

### SERMON GUIDE:

May 28, 2023, Pastor Jason Smotherman

### STRANGE FIRE

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Define willingness and obedience. What is the difference between the two?
- Why is it important to have both willingness and intent while pairing it with action and obedience? Explain in your own words.
- Define calling and realization. What is the difference between the two?
- What does the church need today to experience the Acts 2:1-4 moment? More money, political influence, more talent, shorter services?

#### SERMON NOTES

##### Leviticus 10:1-10

Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and **put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized (strange) fire before the Lord**, which he had not commanded them. **2** And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. **3** Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the Lord has said: 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.'" And **Aaron held his peace**. **4** And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, "Come near; carry your brothers away from the front of the sanctuary and out of the camp." **5** So they came near and carried them in their coats out of the camp, as Moses had said. **6** And Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar his sons, "Do not let the hair of your heads hang loose, and do not tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the congregation; but let your brothers, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning that the Lord has kindled. **7** And do not go outside the entrance of the tent of meeting, lest you die, for the anointing oil of the Lord is upon you." And they did according to the word of Moses. **8** And the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying, **9** "Drink no wine or strong drink, you or your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. **10** **You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean**

Nadab and Abihu were not minor players in the priesthood. They were the sons of Israel's priest (Aaron), the nephews of Israel's leader (Moses), the head of Israel's princely elders. They had been with Moses and Aaron on Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:1); they had looked upon vision of God as He appeared on Sinai; they had been chosen and consecrated to the priesthood; they had stood by and assisted Aaron in the first operations of the Hebrew ritual; and in the whole camp of the Israelites only Moses and Aaron had higher dignity than theirs. The fall from the Mountain of Sinai to the valley of destruction was a steep fall.

Look at the meanings of their names and the Hope of their life.



Nadab means willing. **Willingness doesn't equal obedience.**  
Abihu means he is my father. **Called doesn't equal realized.**

Many are willing, few are obedient.  
Many are called, few are able to see their destiny fulfilled.

### **Willingness doesn't equal obedience**

**Willing (Nadab) - ready, eager, or prepared to do something**

Willingness to serve is not the same as obedience in serving.

**Obedience** - compliance with an order, request, or law or **submission to another's authority**

Nadab's life was to literally be a reflection of obedience. A submitting to the authority of God's instruction over his life. He settled for willing when he should have been obedient. Many people make the same mistake as Nadab. **Most people look to our intent and willingness not on our actions or obedience.**

**Both intent and action are important.**

#### **1 Samuel 16:7**

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, **but the Lord looks on the heart.**"

#### **Colossians 3:25**

For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

God's desire for His people is that Godly intent would meet Godly action.

**Calling doesn't equal realization.**

**Calling** : a strong urge toward a particular way of life

**Many people know the direction of God but don't follow the heart of God.**

Father (Abihu) - **an important figure in the origin and early history of something**: a man who gives care and protection to someone or something: *the prince is widely regarded as **the father of the nation.***

Many of us have missed out what God wanted to do through us only to live in the regret of our calling never being realized. Abihu never realized his calling of being a father, he had to live with



consequences of His legacy dying with him. **If you are struggling with your direction, go back to the last thing God told you do and do that.**

The moral of the story.

**They went to sacrifice and pray, but God was more concerned they obey.**

Many people try to pray and sacrifice their disobedience away, nothing will ever substitute our obedience to God, even other important stuff.

Shortcuts are costly.

Jesus is not a shortcut cheat code to play to get out of trouble.

Jesus is a savior to surrender too, not a

**Aaron held his peace.**

Only here (that I can find) in the Book of Leviticus is it said that **the Lord** spoke directly to **Aaron** without the mediation of Moses. The prohibition against **wine or other fermented drink** was probably aimed at keeping their minds clear to fulfill their priestly duty of distinguishing **between the holy and the profane, between the unclean and the clean**, and so being prepared to **teach the Israelites** the rules revealed from God **through Moses** as well as to make decisions about difficult cases.

Imagining being Aaron in that moment.

Two sons, in the house of God, not realizing the importance of obedience.

The questions he must have had.

Did I do enough? Did I say enough? In the end there are no grandkids in the Kingdom of God.

Every person makes a choice.

If you are not willing to speak up and confront before poor decisions are made, it's probably a good idea to stay quiet after poor decisions have been made. **NOW is the time to speak to your children, Now is the time to speak to those around you that are heading towards the day where they will reap what they sow.**

The devil's favorite word is tomorrow.

These two eldest **sons** of **Aaron** (cf. Ex. 6:23; 28:1; 1 Chron. 6:3), either through ignorance or presumption, **offered unauthorized (strange) fire before the Lord, contrary to His command.** This incident interrupted the regular pattern of the previous two chapters in which everything was done in accord with the commands of the Lord (cf. Lev. 8:36). It is not stated what made their offering of incense "unauthorized" ("strange," kjv).

Scripture doesn't exactly say what happened, but let's look at the possibilities;

- **When you mix passions, you are in the danger zone.** Possibility #1, they used coals in **their censers** that came from elsewhere than the altar (Lev. 16:12) Mixed focus is a dangerous game to play in our walk with God. Seek first the Kingdom of God.
- **When you mix timing, you are in the danger zone.** Perhaps, They may have offered at the wrong time of day (Ex. 30:7–9). Example, Intimacy is reserved for marriage, step out of timing and beware.
- **When you mix roles, you are in the danger zone.** It may even be that they sought to go into the most holy place, and so usurped the prerogative of the high priest on the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev. 16:12–13). He is to be in charge. His word is final. His direction we are to trust. Whenever I switch roles and take control of my life, the danger zone has been crossed.
- **When you mix common with holy, you are in the danger zone.** The command prohibiting the priests from drinking “wine or other fermented drink” (10:9) may suggest that drunkenness was a possible factor in their sin. We have traded a form of Christianity that mixes the common with the Holy, the permissible (allowable) with the fervor of all-in relationship with Jesus.

Our world needs us committed to Holy Fire.

Many have chosen to live between two Fires, two passions.

Mixed living is dangerous. Fear of man and love of self have caught too many people between two fires. The closer they got to the cross, the smaller the crowd. By the time they were in the upper room, only a handful of people remained focused on the Fire.

#### John 12: 42-43 (NIV)

42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.”

Donnie Moore - So many people today would rather face the judgment of an angry God than face the possibility of a displeased friend.

#### Acts 2:1-4

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.

A number of pastors and leaders met recently and the question was asked , **what is going to happen to America?** One pastor said, **“Christianity in America has less than ten years.”** Another said, **“The church will be forced underground in less than a decade”** **“The church needs more money”** one pastor talked about, **“More political influence”** another said. **“More talent”** We need to understand that our condition is impossible right now. There’s no counsel, no human effort will turn America around. The bad news is, It looks impossible! **The good news is God specializes in the impossible.**



## What the church needs is the Power of God.

The idea that getting America's attention, by shortening church services is absolutely absurd.

One quote by a man, "Men will not go to church if it's long, they will drop the kids off and go watch football".

According to one major theological school "Church needs to be quick, it needs to be short, and no threatening remarks from the pulpit. Church must be explainable."

**The power of God gets people attention, it's not when church is explainable that it's compelling, it's when she is unexplainable. It's when she breaks the laws, breaks the rules. It's when God does something that is not tied to anything on earth. Pharaoh was scared to death of Moses because Moses had been to the burning bush, because he couldn't explain how an 80 year old man pointing a stick could open an ocean.**

It's always been impossible for the church, under Nero, Hitler, communism, in China, in muslim nations, in economic downturns, it has always been impossible for the church. BUT When God is ready to move, He will move even when it's impossible.

"This I've got to see" That's the world, that is what we want the world to say.

This is what they must say when they see black, white, Asian and brown all worshipping together. **"This I've got to see"**

When someone gets off heroine in one step instead of twelve, **"This I've got to see"**

When the lame walk the blind see and the deaf here **"This I've got to see"**

When a gang member a God-hater, an atheist, a devil worshipper are kneeling at an altar getting saved, "This I've got to see"

When a wife beater gets saved and filled with the holy spirit, "This I've got to see"

When a family prioritizes the things of God over sports or recreation, "This I've got to see!"

What do you think was going on in the upper room?

When 120 individuals were like a flea on elephants back.

When's the world's most important religious feast at Pentecost is going on outside, thousands from all over the world are there.

What is the hope that 120 people are going to turn a generation's neck, because a fire was going to appear over their heads. It was a fire that did not need fuel, a fire that violated the third law of



thermo dynamics. A fire that was not on a bush but on 120 believers, that began to speak the word of God, violating the laws of sociology.

How is it that they are speaking from our village, our dialects, telling of the mighty works of God. How did 120 go global in one day?

What is the hope of Parkway turning a generation's neck?  
What is it going to take to move a valley to the foot of the cross.  
It's going to take a This I have to see moment.

The Bible says in the last days you will see a death of passion, an absence of emotion. The inability to feel things. **Unloving means they've lost the power to feel beauty or be moved by a sunset.** Unloving means a part of them has permanently died, where they don't notice the laugh of a child, the ocean, a waterfall, the feeling of family. It just comes from life and they've lost it.

In the book War and Peace, Napoleon said, "I have lost the power to think in decent thought"

In the last days it says, they will be ungrateful, if you can't feel gratitude you can't feel the meaning of anything. The bible says they will be unforgiving, they won't forgive one another, hate will ruin their hearts. The days will be perilous because of an emotional war that will destroy all natural affection.

Men will be, unloving, unforgiving, ungrateful and ungodly. In the last days, one of the greatest battles that is taking place is the battle for passion. What people are passionate about?

It's why I can preach and no one claps.  
It's why we can worship and no one raises their hands.  
It's why I can challenge and no one rise to the challenge. It's because these are the last days. A this you have to see faith needs to rise. A get out of my way, touch the hem of His garment faith needs to be activated.

The church, when we are passionate for God and passionate about the things of God, the world will stop and look and say "This I've got to see" "This I've got to see"

God, make me a "this I have to see" believer!