

# “CLAIM THIS PROMISE...WHEN YOUR FLAME IS DYING”

**TEXT: Psalm 39:3**

**INTRO: A.** Our jet had just taken off from Kansas City when a loud explosion caused the plane to shudder. The stewardesses strapped themselves into their seats, the passengers were fearful. After what seemed like a long time, the pilot announced that he would get back to us with more information, but that at that moment he was

“quite busy.” Finally he came back and told us we were heading back to the K.C. airport. As we were touching down, we could see emergency vehicles lining the runway with their lights flashing. Not a comforting sight. We later learned that on our 3 engine jet, the main tail engine had experienced a “flame out”! The plane could continue to fly on two engines, but it was safer not to try.

**B.** I have seen many Christians experience “flame outs.” They continue to function, but their main source of power is gone. They too need to return to their “home base” for repairs and not continue to try to “wing it” under their own power. They (you) need to “CLAIM THIS PROMISE...WHEN YOUR FLAME IS DYING.”

## **I. WARMING YOURSELF BY THE ENEMY’S FIRE:**

**A. ...With Peter:**

*Mk.14:54*

*54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.*

1. Peter had a “flame out” when he hung out with the wrong crowd.
2. The influence of the ungodly sapped his spiritual strength and turned the boisterous and bold Peter into a Christ-denying coward.
3. The greatest influence on the believer is where and with whom he or she spends their time.

**ILLUS:** I am not talking about the time over which you have no control, e.g., at work, etc., but rather the time which you are free to decide and choose your friends, fellowship and activity. If you spend your chosen time with positive influences your fire will burn brightly. If you read the Word, pray, work, avoid the ungodly (TV, reading material, etc.), read wholesome literature, etc. you will not have a flame out.

Peter no doubt did what was expected of him around the enemy’s fire. He denied the Lord, he used language acceptable to the crowd he was with, etc. Was Peter saved? Yes. His fire had been quenched by his associations! Yours will too!

4. Peter probably rationalized where he was based on trying to stay close to Christ, but it led him back to a lifestyle he was all too familiar with and which ensnared him again.

**ILLUS:** When a person gets saved, he not only changes his lifestyle, but his friends, fellowship and the places he goes. He needs to be in church with God’s people. He needs to avoid the former influences, AMAP. You can’t warm yourself by the enemy’s fire and expect to have the Lord’s fire burning with in you!

## **II. WARMING YOURSELF BY YOUR OWN FIRE:**

## A. ...With David: (text)

**QUOTE:** My sorrow was stirred, my heart was hot within me, v. 3. He could bridle his tongue, but he could not keep his passion under; though he suppressed the smoke, that was as a fire in his bones, and, while he was musing upon his afflictions and upon the prosperity of the wicked, the fire burned. Note, Those that are of a fretful discontented spirit ought not to pore much, for, while they suffer their thoughts to dwell upon the causes of the calamity, the fire of their discontent is fed with fuel and burns the more furiously. Impatience is a sin that has its ill cause within ourselves, and that is musing, and its ill effects upon ourselves, and that is no less than burning. If therefore we would prevent the mischief of ungoverned passions, we must redress the grievance of ungoverned thoughts.

(from Matthew Henry's Commentary)

1. David is having a pity party. V.1-3
2. He becomes introspective and ponders his finiteness and frailty. V.4,5
3. If you want to become a real “burnout” – just warm yourself by your own fire!

**ILLUS:** Dwell on your future instead of your present. Worry and fret about your impending death instead of what you can do for the Lord here and now and you will have a major “flameout”! (Note: the Lord has given us all a measure of our life at the end of our arms... “an handbreadth” – that’s it!) But the only way to prepare for the future is to live in the present!

## B. ...With Elijah:

### *1 Kings 19:11*

***And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.***

1. Here is a mighty prophet of God feeling sorry for himself.
2. Elijah thinks he is all alone in standing for the Lord, but God reminds him that he has 7000 others standing up for Him!
3. When you feel all alone in your walk, witness and service – remember that there are countless thousands of believers doing what you are doing or more!
4. When you warm yourself by your own fire, your flame will soon go out; it is mighty cool when you are all alone!

### *Eccl. 4:11*

***Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?***

## C. ...With Nadab and Abihu:

### *Lev. 10:1-2*

***And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.***

1. These two men weren't having a pity party, they were on a power trip!
2. These two men did what so many after them have done, they intruded into areas where they

were not called to serve and questioned God-given authority.

**Lev. 9:23-24**

*And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.*

3. There is nothing wrong with desiring to serve the Lord, but you had better make sure of your calling first.
4. These two men were acting out of jealousy; they had just seen the miraculous and wanted to bask in the glory that now came to the God-called servants! Beware...!

**III. WARMING YOURSELF BY THE SPIRIT'S FIRE:**

**A. ...With Elijah:**

1. On Mt. Carmel.

**1 Kings 18:38**

*Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*

2. Re: Ahaziah. 2 Ki.1:10-14
  - a. Three times the fire of the Lord falls at Elijah's bidding here.
  - b. Elijah is ministering in the warmth and power of Holy Spirit fire!
3. At Gilgal: 2 Ki.2:11
  - a. Thank God the end of Elijah's life is not a burn out, but a blast!
  - b. He is taken to heaven in a chariot of fire, pulled by horses of fire.

**B. ...With Elisha: 2 Kings 2:11**

1. Because he walked with God, he was warmed by God's fire.
2. If you want God's blessing, power and protection, you must do the same.

**C. ...With Isaiah: Is.6:1-8**

1. When you are warmed by God's fire you see your own unworthiness.
2. When you are warmed by God's fire you are able to serve Him.

**CONCL:** Are you warming yourself by the enemy's fire, your own fire or the Spirit's fire, tonight? When your flame is dying...claim this promise!