

## **Awe Struck**

I told everyone a few weeks ago that we would be doing a series on Exodus and how the story of the Jewish Nation foreshadowed the life of Jesus. I guess we will get to that some day in the future, but as I tried to write it, I just got the impression from the Holy Spirit...you are finished telling them about me yet.

So....we start a new series today that continues our focus on the Holy Spirit. For the last 12 weeks we have learned about the fruit of the Spirit, but in this series we will look at the Holy Spirit Himself and The Gifts of the Spirit.

So we start this journey. To understand and embrace the forgotten God...The Holy Spirit Along this journey we will answer ...

What was the Holy Spirit doing in the OT? Who is the Holy Spirit? Force or Person? The Flash point of the upper room. A one time occurrence or to be replicated today? What is Charisma...what was the Charismatic Movement?

We just studied the Fruit but what about the Gifts of the Spirit? Discerning Gifts- Word of Knowledge, Word of Truth, Discerning the Spirits Declarative Gifts...Prophecy, Tongues The difference between the Gift o Tongues and the Grace of Tongues Dynamic Gifts-Faith, Healing and miracles

What about 2 Baptisms? Are we to be baptized both by water and fire? If there are second baptism of the Spirit?

What is Blasphemy of the Spirit? Have I done that?

What about the craziness surrounding the Holy Spirit? Some Christ followers seem to ignore the Holy Spirit all together and think to embrace His presence is crazy and out of control. They seem to abuse the Holy Spirit by ignoring Him

Others seem to try to stir up the Holy Spirit like some magic concoction that they control and can manipulate. They try to abuse the Holy Spirit by treating Him like a puppet on their string. What are we to do with the craziness and why is it happening? Where do we find balance and a proper biblical perspective?

That is where we are headed. Let me say in advance...on some points you will probably disagree... If you think Remnant is going to teach that all the gifts stopped in the First Century you will be disappointed If you think...Ok Great..Remnant is finally going to become crazy Charismatic...you are going to be disappointed

Let me make a promise to you.... We will study the Scriptures together... We will understand what God's Word teaches about the Holy Spirit We will together learn how to position ourselves to receive everything the Holy Spirit wants to give us personally and as a church. We will through the study of God's word develop a desperation for more...and remain open to whatever God wants to do... We will not be afraid of the Greatest Gift God has given us.. But we will not try to conjure up or control or manipulate others into an experience that is not from God.

There are moments in our lives that help to shape and define other moments in our lives. Things that happen....decisions that we make....decisions made for us.....that shape our lives. We can look back over our lives and see these milestones, but they are much more difficult to see in the moment that they are happening. In fact, many milestone moments seem mundane and routine until some time passes and you see the significance of what happened.

But there are other moments in our lives....Moments that we know are special as they are happening. Moments that you know are big in the moment. Moments when you know, I will remember this moment for the rest of my life.

These special moments seem to ignite things. Seem to start a cascade. Almost like the first domino has fallen and all the others are responding in kind.

I tend to think of these moments as flashpoints. That moment when an ember turns into a fire. When an idea or an action sparks everything. Once that flashpoint occurs, you know that you will never be the same again.

Many of us have experienced flashpoints in our lives....

WW II Pearl Harbor- [Photos 1-2](#) NASA Space Shuttles Challenger- [Photos 1-2](#) World Trade Center 9/11- [Photos 1-2](#) The COVID 19 Pandemic- [Photo 1-2](#)

There are Biblical Flashpoints that we see in Scripture.

Biblical Flash Points [Abraham and Isaac- Photo](#)

Moses and the [Burning Bush Photo](#)

Peter [Stepping out of the Boat Photo](#)

[Jesus on the Cross....Photo](#)

[Jesus not in the grave Photo](#)

Flashpoints wake us up Decide if we are all in Leave us with a sense of wonder and awe Spiritual milestones move us closer to Jesus

One of the flashpoint moments of my life occurred when I was 34 years old. I had grown up in church...knew all the stories of the Bible...but walked away when I was 17. I saw too many hypocritical Christians filling the pews on Sunday and ignoring God everywhere else.

In a very conservative Southern Baptist Church in Dallas I was exposed to many "youth leaders" who clearly were pretending to follow Jesus. It was at church youth group that I was first offered alcohol and drugs. It was a youth leader that introduced me to Playboy magazine. It was a church leader who told me to stop bring those black people to my youth group. It was a church leader who drank wine every night and spent the rest of the week trying to make sure no one knew it.

I walked away from these hypocrites at the age of 17 and swore that I would never come back to a church. I kept that promise for the next 17 years.

But then a flashpoint happened. A church service that was unplanned, a sermon that was unsettling, and a Scripture that was finally understood. It is a long story, but there was a flashpoint moment. The moment when I realized that Jesus is God. And all these stories in the Bible that I just thought were fables we actually real moments in human history.

That flashpoint changed my life. It sparked a change in everything. And I knew as it was happening that I would never be the same again.

I had promised myself that I would never come back to church. Never fall for that hypocritical nonsense again. I thought that I could just have Jesus and not His people. I don't need church, it can be just Jesus and me.

I soon realized that you can't follow Jesus without being involved in Christian community. Even Jesus Himself had disciples and followers who He shared His life with. We are not solo creatures. We were never designed for and never do well in isolation.

Spiritual babies can only grow up in Spiritual families. Without the family, we may be saved, but we stagnate our growth. I realized that good bad or indifferent, I would have to actively participate in a church family if I was to truly follow Jesus.

That led me to my next flashpoint....The moment when I decided that if I was going to follow Jesus...I had to be all in. It would have to be everything or nothing. I would never be the hypocrite that was someone else's reason to walk away from God, the church, or their Christian family.

I remember being in a Hotel Room at the Hyatt here in Sarasota. Tammy had called to tell me that she was getting baptized and wanted to know if we should do it together. Did I want to get baptized again? I was originally baptized at age 9.

I went out to the bay and walked around. I remember telling God that I was coming back...and I would be ALL IN. Once I came up out of the water of baptism it would be my declaration to God and everyone..that I was a true follower of Jesus. I was fully surrendered and all in for whatever He had in mind. Anything, anywhere, any time. His truth not mine. His truth not my opinion. His truth every word of it. My flashpoint...this is real...I am giving my life to Him...and I am ALL IN.

That is what this series is about. What happens when you are ALL IN? How do you take that leap of faith? How do you make sure that you are not holding anything back? How do you make sure that you aren't hypocritical? What does it mean to be fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit? What does He want? How do I make sure that I am not just saying that I am fully surrendered but that I actually am ALL IN?

I want to begin our journey by looking at a moment in History when there really was a flashpoint. Jesus had died, resurrected and returned to the Father in Heaven. He told His disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait. For what they were not sure. But they knew Jesus had promised them something powerful. Maybe a Spiritual army, Maybe Jesus Himself back to finish what He started, They didn't know.

This series is based on this moment... this Flashpoint.

Acts 2:1-4 (ESV) 2 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Now that's a Flashpoint! In this moment...everything changed. They knew that what was happening was something that they would remember for the rest of their lives. This moment....their participation in this moment....would redefine them. They knew it. They didn't understand it at the time....but they knew. The Holy Spirit had drenched them....Now they would forever be powered by the Holy Spirit From that moment forward..the Holy Spirit was not just with them but now was in them. They didn't just get some superpower...they became new Spiritual beings...born in the Spirit...now Spiritual beings having a human experience....Spiritual children now part of God's Spiritual family. Born not of man but of God.

John 1:12-13 (ESV) 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Then we see their response....

Acts 2:43 (ESV) 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

Awe...I love that word....I like thunderstruck better....but it is that moment when you know what is happening or what you are seeing...is supernatural...of God.

When was the last time....The Awe of God... Came upon your soul?

When was the last time you were surrounded by... Wonders and signs being done through those following Jesus?

Maybe that is you... Something is missing Deeper Experience Informed about Jesus but not transformed by the Holy Spirit You need a flash point

As badly as we want moments of Awe in our lives, we can't manufacture them. Well, because they don't come from us. Moments of Awe are like periodic love notes from God. I realize that at times I have tried to do God's work for him I am a part of a Western Religious System in our culture

Our Religious System has means, methods and programs for doing church That in the end requires little help or involvement of the Holy Spirit We don't fall on our faces and ask the Holy Spirit to fill these seats We have facebook, websites, and marketing to do that We have deceived ourselves Mistaking physical bodes and buildings for the evidence of spiritual life

Some church services remind me of crazed people trying wake up and stir up God to show up. They believe that God's attendance in their service is under their control and not His. Not realizing that God is already in their midst and He is waiting for them to realize it and abide with Him. I saw a church service recently that reminded me of Elijah on Mt Carmel.

1 Kings 18:26-29 (ESV) 26 And they took the bull that was given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made. 27 And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." 28 And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. 29 And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.

As we being this deeper dive into the Holy Spirit, please remember that we don't stir up the presence of God....We don't have Him on our leash like a dog and pony show. We don't bring Him out with just the right charismatic gift....God is present everywhere and with us at all times. As we become aware of that truth, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including the more charismatic gifts, become more evident. It is our surrender to the presence of God not our manufacturing of it that moves us to moments of Awe.

Let me share my greatest fear as your pastor...

It is dangerously possible for the church and each of us.... To go through our programs, routines, and activities And get to the end of our lives and realize the Spirit of God has been almost entirely absent and neglected in the process

The greatest hindrance to the advancement and the Glory of God in the world today is the attempt of the church of God to do the work of God apart from the power of the Spirit of God

We want to blame the world and Satan's influence for our failure to advance the gospel But I believe it is the self-sufficient mentality that plagues the church today We believe we can do God's work without the power of God.

Sadly the Gospel in not advanced because the Holy Spirit is essentially absent from many churches and they haven't stopped their programing, marketing and expansion efforts long enough to realize it. Truthfully, churches are packed full of people, some even believers, who have not developed a relationship with Him.

Jesus' last Instructions to the disciples?.... Don't go...until you receive power from on High Don't you dare try to do my work through your power Yet that is exactly what happens week in and week out in churches and Christ followers all over America

This series is about The Holy Spirit

The power and presence of God in our lives As the church, as the people of God, are we dependent upon ourselves or are we desperate for the Holy Spirit of God?

Have we experienced the flash point of the Holy Spirit exploding in our lives? Are we desperate for that moment. Are we crying out like those in the upper room begging God to send us His Spirit and His power. Do we understand to our core..that we are wholly ineffective unless the Spirit of God is the most important thing in our life?

Spiritual Flashpoints in our lives occure because God chooses to reveal Himself to us. To make us more aware of His presence and plan for our lives. Not surprisingly Spiritual flashpoints occur more often in people who are spritually connected....who Abide each day in the Spirit. Moses had a flashpoint moment....

Exodus 32 Moses on Mt Sinai Exodus 32:7-8 (ESV) 7 And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. 8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' "

God was furious.. Exodus 32:9-10 (ESV) 9 And the LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. 10 Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you."

Moses responds with the greatest intercessory prayer of the Old Testament

Exodus 32:12–14 (ESV) 12 Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people. 13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, ‘I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.’ ” 14 And the LORD relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

Exodus 32:31–34 (ESV) 31 So Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. 32 But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.” 33 But the LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. 34 But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.”

Eventually rather than destroying all of the Jewish nation Then God says in Exodus 33...I promised you this land It is yours to take...I keep my promises... I will lead you there...

Exodus 33 Exodus 33:1–3 (ESV) The Command to Leave Sinai 33 The LORD said to Moses, “Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your offspring I will give it.’ 2 I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 3 Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.”

I keep my covenant You can have my blessings but not my presence Churches today Say a prayer go to heaven. It is blasphemy You can have the blessings of God without having to submit to the authority of His presence in your life... You do not go to heaven if you don't want God Only one reason we came to Christ...To get our relationship with God restored. And Moses knows this...

Exodus 33:15–16 (ESV) 15 And he said to him, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. 16 For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?”

Exodus 33:17 (ESV) 17 And the LORD said to Moses, “This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” 18 Moses said, “Please show me your glory.”

Moses..burning bush...red sea... Show me your glory...I need a flash point

4 Lessons for us as we embark on this series.

### 1. We have an assignment that we cannot fulfil

God sized mission requires God Promise Land has no promise if you are not there God. There is no way God that I can take these people...into that land...apart from your presence I will fail God... I don't have the resources...I don't know what to do... I am desperate for your presence God...I will fail this mission without you

Is that how you feel about the Mission of this Church?

We feel ineffective on our own because we are.... Nothing happens without the presence of God And churches will not impact this community or our world Until we fall on our faces and embrace our need for the Holy Spirit of God



Do you realize how impossible and how big the task is that we have been given? No church will be effective until we fall on our faces and admit our desperate need for the Holy Spirit

When we say God this task is too big for us... Please God pour your Spirit out on us...we are desperate for more of you We are beginning to understand God's plan for our church. That realization is a Flash Point

## 2. We have been given a Great Privilege

Exodus 33:7-11 (ESV) 7 Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. 8 Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. 9 When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. 10 And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door. 11 Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

Let me remind you... Select Few in the OT Build on how desperate they were to be Like Moses...

We don't watch some man go into the tent...each person in this room... If surrendered to Jesus Has the privilege of BEING IN THE TENT Do you realize that you are the tent? The Presence of God lives in YOU How can we get so busy and ignore the great privilege that has been given to us?

## 3. We have a family we cannot forget

Exodus 33:15-16 (ESV) 15 And he said to him, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. 16 For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"

The Spirit of God moves among His people... We fast and pray that this is the cry of our church... We pray for a flash point...an encounter and experience with the Holy Spirit for our church.

## 4. We have a God that we cannot fathom

Exodus 33:18 (ESV) 18 Moses said, "Please show me your glory."

Bold Prayer Moses..Burning bush, Red Sea, Plagues of Egypt, Mt Sinai, In the Tent of Meeting...Glowing for days...That Moses....SHOW ME YOUR GLORY...

How could he ask God for more? Once you have tasted the Glory of God....insatiable appetite for more Does that describe your relationship with the Holy Spirit today? More desperate for more of Him than anything else in your life? If not this series is for you...a flash point is coming

Jesus told us about the Holy Spirit

He described the flash point that occurs when our lives collide with the Holy Spirit

John 16:12-15 (ESV) 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

We begin this new series today. I could have called it Flashpoint I guess....but I wanted to get more to the heart of the matter. When I look around Churches...including this church...I often ask God...."Are they ALL IN?" Do you have their heart? Are they willing to do whatever you tell them? Are they abiding in you, receiving their power from you, and fully surrendered to you? Holy Spirit do you have free and total reign in their lives? God are you their life...or just part of it? God are they seeking first the Kingdom of God?

Then each day as part of my quiet time, I ask the same questions to the Holy Spirit about me. I still have a long way to go, but I know in my heart of hearts that it is my desire to seek Him first above all else.

We are going to begin this series that is all about the Holy Spirit.....How like the disciples in the upper room, we are to receive Him and fully embrace the gifts, the power and the fruit of our relationship with Him. During this series God is going to prompt you and me to surrender more. to trust Him more, and to experience Him more.

But before we go there, one question must be paramount to the start of our journey. We are going to spend some time praying at the altar and taking communion. There is only one question that I would like you to really nail down today....and I don't want the answer to come from you. For the next few minutes....alone with God....ask Him this question....God and I ALL IN? Is there any area of my life where I am holding back, any area of my life where I am afraid to trust you to go, any sin I am demanding that you ignore or any area of my life where I am being hypocritical?

Let pray. When the music starts the communion tables will be open, but first it is time to do some very serious business with God.