

Bonfire Series: A 5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Day 1: The God Who Interrupts the Ordinary

Reading: Exodus 3:1-6

Devotional: Moses was not on a spiritual retreat. He was working. He was doing what Tuesday demanded of him, nothing more. Yet God chose that unremarkable morning to speak. This is the pattern of divine interruption. God does not wait for us to manufacture the perfect spiritual atmosphere. He steps into the shop floor, the waiting room, the long commute home. Presence always precedes awareness. Before Moses recognized anything holy, holy ground was already beneath his feet. Today, consider that God may already be at work in the most routine corner of your week. The question is whether you are paying attention.

Reflection Question: Where in your ordinary routine might God be trying to get your attention right now?

Day 2: Holy Ground Wherever He Stands

Reading: Exodus 3:7-12; Genesis 28:16-17

Devotional: Jacob woke from a dream and declared that God was in that place and he had not known it. Moses stood before a burning bush and was told to remove his sandals. Both men encountered something they were not looking for, and both discovered that a place becomes holy not because of who shows up to worship, but because of who God already is. God does not share His holiness on our terms. He sets the terms. He calls us to remove whatever stands between us and Him. Barriers can be subtle, comfort, distraction, pride, routine. But when God says come closer, He means it without condition.

Reflection Question: What might be creating distance between you and a deeper awareness of God's presence in your daily life?

Day 3: The Pilot Light That Never Goes Out

Reading: John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Acts 2:1-4

Devotional: The fire of God did not end at the burning bush. It led a nation through the wilderness as a pillar of flame. It fell on ordinary men and women in an upper room and ignited a movement that changed the world. And according to the promise of Jesus in John 14, that same Spirit now dwells within every believer. Not as a roaring spectacle reserved for extraordinary moments, but as a quiet, constant presence, steady like a pilot light. Small in appearance, but sufficient to ignite everything when the moment demands it. The Spirit does not leave when life gets difficult. He stays lit.

Reflection Question: In what area of your life do you need to trust that the Spirit's quiet presence is enough to carry you through?

Day 4: God Does Not Wait for You to Qualify

Reading: Exodus 3:13-14; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

Devotional: Moses was a fugitive. He was forty years removed from a palace and forty years into hiding from a murder charge. He was not seeking God. He was not polished, prepared, or particularly impressive. And yet God said, I am sending you. Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 1 that God consistently chooses what the world considers weak and foolish to accomplish what the wise and strong cannot. This is not an oversight on God's part. It is His method. He does not look at your record and then decide whether you are worth calling. He looks at who you can become and calls you toward it.

Reflection Question: What past failure or sense of inadequacy have you allowed to convince you that God cannot use you in this season?

Day 5: Fire Grows in Community

Reading: Hebrews 10:24-25; Ecclesiastes 4:12; Psalm 119:105

Devotional: When logs roll apart in a campfire, they go out. The same is true for the people of God. Isolation does not simply slow spiritual growth, it smothers it. The writer of Hebrews was direct: do not forsake gathering together, because proximity to other believers is what stirs us toward love and good works. The wilderness seasons of life, the diagnoses, the strained relationships, the years that did not go as planned, these are precisely the moments when community matters most. God's fire in us was never designed to burn alone. Stay close to the people who know the same God. Push the logs together.

Reflection Question: Is there a relationship or community you have been withdrawing from that God may be calling you back toward this week?

Small Group Guide: Bonfire Series Week 1

The Burning Bush: When God Interrupts the Ordinary

Based on Exodus 3

Overview

This session explores the encounter between Moses and the burning bush, examining how God interrupts ordinary life to call people into extraordinary purpose. The discussion will focus on recognizing God's presence in everyday moments, understanding what it means to stand on holy ground, and the importance of staying connected to God and to one another.

Key Takeaways

1. **God interrupts the ordinary.** Moses was not on a spiritual retreat or seeking a vision. He was doing his job. God met him exactly where he was.
2. **Presence often precedes awareness.** God was already at the burning bush before Moses arrived. His presence does not wait for our readiness.
3. **God's holiness is not convenient.** When we encounter God, we come on His terms, not our own. The removal of Moses' sandals reminds us that nothing should stand between us and God in those moments.
4. **God's fire leads in the dark.** Just as the pillar of fire guided Israel through the wilderness, God's presence orients us when life becomes foggy and uncertain.
5. **God does not wait for us to qualify.** Moses was a fugitive with a forty-year-old murder charge. God saw not who Moses was but who he could become.
6. **God's fire grows in community.** Isolation smothers what proximity to other believers would keep burning. We were not built to keep our own fire lit alone.

Discussion Questions

Opening (Choose one to get the conversation started)

- What is the most memorable fire you have ever been around -- a campfire, a fireplace, something else? What made it memorable?
- Has there ever been a season of life you would describe as a "wilderness"? Without going into detail, what word would you use to describe how you felt during that time?

Digging In

1. The sermon points out that Moses was simply going to work the day he encountered the burning bush. He was not seeking God or expecting anything unusual. Why do you think God so often shows up in the middle of the ordinary rather than waiting for us to be in a particularly spiritual moment?
2. Jacob's words in Genesis 28 describe waking up and realizing God had been present in a place where he had not recognized it. Can you think of a time when you looked back on a situation and realized God had been present even though you did not sense it at the time? What did that realization do for your faith?
3. The sermon describes God's presence as "holy, not convenient." Moses was told to remove his sandals because the ground was holy -- not because of Moses, but because God was there. What does it mean practically in your daily life to approach God on His terms rather than your own?
4. The sermon uses the image of a pilot light -- a small, constant flame that is not dramatic but is always ready to ignite when needed. How would you honestly describe the state of your own pilot light right now? What conditions in your life tend to dim it?
5. Moses carried a significant past -- forty years of hiding, a murder charge, a sense of disqualification. Yet God called him anyway and said, "I AM WHO I AM has sent you." How does Moses' story challenge the way you think about your own past or the ways you feel unqualified?
6. The sermon closes with a strong statement: "Isolation eventually smothers what proximity to other believers would keep burning." Where have you seen this to be true -- either in your own life or in someone else's?

Going Deeper

- Hebrews 10 warns against the habit of isolating from community. What are the most common reasons people in your experience pull away from Christian community during hard seasons? What makes it so difficult to stay connected when life gets heavy?
- The pillar of fire in Exodus 13 was visible at all times during the night so that the Israelites could always look up and see God's presence. What are the spiritual practices or habits in your life that function like that pillar -- things that keep you oriented toward God when everything else feels disorienting?

Practical Applications

Choose one of the following to practice individually before your group meets again:

1. **Notice the ordinary.** Each morning this week, take two or three minutes before your day begins and simply ask God to make you aware of His presence throughout the day -- not just in quiet moments, but in meetings, conversations, and routine tasks. At the end of each day, write down one moment where you sensed Him.
2. **Remove a sandal.** Identify one thing that has been creating distance between you and God -- a habit, a distraction, an unresolved issue, a posture of self-sufficiency. Bring it honestly before God this week and ask Him what it would look like to set it aside.
3. **Tend the fire together.** Reach out this week to one person in your group or in your church community who you know is in a wilderness season. Do not wait for them to ask for help. Push the logs together.
4. **Sit with a passage.** Read Psalm 139:1-12 slowly and prayerfully. Let it remind you that God's presence is not something you manufacture -- it is something you are already living inside of. Journal one response to what you read.

Closing Prayer Focus

As you close your group time, pray together around these themes:

- Gratitude for a God who meets us in the ordinary
- Honesty about the current state of your pilot light
- Courage for anyone facing a wilderness season right now
- Commitment to stay close to one another and to the fire

Next Session: The series continues as we explore another significant fire in Scripture and the story it tells.

Discussion Questions

The sermon describes how God interrupted Moses during an ordinary workday rather than during a moment of spiritual seeking -- in what ways have you experienced God breaking into the routine of your daily life when you least expected it?

Moses was a fugitive with a 40-year-old murder charge when God called him at the burning bush -- how does the reality that God does not wait for us to qualify before calling us challenge the way you view your own worthiness to be used by Him?

The sermon draws a distinction between God's presence and our awareness of it, suggesting that presence often precedes awareness -- what practices or habits might help you become more attentive to a God who is already present before you recognize Him?

God told Moses to remove his sandals so that nothing would stand between him and the holy ground -- what barriers or distractions in your own life might be creating distance between you and a genuine encounter with God?

The sermon compares the Holy Spirit's work in a believer's life to a pilot light that burns quietly and constantly, ready to ignite when needed -- how are you actively maintaining that inner flame, and what threatens to extinguish it in your daily experience?

The pillar of fire led the Israelites through the wilderness at night without removing the wilderness experience itself -- how does this shape your understanding of what God's guidance looks like during difficult seasons, and does it change what you expect from Him?

The sermon suggests that God's presence is holy rather than convenient, and that we always meet Him on His terms rather than our own -- how does this reframe the way you approach prayer, worship, or seeking God's direction in your life?

Isolation is described as something that smothers the spiritual fire that community would keep burning -- in what specific ways have you seen either the benefit of close Christian community or the cost of withdrawing from it in your own spiritual journey?

Jacob declared in Genesis 28 that God was in a place he had not recognized -- can you identify a moment in your past where you later realized God had been present and at work in a situation you did not perceive as sacred at the time?

The sermon notes that God chose Moses -- a man who was weak, flawed, and hiding -- to accomplish something far beyond his own capacity, echoing the truth found in 1 Corinthians 1:27 -- how does this challenge the way you assess your own limitations when considering what God might be calling you to do?