FLASH POINT

Acts 2:1-21

Pentecost

Woo Hoo!! It’s PENTECOST! Woo Hoo! Say it with me! Woo Hoo! Now mean it!! WOO HOO!!

Just in case you haven’t notice… or if it’s your first day here, I tend to have a lot of energy! (I know, shocker, right?!)

If there's anything that catches people's attention and causes them to sit up and take notice of what you're saying or doing, it's ENTHUSIASM! The word enthusiasm is derived from two Greek words: "En", which means IN, and "theos", which means GOD. So enthusiasm literally means "in God", or "God in us"! Thus a truly enthusiastic person is one who acts and speaks as if s/he were possessed by God!

God's Word tells us, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might!" (Ecclesiastes 9:10) The Bible also tells us, "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord!" (Romans 12:11) The Lord expects us to be whole-hearted and filled with an impassioned desire to please and serve Him! ENTHUSIASTICALLY!

In fact, Jesus said that half-hearted, lukewarm, indifferent Christians make him literally sick to his stomach! He says to them, "I know your deeds and works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either one or the other, cold or hot!--So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of my mouth!...Be zealous, therefore, and repent!" (Revelation 3:15,16,19)

The Lord wants and needs on-fire, red-hot, enthusiastic followers who love Him!

Is that you? Are you red-hot? Are you on fire for God?!

Speaking of fire… (Have Denise get up with a worried look… with a fire extinguisher and a super soaker)

Our scripture for today is our Pentecost scripture. All of the disciples were together, disappointed, sad, and heart-broken that Christ left them. Though many of them saw him ascend to heaven, they still mourned their loss. As they sat together an amazing thing happened. The Holy Spirit came upon them.

Now in confirmation class, we have been working on understanding the symbols of the Holy Spirit. Confirmands, when the Holy Spirit came down to earth when Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down in what form? (Dove) When the Holy Spirit came down to earth on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down in what form? (A flame) So what is the color of Pentecost? (Red) It is red because the Spirit of God came as a flame…

Are you on fire for God?? (Light fire) (Have Chris come up… in firefighter gear and a super soaker… tells me no fire in the building…)

Yes, fire is not good in the building… but our spiritual fire needs to burn, and burn hot. As Christians we need to watch out to not “quench” our fire. 1 Thessalonians 5:15 tells us, “Do not quench the Spirit.”

In light of this, what does it does mean to “quench” the Spirit’s fire? It helps to know that the word translated “quench” or “put out” generally refers to putting out a literal fire. You might douse a flame with water or you might extinguish it by covering a fire with a mound of dirt. You normally don’t quench a fire by accident. The fire goes out because someone either lets it burn out or takes steps to put it out. This suggests that the Holy Spirit naturally “burns” within us unless we do something to put out the Spirit’s fire.

How do you quench, suppress, stifle, or put out the Spirit’s fire? Disobedience and sinning will stifle the Spirit’s fire. Criticizing someone else’s love for the Lord would do it. Harboring bitterness in your heart would do it. So does saying “No” to the Lord. Other things in our daily life threaten our fire- peer pressure, problems, and trials…

It is also important to know that we can put out the Spirit’s fire in our lives and in the lives of others.

Don’t quench the Spirit! We need to burn strongly for the Lord (set paper on fire… Chris comes out and squirts water on the table).

What good is a furnace when its fire goes out? It's cold, dark and useless! It's still all there, just without fire. In the winter, if your furnace goes cold, the whole house will grow freezing cold. It is sad to say, that it happens to churches as well. Their pastors, leaders, and members have lost their fire, they have no emotion, no spirit. The fire's gone out, so the whole house has grown cold and frozen in lifeless, Spiritless formality! Brrr!

Is that us? Have we grown cold? Or are we on fire for God?? We are on fire!! (Burn paper… Denise comes out and squirts the table)

We need to keep our fire. We need to stay fired up. We need to have a fire for God. We need to continue to burn.

Nothing could quench Paul's enthusiasm! In his own words he says, "Five times I received from the Jews forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day adrift in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from the Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers! I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked." (2 Corinthians 11:24-27)

Did Paul let these difficulties and obstacles stop him? No! He went right on serving God no matter what hardships or difficulties befell him! Nothing can stop the man who is fired up with enthusiasm and on fire for God!

Are we on fire for God? (Make sure they say it loudly!)(Light paper) (Have Chris squirt water on the table)

Someone once asked a great man of God what the secret of his success was and he replied, "I just get on fire for God and the world comes out to see me burn!" But if you haven’t got the fire, if your Christianity is nothing but cold dead icicles - no warmth, no heat - you'll never inspire anyone to do anything! He who has no fire in himself cannot warm others.

So we need to have fire in order to fire up others. How do we get fire and how do we keep it? What is our flash point? A flash point of a material is the lowest temperature at which vapors of a fluid will ignite. What is our flash point? At what point will we catch on fire for Christ?

Do you feel the fire when you read the Bible? (Light fire) (Have Chris and Denise come out, but stand with their super soakers… just standing)

Do you feel the fire when you pray? (Light fire)

Do you feel the fire when you come to church? (Light fire)

Do you feel the fire when you worship and sing? (Light fire)

Let's get on fire for God by earnestly praying and faithfully and hungrily reading God’s Word and letting God’s truth and Spirit inspire us.

We have to get to the point where we are so hot that others can’t deny the heat. They can’t deny the fire. They can’t deny the flame that they see burning in you.

Are you fired up for God?! Are you on fire? (Burn paper) (Chris and Denise point super soakers to congregation) AMEN.