

## Beach, Bonfire, Bento and Bible Study **F.I.R.E.**

### **Part 4 – God’s Everlasting Fire**

#### **Faithfull, Irresistible, Refining, Everlasting**

**F.** - God Reveals His **Faithfulness** through fire.

**I.** - Just as we are drawn **Irresistibly** to fire, so God draws us to Himself through grace.

**R.** - God **Refines** our faith through fire.

**E.** - God's very presence in **Eternity** will be a Blazing Fire, a terror for one and great beauty for another.

#### Fire facts: One Fire in Three components

Fires start when a flammable and/or a combustibile material (FUEL) with an adequate supply of oxygen or another oxidizer (OXYGEN) is subjected to enough heat (IGNITION) and is able to sustain a chain reaction (EXISTANCE). This is commonly called the fire tetrahedron.

The Bible teaches that God similarly exists in three persons, referred to as the Trinity. Matt 3:16-17, Eph 4:4-6 One God in Three Persons - God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit

During our first lessons in week one we learned that God has Faithfully revealed himself to us through his creation and that we are reminded that God refreshes His promises to us daily. Lamentations 3:22 & 23 <sup>22</sup>The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; <sup>23</sup>they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

In our second week we learned that God is not passive in our redemption or salvation. He does the work and the pursuing. We are irresistibly drawn to the fire of God because:

1. *God calls us and finds us.* (Genesis 3:8-9)
2. *God makes atoning sacrifice for our sin through His Son Jesus Christ.* (Romans 5:8)
3. *God removed the barrier that separates us from an eternal relationship with him.* 1 John 4:10)
4. *God has provided us a suitable set of clothes, through the Blood of Christ.* (Luke 24:49)

During our 3<sup>rd</sup> week study we made four observations about God’s Refining Fire:

1. The world is all about image building. We build up our own images and try to tear down the images of others. People exalt themselves at the expense of those around them. The lust of the eyes, the flesh and the pride of life are the god’s that Satan and the world demands that we worship. (1Jn 2:15)
2. It is because Christ saved us and that we are no longer slaves to sin and because of this we now have *freedom* to choose to obey or disobey, honor or dishonor God. (Rom 12:1&2)

3. Everyone will face the fire of God. For a believer it will be during this life as we are sanctified and for the unbeliever it will be forever in hell. Unbelievers will suffer in this life due to a world that has been cursed by God, but they will not be unbound from the curse sin. God takes the believer and meets him in the fire of testing and suffering then burns away the sinful bonds of our worldly flesh. (Gal 2:20 and Romans 8)
4. The ultimate purpose of our facing the Refining Fire of God is the worship and glorification of God. (1 Pet 1:6-9)

This week we consider the everlasting nature of fire. I don't know about you, but when I first think about eternity and fire I think about the judgment of God against Satan and his demons and unredeemed man.

- ✓ Revelation 20:7-9 "And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,"
- ✓ Revelation 20:11-15 "Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

The judgment of God with fire is a promise of God and will happen. As a Christian when I think about how sure God's promises are, it motivates me to want to share the gospel of salvation to everyone I can. The really strange thing about this is that unbeliever's do not seem to be much affected by the prospects of an eternity in Hell. They carefully craft alternative explanations for eternity that are designed to convince themselves that Hell does not exist, or they will not have to face anything that anyone else will have to face. So I see three principles emerge here:

1. Christians are affected by Hell and are therefore motivated to share the gospel.
2. The Lake of Fire is not a fire that is burning out of control, but rather under the direct sovereignty of God.
3. Unbelievers are not profoundly affected by the prospects of Hell, and therefore are not motivated to seek God because of it.

The lesser-considered aspect of eternal fire is the fire we will experience in glory when we are in the very presence of God. We do not often think of it as fire, but the Biblical description of what it will be like to be in the presence of God clearly presents this.

- ✓ Revelation 22:1-5 “Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.”
- ✓ Revelation 21:22-27 “And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

Whereas the fire of the judgment of God is a consuming fire, the fire of the glory of God in the new Heaven and New Earth is a nurturing fire. Remarkably, it is the Glory of God that primarily draws people to salvation. My dad is fond of saying that you draw more flies with honey than vinegar, to describe how getting along with people always works better if you are loving to them, rather than overbearing, demanding or unkind. I am not suggesting that we do not follow the biblical example of sharing the Gospel message in the context of the law which the Holy Spirit uses to convict of sin, but rather that we look to the example of Christ concerning His loving attitude to those who were perishing. So I see two principles emerge here:

1. Unbelievers are profoundly affected by the prospects of Heaven. They take every measure they can to create a virtual heaven while they living this life on earth but because of the condemnation of the Law often look elsewhere.
2. The everlasting Glory, Goodness and Beauty of God draw people to Himself.
3. Since Christians are affected by Hell, having been saved by grace and are no longer under the condemnation of the law should be all the more motivated to share the gospel because we have been given so great a salvation.

**Amazing Grace**

Ephesians 1:7

*By:* John Newton, 1779 (first four stanzas); Anonymous (fifth stanza)

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares,  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,  
His word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand  
years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun.  
Amen.

*By:* Rick Utecht

**And Can It Be**

Ephesians 2:7

*By:* Charles Wesley

And can it be that I should gain,  
An interest in the Savior's blood?  
Died He for me, who caused His pain?  
For me who Him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That you, my God, would die for me?  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That you, my God, would die for me?

He left his Father's throne above,  
So free so infinite His grace;  
Humbled himself (so great his love!),  
And Bled for all his chosen race.  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;  
for, O my God, it found out me.  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That you, my God, would die for me?

Long my imprisoned spirit lay  
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray;  
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;  
My chains fell off, my heart was free;  
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That you, my God, would die for me?

No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!  
Alive in Him, my living Head,  
And clothed in righteousness divine,  
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,  
And claim the crown, through Christ, my  
own.  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That you, my God, would die for me?

# And Can It Be That I Should Gain

Charles Wesley, 1738

SAGINA

Thomas Campbell, 1825

1. And can it be that I should gain an in - t'rest  
 2. 'Tis mys - t'ry all! Th' Im mor - tal dies: who can ex -  
 3. He left his Fa - ther's throne a - bove (so free, so  
 4. Long my im - pris - oned spir - it lay fast bound in  
 5. No con - dem - na - tion now I dread; Je - sus, and

in the Sav - ior's blood? Died he for me, who caused his  
 plore his strange de - sign? In vain the first - born ser - aph  
 in - fi - nate his grace!), hum - bled him - self (so great his  
 sin and na - ture's night; thine eye dif - fused a quick - n'ing  
 all in him is mine! A - live in him, my liv - ing

pain? For me, who him to death pur - sued? A - maz - ing  
 tries to sound the depth of love di - vine. 'Tis mer - cy  
 love!), and bled for all his cho - sen race. 'Tis mer - cy  
 ray; I woke, the dun - geon flamed with light; my chains fell  
 head, and clothed in righ - teous - ness di - vine, bold I ap -

love! How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst  
 all! Let earth a - dore, let an - gel minds in -  
 all, im - mense and free; for O my God, it  
 off, my heart was free; I rose, went forth, and  
 proach the - ter - nal throne, and claim the crown, through

die for me?  
 quire no more. A - maz - ing love! How can it  
 found out me. A - maz - ing love  
 fol - lowed thee. A - maz - ing love How  
 Christ my own.

be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?  
 can it be that thou, my God,

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