We live in a culture that makes it easy to attempt to live a marginal faith or one in which the fire of our passion for Christ and His kingdom wanes. The flame of our faith can be extinguished to smoldering ashes without our even knowing it.

Matt 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. NIV

The greatest question: What is the source of this present darkness?

Today every believer could take courage from the words of our savior as we light our fire again and make a new commitment to not let our fire go out.

Lev 6:9-13

9 "Give Aaron and his sons this command: 'These are the regulations for the burnt offering: The burnt offering is to remain on the altar hearth throughout the night, till morning, and the fire must be kept burning on the altar. 10 The priest shall then put on his linen clothes, with linen undergarments next to his body, and shall remove the ashes of the burnt offering that the fire has consumed on the altar and place them beside the altar. 11 Then he is to take off these clothes and put on others, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a place that is ceremonially clean. 12 The fire on the altar must be kept burning; it must not go out. Every morning the priest is to add firewood and arrange the burnt offering on the fire and burn the fat of the fellowship offerings on it. 13 The fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out. NIV

I. The ________________: Keep the fire of God burning
Lev 6:9-13
9 "Give Aaron and his sons this command: 'These are the regulations for the burnt offering: The burnt offering is to remain on the altar hearth throughout the night, till morning, and the fire must be kept burning on the altar.

The command of God is never difficult to understand. The command of God is stated in the simplest form. The command of God is given to preserve the covenant relationship.

Throughout the bible God has furnished the fire for the sacrifice. This is especially true when you are looking at redeeming sacrifices.

Lev 9:23-24 there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat

One of the most frequent names of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is fire.

Matt 3:11 (12)
"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. NIV

The Holy Spirit baptism is the fire that God provided through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The New Testament believer priest is to receive the fire of God and then is under command to keep the fire of the Holy Spirit burning on the altar of our heart.

II. The _____________________: Substitution

Lev 10:1-2 Nadab and Abihu, offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. KJV

Deut 4:2
2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you. NIV
Acts 5:1-4 Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and died by the same Spirit

Every revival in history has a component of reigniting the fire of the Holy Spirit and fanning the flames of the fire of God in the life of the believer.

When you witness prayerlessness and powerlessness in Christianity it is no stretch to look first at the compromised condition of the fire on the altars of God’s people.

III. The ______________________: Separation

A. Separate Truth from False

1 Kings 18:36-39 Elijah on Mt Carmel with the prophets of Baal.

38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. 39 When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord-he is God! The Lord-he is God!" NIV

B. Separate Authorized from Unauthorized

Num 16:16-22 The Rebellion of Korah

41 The next day the whole Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. "You have killed the Lord's people," they said.

49 But 14,700 people died from the plague, in addition to those who had died because of Korah. NIV
C. Separate the Profane from the Holy

Heb 10:24-31
And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

26 If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27 but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. 28 Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." 31 It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. NIV

Wrap Up

Though we are no longer required to bring burnt offerings, the symbolism of perpetual fire is a powerful expression of our life in Christ. When Paul wrote to his young friend and colleague, Timothy, he urged him “to and to stir up the gift of God which is in you” 2 Tim 1:6

In our present salvation by grace through faith the fire is ignited by God from heaven by His grace filled promise and it kept burning by the faith filled relationship of those who receive His grace.

Next Steps

1. Present the altar of your heart before God for His fire.
2. Determine to keep the fire of God burning.
3. Refuse any and every compromise to God’s fire.
4. Allow the fire to confirm the holy from the profane.

Answers: Command, Compromise, Confirmation