

Fire Conference 2002 (Singapore)

7 MAR 2002 : Opening Address by Speaker: Reinhard Bonnke

The Anointing of God

Africa is to become the lighthouse of the whole world. God is going to do something extraordinary here. Our God is not a God of the minimum but a God of the maximum. Nothing diminishes in God. Power will increase for us to do the job.

Testimony of Reinhard Bonnke's calling and experience in Africa.

Acts 1:8 "...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem ... and to the ends of the earth.

1 You shall receive power.

2 You shall be witnesses.

To witness without His power is not possible. Nothing happens without His power. God keeps His word.

Example: The training of pilots in military aircraft. Trainees go with the instructor and learn all the technicalities of the plane and the engine. But the trainees will only be sent on a mission when they are qualified. They are not perpetual students. The power of the engine is to carry them to their missions. Without that power, they can't do anything. The disciples were like the trainees for three years. In Luke 10, like those trainees getting the feel of the engines, the disciples were getting the feel of the engine power. They would get the power of the "small" commission to get the feel of the awesome forces that would be available to them depending on the anointing and authority of Jesus. Later, with the Great Commission, we have the anointing of the Holy Spirit alongside us. He sent them on a Mission – go into all the world and preach the gospel. Jesus did not send them out without power to be witnesses. They needed power to preach as a jet needs power to fly. Without power you can't preach. Without engine thrust, the pilot can't fly.

That is why Jesus told them, "Don't go yet; wait in Jerusalem until you receive power from on high" ((Acts 1:4-5) which they received on the Day of Pentecost. Training pilots is not just for information, but for action. "You shall go, you shall preach." (Mt 28:19-20) – it's for action. There were no missionaries before the Day of Pentecost. After that, the Holy Spirit (HS) is the Spirit of missions and evangelism. Therefore the Gospel is a prophetic message. The Holy Spirit is inside all people The Gospel is not preached for information sake, but for action. To hell with the devil, to heaven for the people. God wants to call us in.. not just to be my witnesses but you shall receive power. There was a flame for every head, all 120 believers. He knows the exact number present.

The pilot has to switch on the engine. If he fails to do that, the whole training is for nothing. The power is there for us if we want it because Jesus has made provision for that. There is wonder-working power in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We need to switch on the engine with the hand of faith. The engine will begin to roar. If the church will just sit in the simulator enjoying the singing, preaching, the furniture, the prayers – it will all be on the screen, but not on the scene. We should get out of the simulator, get out of virtual christianity and get into the streets and highways and tell people that Jesus saves.

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It'll be a tragedy if the church is trapped within the four walls of the building, because sinners are outside and we are cosy inside the church as a 'wonderful family.' There's a lost world outside which needs to be saved. Don't forget the people outside. We need to come to the reality of evangelism, not programme after programme. Souls desperately needing salvation are on the way to hell, a lost eternity. We just can't sit in church, we got to rise and get out. If you want to catch fish, don't throw the net into the bathtub. If you want to catch fish, take your net and throw it into the river and the sea. We need to learn to go out into the highways & byways like Jesus to people who weren't "kosher"...the prostitutes, the down and out...Jesus came to seek & save the lost – we must be after souls. Hell empty, heaven full!

How to become evangelists? It is the burden of the Lord – we need the Holy Spirit to transfer a wee bit of the burden of the heart of the Lord & put into our heart – then we will have a heart for the lost and we'll go and find and bring them to Jesus. Don't sit in the simulator and go no where. We need to come into real reality, not virtual reality. Come online with Jesus. It's not enough to know everything about power, but we need to switch it on. These are the days for switching on the power; the power is there.

Reinhard Bonnke's father was a pastor of small church. Reinhard Bonnke was born again and filled with the Holy Spirit at the age of 11. He had a touch of the power and a desire for God. He knew he had a call from God. At a prayer meeting, he felt something like electric power in his hands. The Holy Spirit spoke to him to go and lay hands on a woman and she would be healed. His father wouldn't have permitted the laying on of hands. But he did that when no one was looking and the woman experienced electricity through her body & was healed. He learnt the lesson in the simulator. God allowed him to test it when nobody was looking. Later he went to Africa and made those mistakes when nobody was watching him !

You will receive power. How to be fit to receive the power, the Holy Spirit ? One doesn't need to be super-holy to receive the power. Holiness doesn't generate power. Holiness is for holiness and has its own reward. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Mt 5:8).

Power is a matter of faith. Trust in God and He does it. Peter said: "Don't look at us as if our holiness has done it ..." (Acts 3:12). To be like Jesus has its own reward. Don't confuse the two things. You don't have to be super-holy for God to use you. If you are saved, washed with the blood of Jesus, you are fit and worthy to receive the power. If you are worthy to receive the power, the blood of Jesus makes us worthy to receive the fire, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Blood comes before the fire.

The power is given by Jesus. You can't manufacture or generate it with hard work & prayer. He doesn't wait for us to sweat. "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find....For everyone who asks receives" (Mt 7:7-8)

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He appeared to 500 brethren. In Acts 2, only 120 (Acts 1:15) were in the Upper Room. What happened to the 380 who were in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost? They were somewhere in the city but they were not there on the Upper Room. Some people miss the fire, their Pentecost because they don't like tongues.

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Christians don't have any right not to like any gift of God. He gives according to His will, not to our preferences. God gives only perfect, meaningful, necessary gifts. Where were the 380? Maybe they preferred the Temple with its easy rituals. Maybe the God of fire doesn't suit everyone. Dignity is not the fruit of the Spirit, but joy is. The joy of the Lord is our strength. (Neh 8:10). Jesus saves because He has destroyed the works of the devil. We are anointed with fire and there is no fire without heat ! 380 missed it because of theological construction. You shall receive power, you shall be witnesses – in and out of season so that this generation will be saved. The devil has been destroyed !

The early Christians were not ashamed. The Nigerians are bold for Jesus. Many don't want to offend anyone except God. We need to be bold; fire gives boldness. We got a word from the living God. Paul shaved his head to fulfill a vow – he wasn't ashamed (Acts 18:18). Fire-baptised Christians shouldn't be fearful and timid. How did the disciples leave the Upper Room? How would people come out after the Holy Spirit has fallen on them? You couldn't stop them. They would come out like a mighty river of lava destroying the works of the devil.

May God's Spirit fall afresh. It's not education but revelation of Jesus Christ the Son of God who will save the world .

Let's make vow: "I will not be intimidated. I will put that fear of man away" We should preach more evangelistic gospels. If evangelism is not the call of the church, the church will eventually die. Evangelism keeps the church fresh. Let's roar for Jesus Christ. I will stand up, I will speak up and I will never shut up for Jesus Christ. Throw off the yoke of timidity and fear. We must make a decision – "I will not be ashamed. I rather offend people than offend the living God." Fear God; speak up , preach the gospel and get people saved !