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The Fire of Faith By Teresa Hampton

One of my favorite songs is “It Only Takes a Spark,” by Kurt F. Kaiser. When I hear the words, what comes to mind is the fire of faith that was evident in the lives of first century believers. They lived and breathed the message of this song.

Following Jesus’ arrest and crucifixion, the apostles were a scattered, fearful group. However, during the next forty days, they saw, touched, spoke and ate with the resurrected Lord. They, along with other believers, came to understand the spiritual nature of Christ’s reign and His kingdom. With that knowledge, their lives would never be the same.

Peter and the eleven preached about the risen Lord to a large number of Jews on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Bear in mind, the people in this audience were the same ones who put Jesus to death days earlier. Yet the apostles boldly proclaimed Jesus’ resurrection, and the culpability of their listeners in the crucifixion of the Son of God. What was the result? About three thousand men and women obeyed the Lord (Acts 2:41).

At Solomon’s portico, Peter and John rebuked the Jews for denying the Holy One. The captain of the temple and the Sadducees had them arrested. Yet many of the listeners believed, and the number of men that obeyed was about five thousand (Acts 4:1-4). The following day, Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrin. They were commanded not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus (v. 18). What was their response? They answered, *Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have heard.*

The book of Acts is filled with testimonies from first century believers, and the resulting fire of faith that their words ignited. Early Christians, like James, Steven, and Paul, were threatened, persecuted, beaten, stoned, imprisoned, or put to death for their belief in the risen Lord. Despite the suffering, Christians could not be silenced about the good news. They could not speak with people without telling them about the Savior, no matter the risk to themselves or their families. It was a fire burning in their souls!

Lost people are all around us. Does the fire burn in our hearts to tell them about the gift of forgiveness? Do we seize every opportunity to teach them? Do we ask them to worship with us so they can hear about Jesus’ love?

We live in a land of religious freedom, at least for now. We should use that blessing to its fullest. If we do not have the fire of faith, we need to kindle one. If our flame is flickering, we need to fan it. Remember, it only takes a spark...to get a fire going.

Today’s Verse: *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20)*

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