2:3.
- All through the bible he has been a God that answers by fire. And he does not change.



God spoke to his people and led them with fire when the glory cloud came down upon the tabernacle in the wilderness. God wants to come down upon his tabernacle today so that he may speak to us and lead us in today's world.

☞ **We, who are Christians, are the tabernacle of God, and we need to be illuminated with the "fire" of God's presence.** When God's presence was manifested by "fire," all the people could see that God was on the scene.

Fire does the preparing for the glory of God, because fire devours everything that will be in the way of the glory of God. Fire prepares our hearts so that we can live in the glory of God. This is why Jesus cried out that he had a desire for fire and wished that it was already burning.

### ☞ **Fire Consumes**

Our God is a consuming fire. That means everything God touches, everything he has ownership of, he wants to consume. He doesn't destroy - he consumes - when Moses looked at the bush, it was consumed by fire but was not destroyed, and that's the same thing God wants to do with our lives. He doesn't want to destroy you, he wants to consume you.

☞ **He wants your life and mine to be a flame of fire in which all we do and say represents him.** Hebrews 1:7 says, "he makes his servants flames of fire." John Wesley put it like this - when the fire of God touches your life, people will come and see you burn.

Fire changes what it consumes. Coals eventually turn to ash, and it's the same with firewood. As for us, if we get consumed with the fire, we too will be changed. The unholy will be holy, the unclean will be made clean, the worldly will become righteous.

If you're consumed, you'll be committed to all that God is doing in His church today. If you're consumed, your job, family, and the interests in life will be second compared to seeking first his kingdom and his righteousness. If you're consumed, you won't be satisfied with not growing in Him; you'll be a man or woman seeking to be in His presence. If you're consumed, you'll seize every opportunity to share your faith with the lost.

Are you burning brightly for Jesus today? Has he got first place and first call upon your life? Are you consumed with the fire and zeal of the Lord today?

### ☞ **Fire refines**

In Malachi 3, Malachi sees the Lord and in verse 1, he says "the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his temple." Then, in verse 2, he describes what he'll be like at that time - he says, "He will come like a refiner's fire."

A refiner in biblical times was a person who took a piece of metal that was formless and impure, and put it in the furnace, heating it up to a high temperature until all the scum and impurities came to the surface so he could remove them. He'd do this again and again until he knew the metal was clean and pure. And the way he would know that the metal was pure, was that he could look at it see the reflection of his face in the metal.



That's what God wants to do in our lives. He won't leave us the way we are, he'll chase after us until we change. He wants our attitudes and our weaknesses, any hidden sins, any discouragement that's held us back, any fear or condemnation –

☞ **he wants it all to go through the furnace of his presence so that all the junk that's in our hearts will come to the surface, and ultimately, the reflection of Christ will be seen in everything we are and everything we do.** Not the reflection of this world; not the reflection of self; but the reflection of Christ.

### ☞ **Fire brings light**

Psalms 78:14 speaks about the way God dwelled with and guided his people when it says, "He guided them with the cloud by day and with light from the fire all night." Everything outside the camp was covered in darkness, but when others looked at where the Israelites were, they saw fire, which lit up the place.

☞ And **God wants this church – you and me – to be a church on fire so that we can be a light that shines into the dark regions of this community.** When the fire comes, your light shines. When the fire comes, people will be drawn to the light. In other words, when we're on fire, they will be attracted to what they see in us.

*This little light of mine; I'm gonna let it shine... Won't let Satan blow it out; I'm gonna let it shine...*

On a similar note, Jesus said in John 7:38 that out of our bellies will flow streams of living water. If you leave water in a pot, nothing will happen; but the moment there is fire under the pot, soon the water will start to boil, which can be heard. And if you leave water on the fire, it will boil over the sides of the pot. For streams of living water to flow out of our bellies, we need the fire of God to make the water boil.

We need the fire of God today. Let his fire consume you, refine you, and shine through you into this dark world. It is time to cry out for the Lord to send his fire! Do you want to experience the glory of God? We must understand that without the fire, there can be no glory. That is why John said that Jesus will baptize us in fire, because this fire will prepare the way for the glory of God.

☞ **You know when it's a good time for a fire? When it's dark and you're lost.** Do you think this world today is dark and lost? **It needs the light of the fire of God!** And that fire must begin in the people of God.

☞ Another good time for a fire is **when it's cold.** Do you know people with cold hearts? Some hearts are so cold, they have frostbite and are dying inside. **They need the warmth of the fire of God!** And that warmth comes from you and me being on fire for God.

Matthew 24:12 says, "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold." That's not just a commentary on the state of the world in our time. It's also a caution for



believers. When we allow sin and worldliness to take hold in our lives, then the fire of the Lord, the passion and zeal for the things of God, will grow cold.

☞ Yet another good time for a fire is **when you need to dispose of garbage**. Have you allowed some garbage to build up in your life? Some sinful patterns that have gone unchecked? Some hurts that you have allowed to fester and become a contaminant in your life? Then, **it's time for a fire to burn out all the junk in your own life**.

It is not an unwillingness on God's part that keeps the fire from falling. It's usually because we have become lukewarm and indifferent, and we tolerate the spirit of worldliness in ourselves. We've allowed other things to take away the spark of God in our lives. We've allowed offenses and difficulties to cool the embers of God's work in our hearts. We've allowed worldly desires and distractions to pull us away from God's source of spiritual fire.

When we are finally ready to catch fire for God, we will begin to get rid of all the junk, allowing him to burn it out of us. And, as he begins to refine us, we will get back to the source of his holy fire and be consumed with zeal for the Lord.

☞ **There's fire in Prayer.** When Elijah cried out to the Lord, God responded with fire.

☞ **There's fire in the Word of God.** Jeremiah said God's word was like a fire in his bones.

☞ **There's fire in the Pursuit of the Lord.** In Jeremiah 29:13 God says, "you will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." God is where the fire is. So, we must choose to go after him.

☞ **There's fire in Walking with Jesus.** The disciples on the road to Emmaus felt a burning fire in their hearts as they walked with the Lord.

Pursue the Lord with prayer and crying out. Get his Word into you; it's like fuel for the fire. And, walk with Jesus; he is always burning, so draw near to him to catch his fire.

☞ **1 Thessalonians 5:19 ...Do not put out the Spirit's fire** (*God's Word Translation*)

*Free the Fire, by Michael & Stormie Omartian, performed by The Imperials*  
*Free the fire in me, let it be ignited in power. Let me be ablaze in this hour like a torch that's passed for eternity. So free the fire in me, let it show like glowing devotion. Let it go like flames hot in motion. For the world set free is my burning desire, so free the fire in me. Everybody needs the light. In my heart it's always burning bright. So, let the heat climb ever higher and free the fire in me.*

**Consuming fire**