

Anticipation

Introduction

This series is about Flash Points In firefighting lingo, the flash point is the temperature at which everything combustible in a room spontaneously burns into flame, spreading the fire instantly. If we apply this principle to our lives, "flashpoints" are those moments when, for better or for worse, an idea catches fire or a single event sparks a change that transforms our lives forever. We have been exploring Spiritual Flash points.

This series has been planned for 2 years It started with a confession I realize that at times I have tried to do God's work for him Churches today have the 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

This series came out of a concern....that... 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

It is so easy for us to go into task mode... And try to do the work of God apart from the Power of God I believe that the Gospel is not fully advanced today... Because the Holy Spirit is essentially absent from many churches

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 I am sending you on a God-sized mission It will require God sized power Without Him...without me...you can do nothing Yet that is exactly what happens week in and week out in churches and Christ followers all over America

This series has been about The Holy Spirit We have been exploring together the power and presence of God in our lives Asking ourselves critical questions 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? Have we spiritually positioned ourselves to receive everything the Holy Spirit wants to give us? Do we trust Him to lead? Or have we boxed Him out.

We started the series with some promises.... 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 not be afraid of the Greatest Gift God has given us.. We will through the study of God's word develop a desperation for more...and remain open to whatever God wants to do... But we will not try to conjure up or control or manipulate others into an experience that is not from God.

We have learned together.... Jesus knew the Disciples would grieve when He left So He sent a comforter...the Holy Spirit He said it would be better for them... To have the Holy Spirit in them Than Jesus walking with them

He told them to wait until they received power Don't you dare try to go represent me to the world in your own power. because you will fail Wait He said...until you have been empowered from on high

I will bring the world to me... By living through you. I don't need your help...just your surrender

We learned that to surrender, we must see the Holy Spirit as the person that He is. Because we can't have a relationship with an impersonal force The Holy Spirit is a person...with emotions, expectations, He is not a Pet Rock that we can pretend to have a relationship with He is living...real...He is a person.

That no matter how much you know about the Bible, no matter how much you discipline yourself, no matter how hard you try to serve and please God.... If you don't have a relationship with the very personal... And real Holy Spirit.... Your walk with Christ will stagnate... You will miss out on the amazing journey God has planned for you...

You will wander in what feels like Spiritual wilderness Knowing you were supposed to be experiencing Something much deeper

We learned that a relationship with the Holy Spirit only comes after we repent...literally turn around and follow Jesus Flash Point falling of the Holy Spirit... Pentecost Story in Acts...2 of the Best Questions in the Bible What does this mean? What must we do?

Then Peter.... Repent...Be Baptized...Receive the Holy Spirit. Yet some never truly repent...They skip over the brokenness of realizing their sin It is our brokenness...our repentance...our shame... That makes us desperate for the Holy Spirit

We have also learned.. Then we learned that we not only must repent but also desire consecration. To pursue the Holiness of God. That we don't just come to God wanting forgiveness for our sins We actually down to our core want to stop sinning. And we are desperate for God to give us the power to do so.

That those who skip repentance and just say a prayer on day Can live fake Christian lives and not even miss the Holy Spirit Churches can "do church" without Him Because you don't need the Holy Spirit If you have no real desire to pursue holiness

But if you come from a place of brokenness If you truly repent..turn from your path to follow Jesus And you desperately want to be like Jesus...to pursue His holiness Then you become desperate for a relationship with the Holy Spirit Because a God sized transformation requires God sized power.

We studied that Amazing Day at Pentecost That flash point where the Holy Spirit descended And those who received Him were never again the same We learned of the link between the Tower of Babel and that moment at Pentecost

We learned about Baptism of Water and Baptism of the Holy Spirit We learned about praying in the Spirit... Hopefully bringing clarity to these confusing And potentially divisive topics

Then we began exploring Spiritual Gifts in 1 Cor 12 The Declarative Gifts
Prophecy...Tongues...Interpretation of Tongues The Discerning Gifts Word of Knowledge
Word of Wisdom Discerning of Spirits

The Dynamic Gifts Healing... Miracles Generosity But we learned that the greatest gift...is LOVE In fact without Love...the rest don't matter

We explored... The use of the Gifts in public worship services.. The importance of not alienating those who are trying to find Jesus While at the same time not shutting down what the Holy Spirit wants to do.

We have been on a remarkable journey together God has stretched all of us positioning us to receive all that the Holy Spirit wants to do

But we have one more step to take... To get ready... I think we can learn it...from learning about Joshua.

Joshua 3

Let me remind you of the story... Moses leading Israelites out of bondage in Egypt Their freedom from bondage...required they cross the Red Sea The Egyptians were pursuing them...God split the sea... They were led through the wilderness to the Promised Land God led them...Fire by night..Cloud by Day Along the way...God was teaching them...preparing them

On the Day of Passover..He gave them the 10 Commandments and the Law God used their wilderness experience to prepare them to cross the Jordan... To prepare them to live in the Promised land Where they would be his people and He would be their God

The first time they got to the edge of the Jordan **MAP** They sent spies into the Promised Land But rather than trusting God....they retracted in fear They didn't have the faith in God to cross over the Jordan

They had a relationship with God... They remembered the Passover and celebrated it They received the Law...built the tent of meeting God's presence in a cloud.....a fireball at night..and in the Ark of the Covenant

God miraculously led them through the desert...and the Promised land was right there for them But they lacked faith. and it angered God. Their lack of faith...cost them the Promised land They were still God's people... But they missed out on all that God had planned for them.

Without faith they all were destined to wander and die in the Wilderness And with the exception of a few who had faith...Joshua and Caleb...the entire generation.. Including Moses never experienced the land God had promised them.

They lived their entire lives...having seen the Promised Land But never having enough faith to actually experience it.

Now after wandering for 40 years.... Joshua finds himself... Once again standing on the edge of great promise Promise that will only come..through a huge step of faith.

I understand that fear... I have been following Jesus for quite a while... But there are times...when my walk feels like I am wandering in the wilderness I know I am following Jesus...just like they followed the cloud, the fire by night and the Ark of the Covenant. But I have become aware that He is calling me to a much deeper experience with Him

I know the Holy Spirit wants me to develop deeper intimacy I know that there is a deeper way of living my life I know that each day I have to surrender more... To receive more.

But I stand at the edge...seeing that relationship that I want... And yet fearful to take a step of faith.... What if I really open myself up to whatever the Holy Spirit wants to do and He makes me look foolish? What if I become charismatic? What if I am not in control of which gifts I want to receive and How God wants to use me.

And like the first generation of Israelites... I must decide...if I want to keep wandering in wilderness.... or surrender my fear...my control...my pride.... and allow Him to lead me...to a promised relationship with Him.

I feel like our relationship with God is on the edge of an explosion And many of you have shared similar emotions. It is like we have been wandering but we can see the promised land... A deeper Spiritual relationship with the Holy Spirit... with full expression of all that He wants to give us.. For the purpose of building us up to reach others for Christ.

I know God has been calling us to surrender... Surrender the control that we have never had... Surrender our opinion of what the Holy Spirit can and cannot do Surrender our idea of what church should be..

It like we have finally reached the edge of the Jordan River God is calling us to a deeper pursuit of Holiness God has led us to a place...where we can see.... The promised land if you will.... Of a deep...intimate...relationship with the Holy Spirit. God is calling us to trust Him... to leave behind our past.... and go "all in" with no turning back.

It is at the bank of the Jordan.... That we decide how we are going to live It is a flash point for us

We tend to live our lives in the flesh "Present Past" We live in the present...but often what shapes and controls us... Is our past...

In our flesh apart from God We are constantly reminded of and almost pulled backwards from our past experiences. The anchor if you will that is our past... Pulls us away from where we are trying to go. We live in the present but repetitively pulled back by our past Our past becomes our wildernesses experience

We seem to want what God promises.... But we can't seem to trust Him enough To release our clenched fist and leave our past behind.

That is what was facing the Israelites. They stand on the edge of the Jordan Tired from wandering in the desert because of their lack of faith. And once they cross the Jordan...they leave the wilderness behind forever. God is leading them to a new place...a promised place

God does not want us to live "Present Past" God wants those who trust Him to live "Present Future" To have the anchor of what pulls us to be where we are going... With no pull from where we have been.

When we live Present Future....we cut ties with our past... We are drawn by what is ahead of us... And the anchor of the promise of our future...pulls us forward

For the Israelites and for us... The Flash point moment occurs... When we leave the bondage of our past in the wilderness And take a step of faith...trusting God with the promises of our future.

Hernan Cortez (Photo) Spanish explorer reached the Yucatan Peninsula in 1519 He was sent there to conquer the Aztecs and set up a Spanish Colony Once they landed....and the men and supplies were unloaded... He destroyed the ships...He wanted his men to know... That there was no turning back. His men were going to live...Present Forward... They had no choice.

It takes a lot of faith to live Present Forward You have to burn the ships of your past And let your promised future...pull you forward. That is exactly where Joshua found himself....Joshua 3

Joshua 3:1–6 (ESV)

Joshua 3:1–6 3 And they came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. 2 At the end of three days the officers went through the camp 3 and commanded the people, "As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it. 4 Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before."

They have been wandering in the Wilderness their whole lives Their parents died in the wilderness because they lacked faith They had heard stories of the Promised Land Moses had

begged God to let him cross over.. But because the people lacked faith It would be Joshua who would lead them

Now they are standing...at a flash point moment of faith.. Egyptian bondage...slavery...aimless wandering...wilderness....manna...dry desert heat The sins of their fathers...a generation that lacked the faith to cross over All of those emotions...all of their past...all that they had ever known.

And now...it was their moment of faith. Would they have enough faith..to allow God to lead them Across this riverto their promised future The faith step required...would burn the ships of their past.

God has been leading them through every moment... And on this day...it was time to passover the Jordan To allow the Ark of the Covenant to lead them... The ark that represented the presence, nature and purpose of the Lord

Joshua 3:5 (ESV) 5 Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

Present future...tomorrow...tomorrow is the day The day you have waited for your whole life The day you leave behind..your past...your bondage...that anchor that has held you back

Notice that you don't have to do anything tomorrow except follow Tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you...

But Joshua says...today...you must consecrate yourself You must prepare yourself...to make sure you are ready to receive All that God has planned for you...all of His promises for you

Consecrate

Consecrate means to examine yourself... But more importantly it means to allow God to examine you. It means you allow God and not you to decide what needs to be confessed What needs to be left behind for good.

It means to separate yourself...to purposely distance yourself ...from anything.. That would contaminate your relationship with a perfect and Holy God. It means to pursue holiness... It means to have the guts to pray like the Psalmist

Psalm 26:2 (NASB) Examine me, O LORD, and try me; Test my mind and my heart.

To expose everything about you... To surrender to His opinion and clean up whatever He reveals to you

To consecrate means to surrender...It is a moment to moment experience.. As you walk in the Spirit. Consecration...is worship. It is honoring God by pursuing only the things that please Him

Consecration is to allow the Holy Spirit to define your reality It is a new way of thinking... Paul describes it this way

Romans 12:1–2 (ESV) 12 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

As a people of God...we are called to a new way of life We are to be consecrated..set apart..to allow the Holy Spirit To be fully manifested in us... When we have emptied ourselves of ourselves We can be filled with the Holy Spirit...

It is the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives that leads those in darkness to light. The reason we were given the power of the Holy Spirit Was not to develop a Holy Huddle.... But to tell the world about Jesus...

All the gifts of the Spirit are to be used.. To build up the body of believers So they can authentically represent Jesus to a world desperate for Him Peter says it best.

1 Peter 2:9–10 (ESV) 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

So standing on the edge of the Jordan With the promise of tomorrow on the horizon... The Israelites....consecrated themselves.. They left behind all that had been holding them back They burned the ships of their past... sins...doubts...excuses...rationalizations

They unclenched their fists that grasped anything displeasing to God They prepared themselves...so that they would be ready... When God moves...

Joshua 3:9–11 (ESV) 9 And Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God." 10 And Joshua said, "Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you ... 11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing over before you into the Jordan.

Joshua 3:13 (ESV) 13 And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand in one heap."

God would once again split the waters... He led them out of bondage in Egypt by splitting the Red Sea He would lead them to the Promised Land by splitting the Jordan.

But note that this time....nothing happens... Unless they have the faith to actually step into the Water and trust God to do what He had promised.

Joshua 3:14–17 (ESV) 14 So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, 15 and as soon as those bearing

the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water16 the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap ...and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. 17 Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

Do you want to guess what Day this Happened? God is a God of details....

Joshua 4:19 (ESV) 19 The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.

The 10th day of the First Month of the Jewish Calendar That is the day...that the Passover Lamb is to be presented 4 days before Passover. This would be the day...years later..when Jesus... The lamb of God presents Himself for examination Prior to his crucifixion.

But on this day...it is the day.. When God delivered His People... from the wilderness Because of their step of faith To enjoy everything He had promised them

Joshua 5:10 (ESV) 10 While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho.

I believe that God wants us... To experience all that he planned for us... When He sent us the Holy Spirit. I believe that God has everything perfectly situated... For a flash point... An encounter with Him..that is so real..so overpowering... That you will never again be the same..

Leaving your past behind in the Wilderness Burning whatever ship you have to Whatever past anchor that has limited your future and take a step of faith...trusting the promises of God... To take you to a place of a deeper relationship with Him

You may be hearing about Jesus for the first time Maybe you have heard about Him before.. But today..you are finally listening.

You are only one decision away from a totally different life. Of course, it will probably be the toughest decision you'll ever make. But if you have the courage to completely surrender yourself to allow Jesus to take over your life, there is no telling what God will do. All bets are off because all bets are on God.

Maybe you have been following Jesus.... But your relationship right now is in a wilderness experience You need a fresh encounter...a flash point with God... You too are one decision away from a totally different spiritual life.

But no matter where you are...it begins with brokenness...surrender...

Joshua 3:5 (ESV) 5 Then Joshua said to the people (AND TO US), "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."