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WILD

FIRE

DEVOTIONAL



“Save others by pulling them out of the fire.” Jude 1:23 NIRV

What does it take to become a firefighter? It’s a tough responsibility, one that men and women prepare extensively for, training long hours with exhausting drills and grueling exercises. Firefighters frequently put their lives on the line, rushing into collapsed or burning buildings to rescue others from hazardous fires.

Why do it? It isn’t for the money. And it isn’t for the fame either. Firefighters will tell you it is all about helping others and saving lives.

As Christians, we have a similar mission: Our job, according to Jude 1:23, is to “snatch others from the fire and save them.” We ourselves are like firefighters, called to duty by Jesus himself with a rescue mission to save others from trouble.

What does it take to be a firefighter? First, it takes sacrifice. This isn’t a shoddy operation. Firefighters spend all their lives learning and training so that they can become the best they can be, working together as a team. This takes discipline, hard work and effort. As Christians, our job as well is to pray, study and show ourselves approved, and to work as a team.

It’s a good thing you have this devotional with you, and hopefully a Bible nearby. These are your tools to help rescue others from the fire, and the more you practice with them, the better you’ll get at coming to the rescue.

The alarm is sounding, and there are people crying out for help. Are you ready to head out to snatch them from the fire? Good! Let’s suit up with the rest of Ladder 1:23, and leave the station for another thrilling adventure!



DAY
S
OFF



“A crowd came together when they heard the sound. They were bewildered because they each heard the believers speaking in their own language.”

Acts 2:6 NIRV

If you ever suddenly realize you're on fire – you should know what to do: stop, drop and roll!

On the day of Pentecost, there was quite a different fire spotted in the upper room. Apostles waiting there saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them there in the room. It was the Holy Spirit's power, coming to empower them so they could declare the wonders of God. Talk about being on fire for God!

The fire rested on top of each of them – and what do you do when there's a fire on you? Stop, drop and roll!

Stop: That's what people outside the upper room did that day when they heard the sound of a mighty rushing wind. That is also just what the apostles did nearly three years earlier when Jesus told them to become followers. Something happened that made them all stop a moment, and that's just what has to happen with us and with others. It may not be a mighty rushing wind, but your words and deeds speak very loudly and could cause others to stop and take notice of what you stand for.

Drop: Everyone dropped what they were doing and headed to the upper room to see what was going on. The apostles dropped everything they were doing for forty days, staying in the upper room and waiting on the promise of Jesus. After you stop, you want to drop. Once you've gotten others' attention with your words and lifestyle, they'll drop everything in order to do the most important thing of all, which is the next step.

Roll: On the day of Pentecost, about three thousand people decided to roll with Jesus. Peter and the others made the same decision years earlier when they stopped to listen, dropped everything they were doing and rolled with Jesus all over Galilee and Jerusalem. It's a natural progression – first we stop, then we drop, and if our hearts are on fire for God and our message is clear, others will want to roll with Jesus too.

It doesn't seem likely that you'll have a flame resting on your head, but if you're on fire for God, you and others around you will do the most important thing: stop, drop and roll!

STOP
DROP
AND
ROLL





“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.”
1 Kings 18:38 NIV

As Christians, we’ve been given the all clear to fight fire with fire. Looking through our Bibles, we can see some heroes who were on fire for God, blazing a trail and able to deliver a fiery sermon wherever necessary. These remarkable men were ready to snatch others from the fire, and looking back at their lives, it’s easy to learn a thing or two from their extraordinary experiences.

The first place to look for fire in the Bible may be Mt. Carmel, where huge flames fell down from the sky to consume the prophet Elijah’s offering. Elijah was a man of extreme faith, trusting God for a miracle that day. Here was a guy, facing off against overwhelming numbers. But as we read in our Bibles, God had him covered and blasted the top of that mountain, putting the heat on the prophets of Baal. God loves extreme faith – it’s the kind that gets Him moving and ready to heat up everyone else around you.

Another person to look at in our Bibles would be Jeremiah. He had fire – shut up in his bones! Jeremiah had such a fiery passion for God that even if he tried to keep God’s word inside, he couldn’t do it. Talk about extreme passion! That’s what we need in our lives too – an extreme desire to get hot for God.

Finally, the one we can learn the most from is Jesus. He told us to keep our lamps burning in all seasons. That means to be ready at all times, always on fire for God. A person who runs hot and cold is far from ready – that’s why we have to turn up the temperature and keep the fire burning.

Trust God, have a strong desire to light the world – and work to keep your fire burning. These hot tips are easy to understand and easier to follow, but only if you’re ready to learn to fight fire with fire!

STAY
HOT
FOR
FIRE





“But when you are tempted, God will give you a way out so that you can stand up under it.” 1 Corinthians 13:10 NIRV

Smoke detectors save lives – thousands of them each year. Firefighters recommend them in every home, at least one per floor. These simple devices detect smoke – and where there’s smoke, there’s fire.

If only Samson had owned one, that thing would have been going off left and right. Unfortunately, as we read in our Bibles, he got burned. If Samson were around today, he would probably tell us a few things – and a few ways not to get burned!

First of all, check your alarm. Each time Delilah came around, alarm warnings had to be going off left and right inside his head. We can all recognize temptation, and we have the Holy Spirit that warns us of trouble, just like a smoke detector calling out and telling us to escape.

Do you have an escape plan? Firefighters recommend them – and that’s why schools have fire drills every so often. Do you know your escape plan when those alarms start going off? Do you know what you’re supposed to do when temptation starts heating up?

Don’t wait until it is too late. Samson played with matches, and got burned. Flee from temptation like it was a burning building, but don’t be too prideful to think you can handle everything. Samson thought the same thing – after all, he handled everything the Philistines threw at him. Until Delilah came around, that is. By that point, you could say smoke was in his eyes. He was blinded, and the real source of his strength – his reliance on God – had left him. That’s why he spent the rest of his life going in circles.

Temptation comes to all of us, and the keys to not getting burned are simple: check your alarm, follow your escape plan and don’t let smoke get in your eyes. Follow these simple steps and you won’t get burned!

STAY
SAFE





“We might be thrown into the blazing furnace. But the God we serve is able to bring us out of it alive. He will save us from your powerful hand.” Daniel 3:17 NIRV

Three guys from the Bible who knew a lot about fire were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These Hebrew boys were confronted with the blazing fury of a king, and the very real threat of being burnt to a crisp.

Still, they stood their ground, and to this day their story is told, recorded in the book of Daniel. What made them heroes is the same thing that can make you a hero too.

The first thing they had was courage. They came face to face with a blazing inferno, but didn't back off. Much like the brave firefighters who march in to battle out-of control blazes, these three didn't know for sure if they'd be walking out of that fire. Yet they bravely went in, and God saw their courage. He sees your courage too, whenever you stand up for what is right, or stand against what you know is wrong.

While in the fire, there was Someone else spotted with them – a fourth person. When the heat is on, it is key to remember you're never alone. God is with you at all times, there to see you not just into the fire, but through the fire as well.

As they emerged from the flames, it was noted that there wasn't even a smell of smoke on them. The king realized his huge mistake and immediately proclaimed that everyone praise God. In a flash, the entire nation began praising God, because of the bravery of these three Hebrew boys. They had rescued everyone.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are heroes, truly tested in the fire. As you answer the call, you too can be a hero if you go in with courage, remember God is with you, and remember that your actions could save a whole lot of people. You too will be a hero when you step into the ring of fire.

STAY
SAFE





“In fact, the water I give him will become a spring of water in him. It will flow up into eternal life.” John 4:14 NIRV

When the alarm calls, before firefighters slide down the pole and leap on the fire engine, they’ve just got to gear up. Having the right equipment is essential for rescuing others, and it is essential for survival too.

The first thing to put on is a fireproof jacket. Our Bibles tell us we are marked with a seal – the Holy Spirit. If you listen, He can guide you through life, even when things could be collapsing around you. God has you protected from the flames, but you’ll still need to hold up that shield of faith to quench any fiery darts that come your way. And don’t forget to keep your helmet on. It protects your head, and your brain. You don’t want any wrong thoughts creeping in when it starts getting hot. It’s an all-out battle at the firezone, and you’ve got to be ready!

Another crucial tool of the firefighter is the ladder. It helps reach out to others in need of rescue. Some people are trapped in what seems like inescapable situations. Only you can reach them with the hook and ladder. Are you reaching out to people in need of rescue?

One final and most important thing to bring along is the water. A person in a burning building is desperate to see that water hose down the flames around them. In the same way, everyone – including us – should be desperate for the water of life. That’s Jesus, who soaks us with his love and forgiveness right when we call out to him for help.

A firefighter never forgets the right equipment, and neither should we. So next time you head out to the face the firestorm, don’t forget to bring your firefighter’s gear!

DAY
SIX





“Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.”

Mark 10:50 NIV

The roof is on fire! In fact, you're in hot water wherever you look. If you stay where you're at, you'll be toast. And as you run to the window, you realize it's a long jump down.

It's a good thing the fire department is there to save you. Unfortunately, there's no way they can get to you with their ladder. Down below, you see firefighters pull out a large canvas with a target on it. They want you to jump down there! Will you jump? It's a long fall, and it's a leap of faith! But it's a whole lot better than staying behind in the fire.

It may not be as dramatic, but God is asking us to do the very same thing in our lives. God is telling you to make a leap of faith. He's telling you to jump. It's clear you can't stay where you are. Look at Blind Bartimaeus – he was in serious trouble if he stayed where he was. He didn't want to be a blind beggar all his life. That's why he was calling out for help over and over, yelling “Jesus! Have mercy on me!”

That's why you might as well jump. Don't look back at the burning wreckage behind you, as Lot's wife did. Just keep looking forward, because your hope and salvation are waiting for you. Bartimaeus threw aside his coat and marched awkwardly towards Jesus.

Don't worry! God is right there waiting for you. He'll catch you when you fall. If you confess your failings to God, He'll be quick to forgive. If you're in a big mess, just leap to Him and find salvation. Just ask Bartimaeus – he saw the light and was completely healed!

A jump like that may appear scary, but you don't have to be scared when you remember that God is there to catch you. Just scream like a maniac and do a cannonball out the window – it's a leap of faith!

DO
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*“There the angel of the Lord appeared to him from inside a burning bush. Moses saw that the bush was on fire. But it didn’t burn up.”
Exodus 3:2 NIRV*

Moses had to be a volunteer fireman – one day he was out there in the desert at his day job, when all of the sudden he spotted a fire. One encounter with that burning bush, and he knew he had to get to work. He knew there were people that needed rescuing.

We’re all volunteers when it comes saving other people. The moment we realize that is when we see the light. Moses saw a burning bush in flames, and inside it was the voice of God telling him that His people were in trouble. Moses had his doubts about his own abilities, but with God behind him, he knew he had to get to work and answer the call.

Moses had a nice, peaceful life. All of us have different walks of life, given different skills and abilities by God. No matter where you are in life, though, when it comes to rescuing others – you’ve got to answer the call. You’ve got to become a volunteer in the brigade and go to work.

The reason is simple: people need rescuing. In Moses’ case, the Israelites were trapped in the hot desert, working hard as slaves that would never be fired. They needed a dramatic rescue. You may not be called to speak out to a Pharaoh, but Jesus did give us all a great commission: go in to all the world and preach the gospel.

When it comes to rescuing people in peril, we’re all volunteers in God’s brigade. So see the light, become a volunteer, and answer the call!

GO
TO
WORK





“Your bodies are a holy sacrifice that is pleasing to God. When you offer your bodies to God, you are worshiping him.”

Romans 12:1 NIRV

Those that were alive on September 11, 2001 will never forget that day. They'll never forget the day that life as we know it stopped, and they'll never forget the courage, commitment and ultimately sacrifice of so many members of the New York City Fire Department.

As the Fourth of July or other patriotic holidays roll around each year, we tend to focus on soldiers and their sacrifice for this country – as we should. But our memories should also never falter when it comes to those brave firefighters who raced off to do battle on our home soil that fateful day, many giving the ultimate sacrifice so that others might live.

The battle never ceases. With every fire that breaks out, our fire department rushes to battle blazes, risking much to save others from harm. It's a difficult task, requiring more than many of us will ever comprehend. But regardless, the job gets done, and time after time the day is saved.

Don't wait until a patriotic holiday to stop and remember. And don't wait to say thanks. These brave men and women are true soldiers, snatching others from the fire – and saving them.

THANKS





“By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.” Exodus 13:21 NIV

Electricity is a great invention. It was first used in place of candles so that there would be light in the evenings! Candles and fire were used, but that was pretty dangerous. Electricity was also first used for communication, lighting and other functions in the 1800's.

That seems like a long time ago but WAY back before that time, when the followers of God were traveling in the desert, they would not be able to find their way in the night without light. There were no lights from homes, no streetlights, no cars driving by. As the saying goes, they could not see their hand in front of their face! It was that dark!

But our big God wanted them to travel at night sometimes! So, because He gave them a task, He also provided the means to accomplish that task. He provided a pillar of fire by night! That light was God himself. If He wanted them to move to a new place during the day He went before them in a pillar of a cloud. But at night He was a pillar of fire! The people were not scared – they obeyed and followed God.

God has amazing ways of working to get His will accomplished. He knows what it takes and has already been there. If you're lost or confused as to what to do in life, just look to Him. You'll see the light!

STAY
SAFE





*“If the LORD delights in a man’s way, He makes his steps firm.”
Psalm 37:23 NIV*

God wants us to reach heights that we have never been to before! He has given us more than we are aware of. The Holy Spirit has come to give us strength, hope and life abundantly. If we are looking to do something great, we need to take one step at a time.

To get to the person on the second floor of a burning building, a firefighter needs to get the ladder from the truck, take it over to the building and secure it. Then, he carefully takes step by step to the correct window. Once the firefighter has rescued the person, he must then watch what he is doing and slowly but carefully take each step down until he reaches the ground safely with his person.

As he successfully reaches the ground, he has a completed mission. Likewise, God has given us steps to a victorious life. Prayer, reading God’s Word, and spending time with other Christians are the first steps to secure your path. To reach your life’s goal whether it is becoming a successful attorney, a pastor, a firefighter or parent, you need to take one step at a time.

Don’t try to jump to the top! Do it the right way. God has great plans for you. Stay with Him and take it slowly and carefully.





*“Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.”
Proverbs 26:20 NIV*

To build a fire you need oxygen, fuel and heat. Take away the wood from a fire and what do you have? NOTHING! A fire must have fuel to burn, or there is not a fire.

God’s Word says that without wood a fire goes out. Then the Bible continues to give another analogy: without gossip a quarrel dies down. What is gossip? Gossip is saying something about someone else without his or her approval. Gossip is something that is to be avoided!

Do you remember a time where someone said something about you to someone else? Maybe they said something that you did not want anyone else to know. That is gossip. How did it make you feel? Not so good! It can make you uncomfortable and annoyed. It can ruin a friendship.

But, like burning a fire, if you take away the wood, the fire goes out. If you take out the gossip from relationships, no fighting will occur and there will be more trust between friends. Choose today to say only things that are positive and uplifting about your friends and family. Don’t let that dangerous fire start!

DAY TWENTY





“The king’s command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.” Daniel 3:22 NIV

Our God is amazing! He is in everything that we go through. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were three Hebrew boys who loved and trusted our God. They worshipped Him. They prayed to Him. They loved Him.

One day, because they were all faithful to God, a jealous king decided that the boys needed to be put into a furnace. The king told his men to “turn the heat up.” The fire in the furnace was so hot that several men died just being close to the furnace. They weren’t even inside it! Then, the king ordered for the men to put the three boys into the fiery furnace.

Do you know what the boys said? They trusted our God so much that they said, “if we die, we die. But our God is great.” When they were thrown into the furnace that had a fire so hot it killed people who just came near it, God delivered them! He brought them out of the heat without a burn.

Here’s a hot tip: when it looks like things are really going wrong and you don’t know a way out, trust in God. He knows what you are going through and He knows where you are at all times. God can deliver us from all “hot” situations!

DAY AFTER TOMORROW





“...and the satraps, prefects, governors and royal advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies, nor was a hair of their heads singed; their robes were not scorched, and there was no smell of fire on them.” Daniel 3:27 NIV

Do you believe that God can do anything? Think again about the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Remember that the fire was so hot it killed two guards who just got close to the fire? That is one hot flame!

Think back to a time when you were around a fire. Maybe you and your family were at a campground or a cookout roasting marshmallows or singing songs? Did you ever have the wind blow the smoke towards you? Was it hard to breath? Could you smell the smoke? You probably noticed that even when you went home and sat down inside your house, you still smelled like smoke. The smell lingered.

When God does something and we wonder how He did it, all we have to know is God is God. When God does something that is not able to be explained, that is a miracle!

And, that is one of the things that makes God different from man. The boys were thrown into the furnace and not only did it not burn them, it didn't burn their hair and it didn't burn their clothes, *and* they came out of the fire and did not smell like smoke. That could only be done by our God.

Trust God in all situations. He may lead you into some situations but He will also bring you through all things if you trust in Him.

DAY
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*“Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.”
James 3:5 NIV*

It only takes a spark to get a fire going. One spark can make a fire big enough to cook a marshmallow. One spark could ignite a fire big enough to burn a building! And one little spark could cause an entire forest fire! We may think that a spark is nothing to worry about because it is small and not very hot. But if you use that spark in the wrong way, acres of trees, many animal habitats and hundreds of lives could be in jeopardy. Remember that!

Also remember, like a spark, the tongue is very small. By itself it is nothing to worry about – but start to talk trash about someone or speak too highly of yourself and it can be like setting a forest on fire. One wrong word said to a friend could cause an argument or could be spread to other friends and really cause you problems.

One wrong word to your parents and you could be in a heap of trouble – maybe even grounded! You may think your tongue is a little part of the body but it could really cause a lot of damage in relationships. So, be careful little tongue what you say. The wrong words could lead to all kinds of hot trouble!





“These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” 1 Peter 1:7 NIV

Many times we think that fire is destructive, and it hurts and is a bad thing. But fire is also used for good things. To cook food, fire is used. To heat our homes, fire is used. To make pure gold, fire is used.

Gold is something we love. But did you know that to get gold to look all shiny and new, a very high heat is applied to burn away the impurities? That means that the things in the gold that are not useful or that make the gold worthless need to be taken away. The only way to do that is to put the gold into a very hot fire until all that is bad is burned away.

God uses an analogy, a story, to tell us about how that relates to our life. We love gold here on earth. It costs a lot of money. But in heaven, it is what the streets are made of!

Here, what is more important in God's eyes is faith. In 1 Peter, it says that our faith is greater than gold. We need to be purified just as gold is purified. We need to get rid of the sins, bad thoughts, mean words, and wrong actions in our lives so that we can give praise, glory and honor to Jesus! Think about that today. In your mind think good thoughts about all people. Think about what you say before you say it, so you won't hurt other people's feelings. And do what you know is right. Work hard to make yourself more pure, and worth more than gold.

DAY
SIXTY
EIGHT





“For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.” 2 Corinthians 9:2 NIV

“Catch on fire with enthusiasm and people will come for miles to watch you burn.” - John Wesley

Did you ever hear anyone tell you to catch on fire? Would that be a great thing to say to someone? Well...it actually is a good thing to say! To catch on fire with enthusiasm as John Wesley's quote says means that you are doing something and doing it well. Just as when a fire burns, things around it tend to get hot and catch on fire and burn too. When you do something well, people will follow you. When you are “on fire for God” they will wonder what you are doing and if they stay close enough, they will also “burn” and follow God. They want to be where you are, they want to do what you are doing and they look up to you.

Are you that person? Can you catch on fire about Jesus and have people around you asking about your God and wanting to know more about Him?

DAY
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“Let the one who is evil stop doing evil things. And let him quit thinking evil thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord. The Lord will show him his tender love. Let him turn to our God. He is always ready to forgive.” Isaiah 55:7 NIV

Where in your house is one of the most frequent rooms for fires to start? The kitchen! For that reason, many people keep a fire extinguisher nearby. Check with a parent to see if you have a fire extinguisher in your kitchen. If you have one, great. If you don't, talk to them about getting one.

A fire extinguisher is a valuable tool. Since you have the stove and oven with high heat, it makes it a place where fires can possibly begin. The odds are that it won't ever happen, but it's always good to have something like that nearby just in case.

Now, what can an adult do if a fire should start in the kitchen? Use the fire extinguisher to put out the flame, of course. Once that flame is out, or stopped, the fire is not able to become a bigger fire, something nobody wants.

Our verse for today is like an “evil” extinguisher! If you or someone you know is doing things you know are wrong, there's a real danger there. It's time to “extinguish” doing things that God isn't pleased with, and “extinguish” thinking thoughts that won't make God happy. Maybe it's a good idea to have a fire extinguisher inside your head, because all kinds of thoughts cook up there, just like in the kitchen. If temptation starts flaring up, just blast it with that extinguisher! Put out those fires before it starts getting out of control.

If you know someone in danger of getting burned, let them know God is ready to forgive them, and help extinguish all that's wrong. He's ready to protect us all from getting hurt, because He loves us all. He wants to save everyone from the fire. Let's help Him do that, and extinguish those fires!

PUT OUT
THOSE
FIRES





“Don’t let any evil talk come out of your mouths. Say only what will help to build others up and meet their needs. Then what you say will help those who listen.” Ephesians 4:29 NIV

Fire trucks are full of fire fighting materials. There are axes, ladders, uniforms, first aid items and hoses. Trucks come equipped with everything because a firefighter does not know what he will need when he gets to the fire.

One of the most important things on the truck is the hose. When they take the hose from the truck and attach it to the fire hydrant, the sugar comes out of the hose and puts out the fire.

Wait. That’s not right. It’s not sugar. It’s *jello*, right? No, that’s not it. What is it again? Is it *spaghetti* that comes out?

Oh, I remember now. It’s water! Of course *water* comes out! What is inside the fire hydrant is water. When the firefighter hooks the hose up to the hydrant, water should come out. It puts out fires, saves people, and brings peace.

And just like a hose that is connected to a hydrant, we should be connected to God. Whatever comes out of our mouths should help put out and bring peace, and not stir up trouble. What we say should be those things God is pleased with, and not something hurtful.

Some may enjoy burning others with insults or “sick burns.” But God is loving, caring, peaceful, joyful, and confident. And you’re connected to Him. So, here’s the question: what is coming out of your mouth? Are they things God would say? Do they have a peaceful tone, or do you cause strife with your words?

Remember what comes out of your mouth is the same as what you are connected to. Be connected to Christ.





“The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai. The cloud covered the mountain for six days. On the seventh day the Lord called out to Moses from inside the cloud. The people of Israel saw the glory of the Lord. It looked like a fire burning on top of the mountain. Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. He stayed on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights.”

Exodus 24:16-18 NIV

What a tremendous story! Think about this: Moses was leading the children of Israel in the desert. Then Moses stops at a mountain and for six days there is a cloud around the mountain. Remember how God lead the people by day, with a cloud? When the cloud moved, they moved. Now, the cloud is on the mountain and the people stay there for six days. Do you remember how God guided the people by night? It was with fire!

Day Seven comes around, and can you believe it? God calls to Moses, and as the people watched Moses enter the cloud they saw the “glory of the Lord” and said it looked like...*fire*! God is amazing.

The Glory of the Lord is so unexplainable that our minds cannot describe the sight except by using common words. How do you explain the true presence of God? He is so much more than we can imagine. He does great things for us. He leads us, guides us, protects us, knows us, and loves us!

He is more amazing than any words we could use. But we can sure try anyway! That’s why the Bible is filled with words of praise, and the songs we sing filled with lyrics that tell everyone how good our God is. Today, spend some time reading those words in the Bible, or singing a song of praise about our amazing Heavenly Father. Or, better yet, do your best and use your own words to tell others about His wonderful goodness.

DAY SEVEN





*“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning.”
Luke 12:35 NIRV*

Firefighters have to be ready at all times, alert and able to race to the fire engine when the siren sounds. It takes training, but it also takes being alert. One minute, a firefighter is inspecting a truck, and the very next moment the siren is sounding, launching he and his team to the scene of a burning blaze.

Can you imagine a firefighter arriving at a towering inferno, and not having a clue how to get water out of the firehose? That would be crazy. Firefighters know just what to do, of course, and they’re ready to save the day.

Jesus wants us to be ready, just like that. Who knows when we’ll be needed, and who knows when the Master will want us? We have to be watchful and ready at all times. It takes training on our part – reading our training manual (that’s our Bible) and staying in constant communication with headquarters (that’s prayer).

Sometimes a friend needs encouragement, or it could be someone who needs money, or a family member that needs prayer. Maybe someone needs just the right scripture to lift them up and carry them to safety. We need to stay alert, because God is counting on us to ride in to the rescue!

If we stay watchful, we’ll be like those brave firefighters, always ready to spring into action at a moment’s notice!

DAY TWENTY-ONE





***“But God chose you to be His people. You are royal priests.
You are a holy nation. You are a people who belong to God.”
1 Peter 2:9 NIRV***

It is an honor to be a firefighter. It is a sacred fellowship, where members have literally passed through the fire to become a source of salvation for civilians.

Firefighters know about testing. Months upon months of training go into the makings of a true firefighter, but the lessons continue all throughout their careers.

Firefighters know about sacrifice. The shift of a firefighter is like no other, where each spends a third of their lives away from friends and family, living at the station, ready to jump to work at a moment's notice.

It's a tough position, but ask any firefighter and they'll say it is worth it to help others. It's a position of honor, one that each firefighter takes very seriously.

As Christians, we too have a position of honor. We're a chosen people. We're tested and we're asked to sacrifice, but we've got a job to do, and a reputation to uphold.

Remember that as you make good choices throughout your day. What are you going to do when a time of testing comes? What are you *not* going to do when asked to sacrifice?

Remember that others are watching, and know that God is watching too. Most of all, remember that as a Christian, you have a position of honor.

DAY TWENTY-TWO





“Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5 NIRV

Firefighters dash in to collapsing structures, fully aware that there is danger waiting for them there. But their commitment to saving others is stronger than any uncertainties about the future, and any fears lurking inside. Their training takes over and their emotions take a back seat. People need saving, and time is of the essence.

As a member of Ladder 1:23, we’ve got to have a similar commitment to going into tough situations to rescue people from danger. It probably won’t be a burning building, but God is asking us to step out of our comfort zones in order to reach others.

Will you do it? Will you help snatch others from the fire and save them? If you answer yes to that question, then just like a firefighter, you have no idea the adventure you’re about to get into!

As firefighters depend on their training and instinct in unfamiliar territory, we too can rely on something to get us through: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart.”

We walk by faith and not by sight, and even if everything is collapsing all around us, God can lead us to a path of salvation. All we have to do is trust Him. We’ll make it, not just *into* a situation, but right through it to the other side.

DAY TWENTY-THREE





“Never stop praying.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17 NIrV

When smoke fills up a room, the best place to be is down low. Clean air can be found several inches off the floor – so it makes the best sense to get down on your hands and knees, and crawl to the nearest exit.

As a part of Ladder 1:23, being on our knees is the best place to be. Getting on your knees to pray should be something we do all the time – not just when the fires are burning hot all around us. Paul told us to never stop praying. It’s a direct line to God.

Prayer is like the radio at the station. It’s a two-way radio, where we can communicate with God. We can tell Him how thankful we are, and how much we appreciate His loving kindness. But we also need to listen to that radio, because that’s where our next instructions are coming from.

God is wanting to rescue all of His people, and when we pray, we become the most effective firefighter we can become.

So switch on the radio because there’s a call on your life to get on your knees in prayer. Get in touch with headquarters, because there are people out there to be saved, and each one is counting on you!

DAY TWENTY-FOUR





*“The Son of Man came to look for the lost and save them.”
Luke 19:10 NIRV*

Moses was a volunteer firefighter if ever there was one. He had a day job – but one day while on that job, he looked up and saw a fire. It was a burning bush!

One encounter with that burning bush and he knew he had to go to work. He knew there were people in need of rescuing, and Moses stopped what he was doing to focus on what was really important.

We each have different walks in life, but one important mission from God: we have to snatch others from the fire and save them. No matter what we’re doing, if we know there’s a cry for help, it is our job to answer the call and reach out to save others.

That’s what it means to be a part of Ladder 1:23. When it comes to rescuing people in peril, we’re all volunteers in God’s brigade. So become a volunteer – that means doing something in your church to help out. Whatever it is you volunteer for, when you help out at church, you are working together with the team to rescue others.

That makes you a volunteer firefighter!

DAY TWENTY-FIVE





“Jesus stopped and said, ‘Call him.’ So they called to the blind man, ‘Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.’”

Mark 10:49 NIV

Firefighters don’t use the big sheet like they used to. But could you imagine yourself in a big burning building, forced to jump out of a window? Imagine looking way down there at ground level where several firefighters have spread out a large sheet to catch you.

Are you going to jump? You’d better, because if you don’t, you’ll risk being burnt or worse.

Blind Bartimaeus jumped, and he was glad he did. It was a leap of faith, leaving behind everything he ever knew. His whole life, he spent alongside a road, begging for loose change. But when he heard Jesus, he jumped at the opportunity and saw the light! Imagine that – the first thing he ever saw was Jesus, standing before him.

Bartimaeus followed Jesus after making that leap, and that’s the right thing to do. We should follow Jesus too. It can seem scary at times, making a leap of faith, but don’t worry a bit: God is there to catch us when we fall.

DAY TWENTY-SIX





“In fact, the water I give him will become a spring of water in him. It will flow up into eternal life.” John 4:14 NIRV

A person trapped in a burning building is desperate to see water. Once that water pours in and starts to douse the flames, that’s the moment when salvation comes.

Jesus called himself the water – it’s the kind of water that will spring up inside us and flow forever. Just like a person inside a burning building, there are millions out there that are desperate for this water to come pouring into their lives too. They’re desperate for salvation! They’re desperate for Jesus.

That’s where we come in. As a part of Ladder 1:23, it is our job to deliver that water. It is our job to deliver the message of Jesus. It is a message of salvation, one that can save everyone from fiery danger!

We’ve got to use every resource we have to help others who desperately want to be rescued. We’ve got the knowledge and the ability, so get those hoses ready! It’s time to adjust the nozzles and give the water of life to a world burning with hope for salvation!

DAY TWENTY-SEVEN





*“He said to them, ‘Go into all the world.
Preach the good news to everyone.’” Mark 16: 15 NIRV*

The fire department has a hook and ladder to help save people and property from destruction. The hook is used to tear down walls, and the ladder is used to reach out to people in need of saving. Both of these have saved thousands of lives over many years of the great history of the fire department.

As a part of Ladder 1:23, our mission from God is to reach out to people too. Jesus told us to go into all the world and preach the good news to everyone. Jude wrote that we are to snatch others from the fire and save them. We’ve got a mission to do! The siren is sounding and it’s time for us to race off to work.

We too use a hook – it’s the thing that gets somebody’s attention. Usually, it’s our lifestyle. When others notice our joy, and the blessings we have, that gets others’ attention. They’re hooked!

That’s when it’s time to reach out. Just as a firefighter uses a ladder, we too need to reach out to others with the good news of Jesus. It’s called evangelism. Just inviting others to church is a great way to reach out.

When you do that, you’re fulfilling your purpose in life: *snatching others from the fire and saving them!*

DAY TWENTY-FOUR





*“But he did not know that the LORD had left him.”
Judges 16:20 NIV*

Play with matches and you’ll get burned! You’ve probably heard that expression before – it means don’t mess around with something you shouldn’t, or you’ll wind up in serious trouble.

That happened to Samson. He probably knew he shouldn’t hang around with Delilah, especially after she kept betraying him and sending Philistines in to tackle him. Yet, he kept playing with matches. He was so blind to Delilah’s treachery – and as we read, we wonder how that could happen. His heart was on fire for Delilah, but smoke was in his eyes.

Don’t be too critical of Samson. We all do the same thing. We all mess around with things we know inside we shouldn’t. We all play with matches. Each of us will face temptation from time to time, and the more we hang around it, the more smoke will get in our eyes, just like it did with Samson.

That’s why it’s key to have an escape plan. When you feel tempted to do some- thing you know you shouldn’t – that means it is time to escape. Flee in another direction, just as you were running from a burning building.

If you flee, you’ll have no worries. In other words, you won’t get burned!

DAY TWENTY-ONE



FIRE SAFETY TIPS

Fire safety should be very important to everyone. Here are a few simple tips that you can follow in your home to be sure that you are completely ready!

Install and Maintain Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors warn you of fire in time to let you escape. Put them on each level of your home. Test these regularly, replacing batteries twice a year, or when the detector chirps to signal that the battery is dead.

Plan and Practice Your Escape

If fire breaks out in your home, you must get out fast. With your family, plan two ways out of every room. Test windows and doors—do they open easy enough? Are they wide enough? Or tall enough? Practice alerting other members. It is a good idea to keep a bell and flashlight in each bedroom. Choose a meeting place outside where everyone should gather. Once you are out, stay out!

Fire Drill

Do a fire drill at home – have the whole family practice the escape plan at least twice a year.

Crawl Low Under Smoke

If you encounter smoke using your primary exit, use your alternate route instead. If you must exit through smoke, clean air will be several inches off the floor. Get down on your hands and knees, and crawl to the nearest safe exit.

And if your clothing catches fire, remember: don't run! Stop, drop, and roll!

FIRE SAFETY TIPS



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WILD FIRE NOTES

