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Are You a Keeper of the Fire?

by Pastor Clarissa Martinelli

Isaiah 55: 1-2 says:

*“Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;*

*and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!*

*Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.*

*² Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.*

ARE YOU A KEEPER OF THE FIRE?

PRAYER

There is a divine empowerment that God wants to release to the church in the world today.

God wants to pour God’s spirit unto God’s people, anointing them with the balm of God’s power and authority to do the works of Christ in this day.

We cry out Lord, Lord, send your anointing, send your power, send your Spirit.

God is ready. God is willing. God is surely able.

But who among us is willing to pay the price for such a precious gift? Who among us is willing to live a life that allows the presence of God to dwell within?

Who among us is willing to set themselves aside for God’s will?

To be powerful and mighty in the Kingdom of God, you have to be set apart from the worldly ways. Look at the life of Samson in Judges 13: 5. Samson was called out from the womb.

“For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”

His mother took a Nazirite Vow from the womb... no wine... no unclean things... could she eat; she was doing her part. She wasn’t to cut his hair. She raised him as a Nazirite.

There was a great anointing upon Samson in a supernatural strength. The Nazirite Vow was his

covering and protection... it was designed to set him apart and keep him pure, to be used by God.

Samson had made a vow of death to the self.

What is a vow... a promise, commitment or consecration to the Lord which can lead to greater anointing.

Isn't that what we all want... to be used by God? For God to use each of us for God's precious will?

Judges 14: 5 says that "Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart though he had nothing in his hand."

What kind of man was this Sampson? He was to be a leader committed to the Lord's will.

BUT as the story continues, we come to see that the natural things of life will get in the way, and the same can be seen our Christian walk today. Our lives are becoming cluttered, diverting us from our full potential in God. We begin with great power... Start off hard and strong, then crash and burn. Like fireworks, all big booms and a short flash and then gone... forever... never to be seen again.

Or we become so weak that a slight wind can blow us in any direction, always trying to please others... forsaking what is true and written in the Bible.

You want power... look to the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ.

But dwelling among our churches today is the Delilah Spirit. This powerful spirit makes the strongest of Christians compromise their gifts and their callings All what they view are the luxuries of an earthly life.

We are tempted with riches, fame and the comfortable life and acceptance from others, compromising what is precious and pure before the Lord to appease the flesh and our fellow humans. Just like Samson in Judges 16:17, we give in at one point to pacify the world and appease the desires of others. "... that he told her all his heart, and said to her, 'No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.'"

Tell me what will kill you Samson... you can trust me... just like the serpent in the garden... We trust the world and do not fear God. Or we fall into traps because we are not rooted in the word and glory of God. We unwittingly violate God's Commandments.

Too much of the world things – each of us can take inventory on what constitutes our earthly treasures – but in the end we live false lifestyles not pleasing to God; we compromise what we

are and what we are to be.

The world says: Compromise once and it's ok; but once you've compromised, the next time becomes easier and easier. We give in to worldly pressures. We get to the point in our sin and folly that we don't even know the Lord has left. Sin becomes familiar, and we start to accept it.

But thanks be to a gracious and forgiving God. Each day we are granted new beginnings and new salvation as God restores and forgives, allowing second, eighth, twentieth – infinite number of opportunities for Creation to live and do better. He can restore all loss, even years of failure like the ones of Samson.

Look closely at Samson's life. Instead of keeping his life so he could be used by God, Sampson began to indulge in the delights of Delilah. See, it was her who pleased him, not God.

Judges 16:20 - "And she said, 'The Philistines are upon you, Samson!' So he awoke from his sleep, and said, 'I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!' But he did not know that the Lord had departed from him."

HE didn't even know the Lord Left... Then they bound him and imprisoned him.

If the church is power, then the enemy is the spirit of Delilah. We succumb to the spirit of this world. We give our power away to fit in, so they accept us.

We go with them when they say, "Oh, just this one time won't matter." When we should be saying, "No. Come let us worship God."

We have all decorations of Christianity - we come to church, sing hymns. But where is our action? Love is a verb, not just a noun . How do we demonstrate our love for God?

We have pretty outward shells, Wet all made up like Delilah. But is there an inward anointing?

The enemy knows the potential power of this church and is doing everything to stop it from manifesting in this earth ... from fulfilling its call. The enemy will rob you of your blessing to keep you down and beaten. It will compromise you to keep you weak... and lay you in Delilah's lap to lead you to ruin.

The church in America today is talking skim milk instead of preaching the meaty substance of the WORD. What we live and say has no value or weight.

A church of power is born in FIRE.

BECAUSE FIRE WILL PURGE ALL SIN AND BRING everything INTO THE LIGHT.

The anointing will evade you if you are not prepared to recognize it when it shows up. You can't have the power of the anointing if something doesn't die first. What's going to die is... YOU.

God is squeezing your ministry out of you. Embrace the Olive press for it is producing something great, something to be used of God.

We are called to follow and serve, co-laborers called to build the House of God.

Jesus came to die. He came to rid this world of its pain. When He left... He left us the Holy Spirit, the Power we need to go forward.

Someone needs to spark the fuse.

Who is willing to carry the Light...who is willing to leave it all behind to become the keeper of the flame?

This is what we tend to forget - the spirit of Pentecost that broke the ground for Salem United Methodist church in the 1850s. Will it be said that it was only during that era that the people were willing to release themselves to the Spirit of God and stoke the fire?

One thing about fire it has to be stoked and tended.

Do you want to be revived? Do you want the anointing to fall fresh on you, your family, your community, your job, this world?

Pray. Give your life fully to God. Consecrate yourselves and families to God.

The enemy is trying to steal your power, and are you going to let him? Stand up and say, "I will serve my God no matter what!" What greater cry than one who is serving the Lord!

The time is now, Church; the days are short. Who is going to say, "Use me, Lord, use me. Pour your Spirit on me, Lord. Use me."

We have to start praying and living as warriors.

Start today by being deliberate in your dedication to serve a true and living God – one that rose one Sunday morning with all power in His hand! He rose for each and every one of us – he rose that you might have life, live in the Holy Spirit, have a relationship with God – and be a Keeper of the Fire!