

## OUR BURNING BUSHES

### Walk, But Watch How You Walk!

**Our Father wants** - us to live godly lives and has provided His instructions for righteous behavior in the Bible

**Psalms 25:8** - Good and upright is the Lord; therefore, he instructs sinners in his ways.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** - 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Those instructions are the **same for everyone and will never change**:

**Matthew 24:35** - Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

But **He also has a specific plan** for the lives of all His children, and **He will help us find** and follow it.

**Ephesians 2:10** - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

**God's path for us might not always be easy**, but it will be rewarding for us and will glorify Him.

Have you ever sensed you were hearing from God?

Throughout my life I've had some powerful encounters with the Lord that had far-reaching effects.

- I've never forgotten those moments.
- God had called me to preach, so He spoke to me in a dramatic way!
- He has made a way to **get my attention** and **communicate His will** for me.
- This may be **different for everyone**, but *they're not limited to a select few*.
- **God still speaks to His children**.
- **His main channel** for directing us is through His Word.
- **He will also** speak to us personally and specifically.
- Especially if **we're willing** to listen and obey.

**In the O.T. one of the most well-known dramatic encounters with the Lord happened to Moses.**

**After fleeing from Egypt, Moses spent years tending sheep for his father-in-law.**

- One day while he was alone in the wilderness with his flock,
- **God spoke to him unexpectedly from within a burning bush:**

**Exodus 3:4-6** - 4 When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.” 5 “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” 6 Then he said, “I am the God of your father,[a] the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

**God then commissioned Moses to be the leader of His people and bring them out of Egyptian slavery.**

**The main way God speaks to us today is through His Word.**

- But He may also speak to us directly at times.
- There’s a certain type of **encounter with the Lord** that we could call a “burning bush experience”

**A burning bush experience is possible for anyone, and it will probably have the following characteristics:**

**It will be unexpected.** Even if we’re praying to hear from God, ***He usually answers in a way that catches us by surprise.***

**It will be unique to us.** God’s personal messages are **different for everyone.**

**It will challenge us to trust and obey Him.** We’re called to make a decision—to obey or not. And **obedience often won’t be easy.**

**It will prompt an emotional response.** We might be moved in some powerful way, such as **through tears, relief, or even fear.**

**It will have a powerful and lasting effect.** God often communicates this way **about significant situations.**

**If we’re listening, our obedience could have a dramatic impact on us and others.**

A “burning bush” experience might be preceded by:

**Circumstances are not working out.** When things are going wrong around us, God may be asking us to stop and listen.

**Crisis.** A critical situation is an important occasion to seek God’s direction.

**Discomfort.** God may cause us to feel **deeply uneasy without apparent reason**, in order to get our attention.

**Proverbs 3:5-6 promises that God is willing to direct us:** “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths”.

**How do we acknowledge God in all our ways?**

**Before Moses saw the burning bush,**

- He may **not** have been **praying for a sign** from God.
- But prayer is one thing that **will keep us close to the Lord**.
- **And ready to hear from Him**.
- Under the new covenant, God speaks to us through our relationship with Jesus.

**We carry His Spirit within us and have access to His guidance, if we’re willing to listen.**

**Stay close to Him. Our ability to hear and recognize God’s directions will improve if we maintain a close relationship.** And anything that damages this relationship, such as sin or prayerlessness, will hinder communication.

**Ask.** God may **wait to provide information** until we turn to Him. This helps us **recognize our dependence on Him**.

**Be patient.** We won’t always receive an answer right away but must wait for His perfect timing.

**Practice surrender and trust.** God might instruct us to do something we don’t want to do. But it’s always in our best interest to obey.

**Pay attention to your spirit.** An agitation in our hearts that isn’t related to sin and won’t go away may be God’s way of telling us to seek Him.

**Expect an answer. When we pray repeatedly and seem to get no response, we may be either not listening or unwilling to accept the answer God has sent.**

**If you've made a mistake in following God's will, ask Him for help. Taking a wrong turn can happen, but *God will often provide us with a way to adjust our course*.**

**Why should we seek God's will for the life-path decisions we make?**

**He's God. His sovereignty means we should seek His plan above all others.**

**He's omnipotent. We can't see every part of a situation, but God can. He knows the beginning and the end of every story.**

**He loves us. Like a loving father, God always wants what's best for us.**

**It glorifies Him. Seek God's direction and obey Him brings Him glory and honor.**

**It becomes a witness for others. Our experiences with God show others that He is a personal God who cares about *the concerns in our hearts*.**

**It's incredible to think that the God who created the universe is willing to speak to us personally.**

**Whatever you are going through, He loves you, He has a plan for your life, and He will show it to you, step by step.**

**If you're willing to ask, listen, and obey, your heavenly Father will guide you daily on the unique path He has chosen for you. Start communicating with Him today and watch Him work in your life.**

**CLOSE:**

**Has God ever spoken to you through a "burning bush" experience?**

**If so, what changed in your life as a result?**

**Why do you think God involves Himself in our lives at a personal level?**

**Ephesians 3:20 - Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,**

**What does Ephesians 3:20 tell you about His goals? His can-do ability is exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think!**