

3 Ways to Keep Your Fire Burning in Hard Times

There are two kinds of fire in life—the good **Holy Spirit fire** that helps us burn for the Lord and the fire of **affliction, adversity, pain** and **sorrow**. For some, fiery trials can be fire-quenchers, squelching your godly fire out. For others, trials can strengthen the very fiber of your being.

You can go through the trials and come out with your Holy Spirit fire burning bright, or you can allow the fires of adversity to snuff out any smoldering wick you may have left. You have to decide that **trial** and **tribulation** will not rob you of your **calling** and your **hope**.

This year has been a difficult one for me, with the loss of one parent and learning to provide care for the other, but it's also been a year of growth. I am stronger now than I've ever been. I have determined that nothing can separate me from God's love and all He has for me.

Here are the lessons I've learned in the fire:

1. Fix your eyes on what is eternal and invisible. Don't look at the circumstances; don't look at the people. Set your mind and your affections on what is above, and you'll be able to manage what's happening below.

2. Process the pain and don't ignore it. Oppression, stress, adversity—you can't be an ostrich Christian and stick your head in the sand when tribulation comes your way. Face the facts and process the hurts, but don't stay in them. You can say, "I'll process it, but I won't live in it."

3. Pray and press in. Hold firmly to your faith! Go to the throne of grace and find help and mercy in your time of need.

Jesus was tempted through the fire, but He did not sin. He faced the pressure and didn't give in. He knows how you're feeling in the midst of adversity. You can run to Him in times of trouble. (See Hebrews 4:14-16.)

Overall, don't let your fire go out when you go through the fire. Let the Word of God be your declaration of faith:

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.* So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Cor. 4:16-18, emphasis added).

In the face of the most intense fire of your life, I pray the fire of the Holy Spirit would gird you up to stand firm in the Lord. Do not lose heart!

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