

"To Burn and Not Be Burnt"

(15th in our series, Jesus Everywhere)

Exodus 2:1-4:17; Matthew 17:1-8*

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May 6th, 2012

**All scriptures are ESV unless otherwise noted.*

Song

Let me stand next to your fire.

Sermon

I'm convinced every song is really about God. Moses says and Scripture says in several places "Our God is consuming fire." Jeremiah 23:29 – "His Word is like fire" and Isaiah 10:1 "His Holy one, a flame." *I have only one desire; let me stand next to your fire.*"

Audio clip from movie *It's a Bug's Life*

Hurry, no, don't look at the light.

I cannnnn'ttttt help it. It's so beautiful. [bug zapper sound] Screaming and then silence.

Let's Pray. Lord God, you are Light; You are consuming fire. And so we're drawn to you like bugs drawn to a bug zapper. How do we stand next to the Fire and not be burnt by the Fire? Lord, help us to preach the Gospel.

Audio clip from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*

God: *Arthur, Arthur, King of the Britons.*

God: *Oh don't grovel. One thing I can't stand, its people groveling.*

Arthur: *Sorry*

God: *And don't apologize. Every time I try to talk to someone it's 'sorry this' and 'forgive me that' and 'I'm not worthy.' What are you doing now?*

Arthur: *I'm averting my eyes, oh Lord.*

God: *Well don't. It's like those miserable Psalms – they're so depressing. Now knock it off.*

Arthur: *Yes Lord.*

God: *Right. Arthur, King of the Britons, your Knights of the Round Table shall have a task to make them an example in these dark times.*

Arthur: *Good idea oh Lord.*

God: *Of course it's a good idea. Behold Arthur, this is the Holy Grail. Look well Arthur. It is your sacred task to seek this Grail. That is your purpose Arthur – the quest for the Holy Grail.*

I've show that clip too much but it illustrates my point: Arthur sees the light and receives the call of God and freaks out. He gets ridiculous and the whole movie is ridiculous. Kind of like Church history is ridiculous. The Crusades were largely a quest for the Holy Grail. And so sensing the call of God, the Church massacred thousands of Jews, Muslims and Christians in the Middle East, looking for the container Christ chose to hold His blood. That's ridiculous and evil – it's religulous.

Clip from Bill Maher's video *Religulous*

Bill Maher: *If you belonged to a political party or a social club that was tied to as much bigotry, misogany, homophobia, violence, and sheer ignorance as religion is; you'd resign in protest. To do otherwise is to be an enabler, a Mafia wife, for the true devils of extremism that draw their*

illigitimacy from the billions of their fellow travelers. If the world does come to an end here or wherever or if it lives into the future, desomated by the effects of of a religion inspired nuclear terroism; let's remember what the real problem was.

According to Bill Maher, our problem is Religion ... But you know trusting Bill Maher's "knowledge of good and evil" is also a Religion.

Well whatever the case, an awful lot of Evil has been done in the name of Religion ...

Crusades, Inquisitions, Holy Wars, Jihad

Anytime humans start talking about ultimate realities like Justice, Righteousness, and the Knowledge of Good and Evil. It's like we stand next to the Fire and get burned by the Fire and yet if there is no fire, there is no Light, no Reason, and no Life. And I'm not just talking on some global political level, but on a very personal level

"How do I look at God and talk about God and not just go insane?"

I've grown up around pastors and preachers and its not a very safe profession.

- One pastor friend asphyxiated himself and folks got burned.
- Both of my pastors in California (hugely successful authors and speakers) had multiple affairs and lived lives of deception.

I remember one of them telling me, *"Peter I was just so stressed."* And why was he stressed? ... well I think it was the Fire. I think he really preached Fire and was burned by Fire.

And its not just pastors ... but anyone:

- How do you handle God's will and God's call?
- How do you handle a law like *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and your neighbor as yourself?"*

The more you handle that Law and try to fulfill that Law, the more you'll be burned by that Law. And if you feel responsible for others obeying that Law, the more you'll burn them ... with the Law.

- How do you handle God's word?

I've oftne wondered *"God, how can people speak your Word and be so different from your Word?"* and then realized I'm wondering about myself – speaking the Word and burned by the Word.

You know the greatest prophecy ever spoken in Scripture was spoken by the High Priest Caiaphas. His job was to literally stand next to the fire in the temple. He prophesied that *"One man must die for the sins of the nation."* Then he proceeded to have Christ crucified. He stood next to the Fire, he prophesied the Fire, then crucified the Fire and then was literally consumed by fire 40 years later when Jerusalem fell to Rome.

- How can people get close to God and look so very different than Jesus?
- How can we burn with God and not be devoured by God?
- How can we stand next to the Fire?

It's just like the folks in Jerusalem ask in Isaiah 33 – *"Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with the everlasting burnings?"*

Clip of video of lightning striking a tree and the tree burning.

How do we hear the call of God and not go insane and not drive others insane and destroy the world – trying so hard to save the world?

In Exodus 2, Moses begins to hear the call of God. You know the story: The Israelites were slaves in Egypt. But while they were slaves in Egypt, they multiplied like rabbits. Pharaoh commanded that all newborn Israelite males be killed. But one Israelite woman gave birth to a beautiful boy and hid him in a basket in the reeds at the bank of the Nile. The Pharaoh's own daughter finds this baby boy and ends up hiring the boy's mother to raise him and nurse him as she adopts him as her son – a Prince of Egypt – *“educated in all the ways of the Egyptians”* (writes Luke in Acts 7:22); *“educated in all the ways of the Egyptians;”* *“Mighty in Word and in Deed.”*

Just think ... If ever there was a perfect candidate for *“Savior of Israel,”* wasn't it the slave who became the Prince? Wasn't it Moses and when he was 40 and *“mighty in Word and Deed?”*

Exodus 2:11

¹¹One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens, and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people.

And Moses began to burn – right?? He burned with indignation. He burned with a “Knowledge of Good and Evil.” He stood next to the Fire and sensed the righteousness of God. And we know what he's thinking:

1. *“Obviously, I'm the Man ... for the job.”*
2. *“I have a plan and Pharaoh will listen to me.”*
3. I have the Resources - Prince of Egypt *“mighty in Word and Deed.”*

He felt the Fire and he did something.

¹²He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together. And he said to the man in the wrong “Why do you strike your companion?” ¹⁴He answered, “Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid, and thought, “Surely the thing is known.” ¹⁵When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. And he sat down by a well.

Exodus 2:12-15

Moses feels the Fire and he's burned by the Fire – right down to the edge of nothing. He's stripped of Egypt, stripped of Israel, stripped of family, stripped of all his opportunities and accomplishments, and stripped at the prime of his life –

He sought to save lives and brought only death.

He sought to liberate and only increased bondage.

He felt the Fire and everyone got burned and now he sits by a well in the wilderness ...

By Exodus 3, Moses hasn't been a prince for 40 years. He is no longer considered wise and it appears that he's forgotten how to speak; for 40 years he's been herding someone else's sheep; and married to a woman whose name sounds like “Zipper” – Zipporah.

As our next scene opens, Moses is not desperately seeking God. Moses is not studying, or fasting or witnessing; Moses is definitely not trying to save the world. It's just one more

extremely ordinary day, just like the last 14,800 days. Sheep, goats, and bushes – ordinary bushes and a less than ordinary Moses – 80 years old, ordinary Moses.

3 Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²And the angel of the Lord [Remember him?] appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. ³And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." ⁴When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see [A bush: burning but not burnt. Like a bug at home in a bug zapper; wood that holds fire, living fire; a bush – burning but not burnt.] God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am. ⁵The he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." ⁶And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. ⁷Then the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey... [Verse 10] Come I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."
Exodus 3:1-8a ... 10

If I'm Moses, I'm thinking *"Now? You can't be serious. Now? I was a slave who became Prince. Now I'm a Prince been made a slave. I was 40, now I'm 80. So what was the point of the miraculous ascent to Prince of Egypt – mighty in Word and Deed?"*

I think we assume all that stuff enabled Moses to do the task. But read carefully and you'll see that it really had nothing to do with the task. I mean as far as Pharaoh, Egypt and Israel are concerned, Moses could've been a peasant all his life – this is 40 years later.

See? It's not Moses' resumé that frees the Israelites, but the Power of God. If Moses' resumé mattered, it only mattered in that it showed Moses it didn't matter. At least not how he thought it mattered. It mattered for it was used by God to utterly decimate Moses' ego.

Søren Kierkegaard wrote

"God created everything out of nothing – and everything which God is to use, He first reduces to nothing."

Do you believe that you are created out of nothing?? I doubt it, for if you believed that, you'd be impossible to offend; you would never get embarrassed; you would have no pride, for to you everything, (absolutely everything) including yourself would be Grace.

If Moses' resumé mattered, it mattered by showing it didn't matter and Moses' story is kind of like your story and my story:

We work to build your resumé, our kingdom, our Jerusalem and it all turns to dust and we die. And if we're saved, we're saved by Grace and turn around and realize we were created by Grace – it's all Grace.

There is nothing but Grace – all else is illusions and lies; that means my pride, my ego is an illusion and a lie.

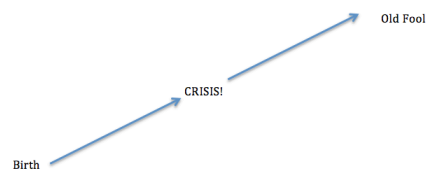
Guys like Richard Rohr and my friend Bob Beltz (guys in the Men's Movement) talk about the fact that men spend the first 40 years or so making an ascent like this.

The Life of Guys



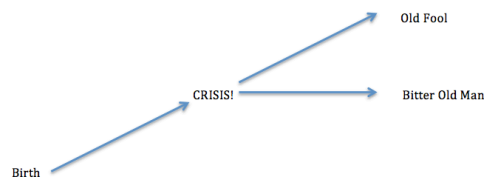
They build their lives until they have a crisis ... an identity crisis. They face their own mortality. Some men don't get the message – we will die. They live in denial and just focus on continuing the ascent and if they pull it off, we call them “successful.” They just keep building bigger and bigger egos and they die. Like the man in Jesus' story (Luke 12) who just keeps building bigger and bigger barns. But God doesn't call that success; in fact He calls that man in Jesus' story (Luke 12:20) – He calls him a “Fool” – an “old Fool.”

The Life of Guys



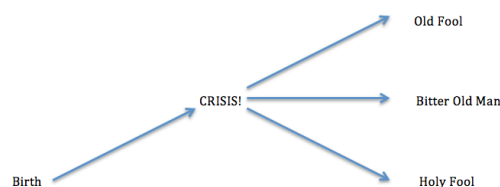
Now most men can't continue the ascent 'cause they're not able. But they still try and still don't get the message and they become “Bitter Old Men.”

The Life of Guys



But some make a descent – a spiritual descent. They embrace the descent. Embrace humility until they become what Bob calls “Holy Fools.”

The Life of Guys



He says *“If it happens at all, it usually happens around 80.”*

Well imagine how Moses felt – *“God I know I failed. Now leave me alone – a Bitter Old Man.”*

I mean it's one thing to lose everything and herd sheep, but it's quite another thing to go back with nothing and act like you're the "Boss of Everything;" to stand before Pharaoh and say "Let my people go!" Talk about foolish. He must've felt utterly foolish. He's still got some ego.

So Moses begins to argue with this Burning Bush – burning and not consumed. It's "The Lord" (verse 4) and yet it's the "Angel of the Lord" (verse 2). It's God and the Messenger of God – Word of God. Moses argues with the Burning Bush, verse 11

¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" ¹²He said, "But I will be with you [Moses says "You got the wrong guy." But he'll soon learn the issue isn't "Who am I?" but "Who I AM is."] and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

Did you catch that? You want proof that this will work Moses? After you've done it, you'll meet me on this mountain ... See Faith is a journey, but not trusting in a plan; it's trusting in the character of a person – trusting who I AM is.

Well Moses thinks that God has the wrong guy and the wrong plan.

¹³Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?' ¹⁴God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' [We've preached a lot on the utterly profound theological philosophical ontological significance of that name, but at the time Moses must be thinking "Thanks, that really clears things up." But God continues. He's not unfamiliar to them.] ¹⁵God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. ¹⁶Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me saying, "I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, ¹⁷and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.'"
Exodus 3:13-17

I Promise. No conditions! I Promise. Wow! Now "Does God keep His promise?" You remember the story: They all die in the Wilderness, including Moses. They all die except a man named Joshua and his friend, Caleb (which means dog); Joshua and his dog.
So, "Does God keep His Promise?" Just hold that thought.

Chapter 3, God gives instruction and Moses keeps arguing, "You got the wrong guy, wrong plan, and the wrong equipment."

Chapter 4, verse 1

4 Then Moses answered, "But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, 'The Lord did not appear to you.'" ²The Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand" [See? God doesn't need an army. He doesn't need money, degrees or resumés. He doesn't need virility, good looks, and youth. He just wants what's in your hand ... a stick, five loaves and two fish; a widow's might.] He said, "A staff." ³And he said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran from it. ⁴But the Lord said to Moses, "Put

out your hand and catch it by the tail” – so he put out his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand – ⁵“that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you.” Exodus 4:1-5

Just think: 40 years earlier Moses thought *“I’m the right guy with the right plan and the right stuff.”* And now he thinks *“wrong guy, wrong plan and wrong stuff.”* And that’s when God calls him. It appears that you can never be too old, too weak, or too much of a failure to receive God’s call. However, you can be too young, too strong, and too much of what the world calls *“success.”* You can be too proud – *“God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble.”*

Well in chapter 4, God continues to show Moses amazing signs and starts telling him about the plagues. Verse 10

¹⁰But Moses said to the Lord, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue.”

He’s saying, *“Don’t you get it, God? I’m not a Great Oak or Giant Redwood, I’m just a bush, an ordinary bush...,”* says Moses ... to a bush ... burning with the Glory of God.

¹¹ then the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? ¹²Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.” ¹³But he said, “Oh, my Lord, please send someone else.” ¹⁴Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. Exodus 4:11-14a

Began to burn against Moses. What was God burning?? What was God angry with? Wasn’t it Moses’ ego; what was left of Moses’ pride?

You see it’s our Ego that arrogantly says *“I can.”* It’s also our ego that arrogantly says *“I can’t.”* Humility is not exalting myself and humility is not condemning myself; humility is surrendering myself to God’s judgment. So if He says I can – I can. Says I’m forgiven – I’m forgiven. Ultimately judgment is not *“Who I am, but who I AM is.”* So humility is not judging self saying *“I can’t”* or *“I can.”* Humility is believing God can and God will do what God says He will do. Humility is trusting I AM, who is the Creator. Pride is believing you are your own creator. Humility is trusting the Creator and so wanting the will of the Creator; humility is Faith in the Creator.

And that’s what’s truly shocking about this story – that God is going to all this trouble with Moses. That above all, God wants Faith in Grace in Moses. I mean clearly God could just levitate the entire people of Israel up and out of Egypt and drop them in Palestine. But that’s not the issue, the heart of Moses is the issue. God doesn’t need Moses; God wants Moses to want what God wants –

Faith in Grace and Grace through Faith
which sets the captives free.

God wants Faith in His Grace. And maybe that’s the point of the whole journey. Maybe that’s the point of our journey; not to get us there, but to get us to want to be there when we are there. And maybe there is God Himself – like He’s our promised land or maybe we’re His – His temple, His House, His Body, and His Bride.

Well anyway in chapter 4 God makes some concessions and Moses agrees and you know the story –

Moses was the most powerful man alive.
He called down plagues, split the sea, liberated a whole nation;
But not when he was 40 years old and Prince of Egypt,
But when he was 80 years old and a Holy Fool.

Numbers 12:3 – *“Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth.”* Isn’t that something? *“Meekest and most powerful.”* Like when *“He was weak, then he was strong.”* So the *“Meek really will inherit the earth.”* Humble and meek and yet he baptized Egypt with Fire from Heaven.

- It was a pillar of fire that lead him.
- It was fire that met him on the mountain top.
- It was fire that rested over the “Ark of the Covenant in the Sanctuary” where Moses would talk to God face-to-face.

Isn’t that something? For Moses, God had a face, in the midst of the Fire. Who is God’s face?

Well anyway, when Moses would come out to the people after standing next to the Fire, his face would glow with fire – burning and not burnt, like a burning bush. Don’t just stand by the Fire, become Fire. And what is Fire? Fire is energy.

In the Old Testament they didn’t call lightning “Electricity,” they called it “Fire” (from Heaven). So I had a great idea and I brought some fire to church. It’s my car battery. Let me show you how it works. See? Energy flows from one pole to the other pole. Look, you can see it sparking and jumping across these jumper cables. So this is my great idea – I’m just gonna’ attach this to my tongue and turn myself into a Burning Bush ... or maybe not.

See I might catch fire and I might burn; but I’d be burnt like a bug in a bug zapper. I’d be burnt. However, these copper cables wouldn’t be burnt. They might not even get hot. Why? It’s because copper is a good conductor of electricity. The energy flows through the metal without resistance. But human flesh is a poor conductor of electricity. My flesh offers a great deal of resistance and so I get burned. Fire is energy and things that resist the energy get burned. Things that store the energy and hang on to the energy also get burned. Plants store energy (light energy) and release the energy when they burn; that’s why wood burns. That’s why we burn.

Well God is Fire and God is Love. Song of Solomon 8:6 *“Love is strong as death ...”* It’s flashes – the flashes of Fire; the very flame of the Lord. God is Fire and God is Love. His Word is Fire and His Word is Love. His Will is Love.

- Maybe we’re resistant to Love or try to hang on to Love.
- Maybe we don’t receive Love and don’t give Love.
- Maybe we hang on to Love as if we owned Love and controlled Love and even created Love, when in fact, God is Love.
- Maybe we’re poor conductors of Love and so get burned by Love.

And, what is it in us, that’s so resistant to Love? Well, isn’t it our Ego? And what is my Ego?

Ego is a lie stuck in my flesh. Ego is that thing in me
that believes I create Love, rather than Love creates me;
that I’m responsible for Love, rather than Love responsible for me;

that I must possess, Love rather than be possessed by Love;
So I must control Love rather than be controlled by Love. So when I read *"you will love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength,"*

- I don't hear a prophecy that God will fulfill
- I hear a Love that I must fulfill.

So I capture Love, use Love and in the end, crucify Love and God is Love. It's my ego that resists Love and is burned by Love.

So how do I handle the Call of God, Word of God – Love that is God? Well definitely not with my Ego. Human Religion is Human Ego, handling the Fire – trying to be the Fire rather than surrendered to the Fire and so we all get burned by the Fire.

- It's the "knowledge of Love" without surrender to Love.
- It's the "knowledge of the Good" without surrender to the Good.
- It's the reading the Law and trying to fulfill it in the power of the flesh.
- The Law is the "knowledge of Love" rather than the presence of Love.
- It's standing by the Fire, rather than being filled with the fire ...

Religion is Ego and Ego is Pride and Pride is burned by Grace. God is Grace – absolutely free, unencumbered Love and God has arranged all things to reveal His Grace – Himself.

You know Exodus 3 uses a very obscure Hebrew word that gets translated "bush." The word only appears in one other place in all of Scripture. In Deuteronomy 33:13,16, Moses says *"May the Lord bless this land... with ratsown [His good will, His pleasure, His delights, God's favor, God's Grace] that dwells in the bush."* The bush was literally aflame with Grace – aflame with God. For 80 years God had prepared Moses to see it. And at the Bush, Moses sees Grace and surrenders his pride. In the end, our Ego is crucified by Grace at the Cross of Christ. And God sets aflame a Holy Fool – aflame with the Glory of God. *"Moses I send you to set my people free."*

I've been thinking about why I'm free or at least becoming free. I mean why am I on this Journey of Faith. It wasn't some argument or some sermon I heard and it wasn't religion. No. I think I "turned aside" 'cause I saw a Bush and the Bush was my dad. I think I had a Holy Fool for a dad. Early in life he was quite a successful pastor, but later in life, he just got the snot beat out of him by the Church. By the time he was 80, I don't think he hardly had an Ego and he was aflame with God. I mean he loved people like no one I've ever met. I remember watching him at times and thinking *"Wow Dad, you actually love people, rather than use people to feed your ego."*

In his 80's I'm not sure he had an Ego. And he was happy. Think about when you're happy ... Ecstasy. Isn't it when you've lost your ego; when you stop judging yourself; it's when you lose your life, that you find it. Well Dad was a bush aflame with Love; not the "knowledge of Love" but the "presence of Love." He was like a burning bush. Maybe you're a burning bush? That's what really makes folks turn aside and sets the captives free. Never too old; never too weak.

Well into his 80's, my dad would sit on the leather couch on the back of my big fancy new church with his oxygen bottle and young men would literally line up to see him and be seen by him. When I was 42 my dad died. When I was 45 I was a prince but my kingdom was crumbling.

My dad had died and I was in a crisis and I would be exiled from my kingdom and I would lose a world of stuff that fed my Ego and a world of stuff I thought was my Calling.

I've told you how I'd just preached and served Communion on Sunday right before my kingdom fell apart. Susan grabbed me and said *"Peter I just saw your dad. He appeared standing before us – young and so alive and he was so excited. He held out a bowl and said 'Susan and Peter, don't be afraid to drink the cup the Lord has for you.'" And she said "Peter his eyes were like flames of fire."* You see? My dad is a burning bush – burning and not consumed and I know what's in the cup – it's Fire – it's Love. It's the Grace that burns away my Ego and sets me free. It flows from a tree that bleeds Holy Fire.

Well Moses was like a burning bush and my dad is a burning bush. But what is The Burning Bush? Our text makes it clear – God spoke to Moses when he turned aside to see The Bush burning and not consumed.

What is the Burning Bush?

It's wood that holds the Love of God, Grace of God and Fire of God. And it's there we see the Angel of God – a man and yet God – burning with Love.

It's there we hear the Word of God.

It's there that we are finally humbled and set Free.

It's there that we die to ourselves and are set on Fire with Love.

It's there on the Mountain of God, burning and not burnt –
like a man with no ego and fully aflame with God.

Well if you know the story, you know Moses still had some ego and still got burnt – it's a fascinating story about striking a rock and St. Paul says the Rock was Christ. And so in Deuteronomy 31:16, Moses sleeps with his fathers. He dies in the wilderness and descends into Sheol. He dies in the wilderness without entering the Land and yet God promised *"I will bring you into the Land..."* How?

1,300 years later a man named Joshua in Hebrew or Jesus in English, climbs a mountain with Peter, James, and John and there He's transfigured before them. His clothes become white as light and His face shines like the sun. He is a man fully on fire with the Glory of God. He is the Prince that became a slave and suddenly Moses appears next to Him on the Mountain in the Promised Land. As Peter freaks out and gets all religulous, Moses talks to Jesus like He's an old friend and maybe He is. He is what Moses turned aside to see. How do we get to the Promised Land? How do we set the captives free? How are we finally humbled and set aflame with the Love of God?

Communion

We live our lives and turn aside to see this (Communion Table) –
Jesus.

The Angel of Yahweh;

the Glory of God;

the Word spoken into the void.

Who on the night He was betrayed took bread and broke it saying, *"This is my Body given to you. Take and eat and do this in remembrance of me."* And in the same way, He took the cup;

He took the Grail and He said, *"This cup is the New Covenant; my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you. Drink of it."*

Don't just stand by the Fire; be filled with the Fire. And one day we'll see it! Every Bush aflame with God and everyone on Fire with Glory – everything filled with Love and God is Love. One day the earth will be flooded with fire – until burning and not burnt. This table is the edge of that day and a great banquet and I ache for that day for I'll sit there with Peter, James and John and Moses and all Israel, my dad, you, people I've hurt and people that have hurt me and we'll all laugh at ourselves – drunk on the Grace of God; baptized with Fire. At home in the Promised Land with God at home in us – burning and not burnt.

Come to the table. Worship Him. Worship Him by making a sacrifice and do you understand what the sacrifice is? The sacrifice is your Ego. That's why it's scary but on the other side is ecstasy – the Kingdom of God. You were made for worship in the Kingdom of God.

Benediction and Prayer

Amen! So we clap for you God because you are a "hunk o' burnin' love." You are the *"hunk o' hunk o' burnin' love"* and Lord God this is Good News. You humble us in order to set us on fire that we might become a *"hunk o' burnin' love"* like you and love is ecstasy.

In Jesus' name, Lord God we thank you for who You are and because of who You are, we say we'd like to follow. And just tell the Lord God that in your heart. Just tell Him *"God I don't know exactly where we're going; I don't know exactly how the journey is going to feel but I want to follow you."* Did you tell Him? In Jesus' name, we say Amen.

Now think about this. We talked about being humbled this morning and that freaks some people out. Think about Moses. 80 years old and wandering around on the west side of the Wilderness; back side of the Wilderness; been herding sheep for 40 years – how do you think he felt? I think he must have felt at times like God hated him, like God cursed him. When in fact, God was arranging absolutely everything to bless him in order to set him on fire. You see the Fire burned for Moses and do you understand the Fire burns for you. And God is lord over your successes and lord over your failures and He uses it all to set you on fire that you might forever burn and not be burnt in the Kingdom of God, in the Glory of God, the Love of God – your home. You're on your way home and that's Good News. And in Jesus' name, believe it.

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