

# COME, OH BURNING SPIRIT, COME

THOUGHTS FROM MAJOR STEPHEN COURT

## 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 (VOICE)

So now, may the God of peace make you His own completely and set you apart from the rest. May your spirit, soul, and body be preserved, kept intact and wholly free from any sort of blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus the Anointed.

Do you ever wonder how to pray? Lots of people have good intentions regarding this habit. They might determine a time and a place and aim to make that "divine appointment" each day. But sometimes schedule demands or late night fatigue or forgetfulness squeeze it out. And even when they make their "appointment," the words can dry up quickly. After a "Good morning," "I love You," "Thank You for..." and a string of "Please bless \_\_\_\_\_," we run out of things to pray.

The Bible is an excellent prayer resource. It offers God-certified prayers, God-inspired intentions, God-created circumstances for us to pray through, full of confidence that we are praying God's will. But do you know another wonderful resource for prayer?

While obviously not on the same level as the Bible, the Song Book does have the advantage of being a collection of (mostly) prayers for all of us to use, often with a vocabulary that we lack. They offer us new ways to express adoration to God, to confess our deepest hurts, sins and failures, and to appeal for His will in our lives.

Captain Kathleen Johansson, who is invading Bulgaria with The Salvation Army, has taken one of those old Song Book prayers by Charles Fry (whose most famous song is *Lily Of The Valley*), father of the Fry family - The Army's first (bodyguard) brass band (you'll want to google him to get the lowdown) - and set the words to a new melody. And they convey profound, intense, faith-filled passion to experience the Holy Spirit's delivering, cleansing, sanctifying, igniting, transformative work in our lives.

In verse 2, we pray, "On the altar now we lay soul and body, mind and will; all the evil passions slay, come and every corner fill." The entire consecration of our lives frees up the Holy Spirit to slay all the evil that is possessing and harassing us. And once we're emptied of evil, the Holy Spirit can fill us completely.

The chorus helps us articulate zeal, "Satisfy our soul's desire, now we trust You for the fire." This is so much more than a whim or fancy. This is life's conviction. And it for "now," not some vague future "bye and bye." The fire? "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11 NIV), or as The Passion Translation more graphically renders it, "He will submerge you into union with the Spirit of Holiness and with a raging fire!" This is not some "nursery-rhyme prayer" we recite by rote. These are super-charged words conveying ardent conviction for overpowering transfiguration.

The bridge and verse 3 play out Jesus' sacrifice that makes the internal revolution possible, and responds in like manner. It's almost a blood oath, in which we figuratively offer our right eye in recognition that Jesus "did bleed and die." The stakes here are high.

**PRAY OVER THE WORDS OF THE SONG BEFORE YOU PRAY ALONG WITH THE WORDS OF THE SONG. MAY GOD GRANT EACH OF THESE DESIRES THAT YOUR HEART UTTERS.**