

**CH MASON DISTRICT
CHURCH DEVELOPMENT SESSION
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REKINDLE THE FIRE

***RESILIENCE IN MINISTRY
BURNOUT***

Supt. James Lee
District Missionary, Shannon Felder

Evangelist DeBorah White, Facilitator
whitespeaklife@aol.com

(2Timothy 1:6-7)

“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” (ESV)

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever watched a fire begin to burn down to the point that all you have left are coals? It looks as though there is no fire actually left, because the coals may be under a layer of ash. You cannot really see much. However, when you take a fresh log and toss it on top of those coals and stir it around a bit, suddenly it ignites, and you have a completely new fire going.

There is the tendency in every one of us to get excited about any new knowledge, gift or work, but after some time it becomes a chore, a routine, then a drag, and then slowly the excitement begins to fizzle out and then it is gone.

The same applies spiritually.

There were once live coals in our lives, but we somehow have allowed the fire to go down.

The reality is this; the majority of people who start in ministry do not finish in ministry. Too often, ministry leaders are simply on autopilot. If you are in a leadership position and your goal is to just to survive you are facing a burnout. The goal of leadership is not to survive. The goal of leadership is to help you thrive.

WHAT IS BURNOUT AND WHAT CAUSES IT?

Burnout is a psychological term that refers to long-term **exhaustion** and diminished interest in work.

Exhaustion is a key component to 'burnout'.

Webster's dictionary defines the word **exhaust** as "to drain, metaphorically; to use or expend wholly, or till the supply comes to an end; to deprive wholly of strength; to use up; to weary or tire out; to wear out; as, to exhaust one's strength, patience, or resources

However, burnout can be experienced in a variety of ways. Because our bodies, souls, minds, and spirits are integrated parts of a greater whole, the following types of burnout often come together and have a compounding effect on each other:

- Physical burnout - **lack of exercise, physical effects of stress and sleeplessness**
 - Relational burnout - **is related to emotional burnout and can be caused by strained relationships**
 - Emotional burnout - **can numb your ability have normal emotions and have a sense of failure and self-**
 - Spiritual burnout - **when leaders neglect their own spiritual lives while trying to pour into the lives of others**
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MINISTRY BURNOUT STATISTICS

- 94% Of ministers feel under pressure to have a perfect family.
- 90% Of ministers work more than 50 hours a week.
- 80% Of ministers believe that pastoral ministry affects their families negatively.
- 75% Of ministers report severe stress causing anguish, worry, bewilderment, anger, depression, fear, and alienation.
- 70% Of ministers don't have any close friends.
- 56% Of pastors' wives say that they have no close friends.
- 45% Of pastors say that they've experienced depression or burnout to the extent they need to take a leave of absence from ministry.
- 40% Of pastors are suffering from burnout, frantic schedules, and/or unrealistic expectations.
- 47% Of pastors' spouses are suffering from burnout, frantic schedules, and/or unrealistic expectations.

Paul wrote to Timothy, *"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you" (2Timothy 1:6).*

It is time to fan them into full flame again. It is time to rekindle the flame and be re-ignited

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FAN THE FLAME?

In the natural, ‘fan the flame’ means to **intensify or stir up feelings; exacerbate an explosive situation; make a bad situation worse**. (The American Heritage Dictionary).

From a spiritual perspective, flame or fire symbolizes

- Light - symbolize the nation of Israel as “a light to the nations” (Isaiah 42:6 NAS). The light, being an illumining source, signifies a mission to reach the world without using force but by setting our lives as examples, not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God (Zechariah 4:6, 1-5)
- Holy Passion - Acts 4:31
- Zeal, - Romans 12:11 (1-11)
- Driving Purpose - to Empower - Acts 2:1-4
- Inner “burn.”-- Jeremiah 20:9 and 23:29,
- God’s Presence – to Equip - Exodus 3:1-10,

Regardless of whether we are talking about literal, burning fire or fire in its spiritually symbolic sense, there are at least three fundamental principles that are common to both.

- 1) Both need fuel in order to continue burning.
- 2) Remove the fuel and before long, you kill the fire.
- 3) If left to itself, the natural tendency of any fire is to go out.

THE ROARING FLAME IN YOU

If you feel like the fire in you is only a small flicker, and you have lost the zeal or fire that you had previously, it is important to know that you can always fan it back into a roaring flame once again.

- 1) RE-IGNITE - to catch fire or cause to catch fire again
- 2) RE-VIVE - to activate, set in motion, or take up again/ to restore to life or consciousness:
- 3) RE-PURPOSE - adapt for use in a different purpose.
- 4) RE-PRODUCE - To produce again or anew by natural process: *to reproduce a severed branch.*
- 5) RE-VIEW - to view, look at, or look over again. give careful examination to
- 6) RE-KINDLE – (KINDLE FIRE TO BE MEMORABLE NOT JUST
TECHI-THE BOOKS ARE LIKE FIRE) - RELIGHT' (A FIRE). REVIVE
(SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN LOST).

INSIGHTS TO REKINDLING THE FIRE

Philippians 2:13 says, *“For it is God who is all the while effectually at work in you (energizing and creating in you the power and desire), both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight.”*

1. Focus on Your Passion - It is very important to be focused on what you are passionate about when it comes to your serving. If you aren't doing what you are really passionate about, your enthusiasm for serving will fade fast. God gives each individual certain passions that are to be the fuel to keep us going when things get tough. If you are serving in a capacity that is outside of that passion, when the tough times hit, you won't have the fuel to keep going
2. Learn to Say No
3. Recognize Your Season
4. Take a Break if Needed
5. Examine Yourself Daily- 2 Cor. 13:5
6. Rest is a part of Christ Teachings. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* —Matthew 11:28
7. Take a Sabbath (Sa-bat-ti-cal) Mark 2:27, Exodus 20:8
 - a. Meditate - Phil 4:8
 - b. Prayer – ‘Pray to endure’
 - c. Worship
 - d. Enjoy God's Creation

REST IF YOU MUST, BUT DON'T QUIT

Pastor White says those words to me whenever I am frustrated or on the verge of 'burnout'.

“Everyone gets tired, young and old. We stumble and make mistakes. We tire from life, and each other when we have exceeded our capacity for emotional stress. We drop out, often ending relationships from mere emotional exhaustion. Many of us feel it, even when we are not aware that we have exhausted our emotional reserves. The only cure for this type of exhaustion is to seek strength from an inexhaustible source” (Deborah White, Vertical Living).

RE-SIST BEING DROP OUT!

Isaiah 40:28–29 in the Message Bible reads:

“Don't you know anything? Haven't you been listening? God doesn't come and go. God lasts. He's Creator of all you can see or imagine. He doesn't get tired out, doesn't pause to catch his breath. And he knows everything, inside and out. He energizes those who get tired, gives fresh strength to dropouts. For even young people tire and drop out, young folk in their prime stumble and fall. But those who wait upon GOD get fresh strength. They spread their wings and soar like eagles, they run and don't get tired, they walk and don't lag behind.”

RE-SILENCE TO COME BACK STRONGER THAN EVER!

[31](#)“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, ^d that he might sift you like wheat, [32](#)but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Please take a few minutes to examine whether you may be experiencing burnout. We can help ourselves only if we are honest with ourselves. Ask yourself these questions:

- I feel hopeless and trapped in my job.
- I am constantly tired.
- I am bored with my duties, co-workers and church members.
- I am easily irritated and have little patience with people.
- I am cynical about the church, people, profession and denomination.
- I want to change my daily routine, yet I feel threatened by change.
- I feel that I lack control over my circumstances.
- I have difficulty concentrating on specific tasks.
- I feel withdrawn, because working with problems, solving seems futile.
- I occupy myself with trivial activities to escape more important responsibilities.
- I use to care about others, but now I'm too preoccupied with my own health, sanity and career.
- I am restless and have difficulty relaxing or sleeping.
- I doubt that I really make a difference to my church members, co-workers, friends and family.
- I have lost my professional and personal confidence.
- I hate to get out of bed and dread going to work.
- I put off making decisions because they seem overwhelming.
- I don't want to hear about anyone else's problems.
- I feel I have nothing more to give.
- I am just going through the motions-waiting for change, move or retirement.
- I've lost my sense of purpose or enthusiasm about my job.
- I often use phrases as, "I don't care anymore" or "why bother, it won't make a difference anyway."
- I am highly critical of others. My self-esteem is low.
- I use personal days a lot just to get away from work.
- My social involvement has decreased both on and off the job.
- I frequently complain and despair over problems.

How do you feel after talking this inventory?

SCRIPTURES TO MEDITATE ON TO REMEDY BURNOUT

Like any sickness or condition, ministry burnout is easier to prevent than to treat. Realigning your life and ministry to follow the ideas in this lesson will greatly help you persevere and feel refreshed. Openly reciting scriptures that will refresh your heart and strengthen are important to restoration of you spirit, body and soul.

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” —**Matthew 11:28-30**

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

—**1 Corinthians 15:58**

Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.

—**2 Corinthians 4:1**

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. —**John 15:1-5**

...but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint. —**Isaiah 40:31**

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

—**Matthew 14:13**

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah

—**Psalm 46:1-3**

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” —Matthew 28:18-20

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. —**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. —**James 4:10**

If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. —**1 Peter 4:11**

Find great fulfillment in following Jesus each day and serving Him. He gives us strength!

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2Timothy 4:5 KJV