



"Through The Flames"

Imagine yourself at sleep in the night when suddenly your house is blasted off its foundation. The explosion has come from the basement. From the seconded floor you see fire and smoke with burning debris spread out the length of a football field. Your heart is pounding as you open the bedroom window to escape across a lower roof, but there is no roof, only a blown out pit to the basement.

As you try to gather your wits from a deep sleep and wondering if you are only dreaming, you are quickly brought to your senses by a baby brother clinging his arms around your neck while riding on your back. The other two younger brothers are making their way out from the overturned beds and following single file toward the broken stairway to the first floor. The smoke is making it hard to breathe and see through the rooms when you hear and meet your sisters at the top of the steps. Mom and Dad are leading the little ones out through their bedroom window and away from the house. One younger sister was stuck in a partition briefly but pulled free when she stopped thrashing around and screaming. The floor had been blown up about 3 feet in front of the doors so there was no way out but through a window. Our parents, all eight children as well as the dog and one cat made it to safety. We were very fortunate. The blast was so powerful it blew out the fire. The smoke was mostly coming from the logs and the wood-burning stove. The only injuries were a few slightly singed hairs on the dog and my father's arm.

Propane gas had leaked in through a basement window from a faulty tank. Our parents had smelled the gas outside when they came home about 10:00 PM. My father saw that the tank was leaking because of the ice built up around the bottom. He unhooked it and rolled it away into the field away from the house.

We learned from the fire department that propane gas stays low along the ground like a fog before eventually climbing up a wall. They figured when the water pump turned on during the night the spark ignited the blast. If the tank had not been moved I most likely wouldn't be writing this article since it was located right below my bed. The Lord delivered us from the flames and what could have been the end for all of us. Had we been awake sitting in our living room and dining area we would not have survived the exploded glass that blew through the furniture and stuck in the walls.

However, the primary purpose of this article is really not meant to be about the dangers of propane gas and the survival of a mom, dad and their eight children. As much as I would love to share the many other details of that event, I will instead tell you why I'm reminded of my thoughts and how I felt after it happened.

I kept thinking about that unseen propane gas just hanging there and all it took was a spark. In a similar way I sense those same feelings today only not concerning an unseen gas or another explosive substance, but rather an underlying sense of an outbreak of rage, a catastrophic calamity or perhaps the excuse for world war III. All it would take is a spark at the right place and time.

As a pastor of a church, an evangelist, Christian apologist for Humbleheart Ministries and a thankful citizen of the United States of America I praise God for His unchanging Word. Scripture must be the anchor for a believer's soul. In this crooked and unstable world we need the spiritual guidance that can only come through Jesus Christ our Lord and the person and work of The Holy Spirit in our lives.

We are all in a vulnerable situation when it comes to life outside of Jesus and His Church. Television has become 99.9% trash! That includes the news, commercials, even several PBS programs that were once family oriented for children, education, nature and science. Not to mention the repulsive rhetoric on talk radio. Beware of the tumultuous flow of misinformation, lies, unconfirmed facts, and hacked, chopped and diced snares of the Internet!

These days several major filmmakers have attempted to appease the Christians by producing various versions of Biblical stories and the history of "religion." As a result there is more confusion, half-truths and a growing sense of apathy. This apathy and profound impatience with the discussion of "faith" is prevalent especially among our youth and those under the age of thirty. Capturing and holding their attention may once have been a matter of five to ten minutes. Now it's a matter of seconds.

At first I thought it was after turning fifty they just stop listening to what you have to say. In other words they think you could never understand things they are going through, their needs, their emotions and especially the mixed messages available to them concerning faith and reality. Those of them who strive to walk in Christ and stand on the Word of God find themselves under fire and continually marching through the flames of their surroundings. They need our prayers, encouragement and the continual sustaining meals of spiritual food from the Bible. This food we "all" need.

The world is full of books, and other various types of publications and media. Much of my information comes through research in the efforts of trying to answer questions. For one example there is a book called "The Shack" that several people were reading among many churches. I received a few copies from those with questions before I finally had to take the time to read it. Let me just say it "is not" a book that any church or Christian should be promoting.

Most recently I viewed a series on DVD called "The Bible" that a major filmmaker and company produced for TV. The great sound and visual effects entertained me, but overall I found it lacking so much accurate detail that a person watching with no knowledge of the actual Scripture account could not fully understand it. In fact, I believe the creators of the film in many aspects took liberty in designing a politically correct version of the Biblical characters they included. This should come as no surprise.

Challenge: Read the Bible! Go to a Bible Driven Church! Worship, fellowship and attend a Bible study! That is the best advice and answer we can give. Though there may be many people who disagree with such a challenge, you know it is true. We also know we must choose between God's wisdom and the wisdom of the world.

The Book Of Mormon II Musical *"is the best musical of the century according to the New York Times"* says the advertisement on a local PBS station. The station for July 3rd is scheduling a bus trip to Cleveland, Ohio to the musical. Will you attend?

Jehovah's Witnesses are eagerly pointing out "apostate Christendom's" acceptance of Darwinian human evolution, same sex marriage and ordaining of gay and lesbian clergy. Is your Church (denomination) accepting and/or permitting this sin?

[May 16, 2013 Judge Says It's Ok for Muslim Violence Against Christians] *The American Freedom Law Center*

Dearborn, Michigan. This western suburb of Detroit has a population of close to 100,000. Over 40,000 of them are Arab or of Arab descent, giving Dearborn the distinction of having the largest Muslim population of any city in the United States.

The list goes on where reports of Satan's fiery missiles are being shot at Christians by non-Christian cults, other world religions, governments and atheist groups. Recent headlines concerning the United States Department of Justice, the IRS, etc help cause further rage, anxiety and fear. It seems like the more our elected officials push a doctrine and laws against what they call "hate crimes," the more hate and criminal acts of violence occur.

How can we survive the impending disaster that lies ahead as we see the pile of explosive issues gathering? How can we make it through the flames? The answer is clear – only through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior!

Remember Philippians 3:20 *"...our citizenship is in heaven..."* I decided to close this article with the lyrics from a song by Dallas Holm whom I consider one of God's faithful servants in the Christian music industry.

We are on a journey in a foreign land
Weary pilgrims trying to find our way
We really don't belong here, we're just passing through, We're all looking for a brighter day
One day we'll see Jesus, look upon His face
And when we stand before Him on that day
We will sing His praises, shout His name on high
And with the host of Heaven we will say...

Chorus: Through the flame, through the fire
Through the storm, through the flood
We have been lifted higher by the strength
And by the blood of the Lamb!

Through some tribulations, through the tempter's snares, Always with our foe on every side
We kept pressing onward to a promised land
Often as by fire we were tried
Soon it will be over, never more to roam
As our weary souls to Him we bring
Laying down our sorrow, lifting up our praise
To the Rock of Ages we will sing.

Chorus...

"Through The Flame" by Dallas Holm

❑ MARANATHA!

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