

Guy Fawkes Night—Bonfire Night

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Pre-Planning:

Plan for an outdoor evening of fellowship beside the fire roasting marshmallows, having hotdogs, hot chocolate or pop, etc.

Fireworks can also be purchased for this event.

In some locations, it may be possible to have an 'old fashioned' bonfire with cut boughs.

History of Guy Fawkes Night:

This is an annual celebration mainly observed in Great Britain, but also observed in the British colonies. It goes back to the events of November 5, 1605 when the secret plan to overthrow the king was found out, and the people in Great Britain lit bonfires and had fireworks to celebrate.

In later years, it has been a fun night for kids and/or families, in which they share in food and fun around the fire.

For more information about the history of Guy Fawkes check out:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_Fawkes_Night

<http://www.bonfirenight.net/>

Song Suggestions: *“God of Elijah hear our cry”* (Salvation Army Songbook 203)
 “Now I feel the sacred flame” (Salvation Army Songbook 546)
 “Wanted hearts baptized by fire” (Salvation Army Songbook 704)
 “Refiner’s Fire”

Scripture Readings:

Exodus 24:12-18

Devotional: **A Relational God**

In Exodus 24, we are given the account of when Moses ascended the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments. During that time of conversation between God and Moses, Moses was given instructions for setting up the tabernacle so that God could dwell amongst His people. However, for the people looking on from the base of the mountain, this was a time of fear and trembling, as they saw the cloud cover the mountain. What is interesting is their interpretation of the glory of the Lord: *“To the Israelites the glory of the Lord looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain”* (Ex. 24: 17, NIV). Despite having experienced God’s deliverance from Egypt, the onlookers perceived God as a terrible consuming force and came to the conclusion that God must have destroyed Moses. Panicking and believing that

God had killed Moses and abandoned them in the desert, the people selected a new ‘god’ to be leader. In Exodus 32, we find that they built the golden calf and justified their actions by saying, “Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.”

What a shock it must have been for the people when Moses reappeared after having being in the presence of the Lord. As we continue to read the story of the Israelite people, we find that many times afterward Moses continued to be in the Lord’s presence. When we reach Exodus 34, we discover that the relationship between Moses and the Lord is so intimate that it has a transforming effect on Moses in two ways: 1. inner transformation— while Moses continues to recognize that God will punish sin, Moses comes to understand that God wants relationship with His people. 2. outer transformation—the power of the Lord at work inwardly in Moses is seen outwardly. Exodus 34: 29-35, tells us about the positive change in Moses’ countenance every time he seeks the Lord’s face. This inner and outer transformation brought about a change of attitude in the people, as they now recognized and responded to God’s chosen leader in their midst.

The onlookers at the base of the mountain were right in believing that God is a consuming fire—he destroys sin and punishes sinful people. However, they had a huge learning curve when they discovered that this same God is also a God of compassion and love and wants to be in relationship with his people. And this relationship is possible when we recognize the omnipotence of God who, through being a consuming fire is able to burn away the dross and sin from our lives, so that we are transformed into a greater characteristic likeness of Himself.

What does this say to us today? When we seek intimate communion with God, an encounter with Him is life-changing; when we are open and receptive to His presence, He will transform our lives inwardly, and that change will be seen outwardly. May it be our prayer that God will come and burn away all that is unholy and transform us to be more like Him.

