

*Fanning it into Flame*  
**Sunday, January 03, 2010**  
**A Prophetic Look at 2010**

I generally like to preach messages that have obvious positive themes that we can all get behind and rally together. Most of us would respond positively to the words: faith, hope, love, prosperity, happiness, joy, fulfillment, provision, success. However, when we hear words like: obedience, responsibility, accountability, submission, sacrifice, commitment, etc. an inner reservation may arise wondering what it's going to cost us. I am amazed by Jesus' openness and direct approach to the fact that things were not going to be without some difficulty. I probably would have wanted to stick with the positive type themes to get everybody on board first. However, Jesus was not looking to appeal to man's ability to do what was necessary. He knew that apart from him nobody could do a thing. While his yoke would be easy and his burden light it did not mean that we would not be going through something in the process. He said things like: Matthew 16:24-27 *Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.* (NIV) In Mark 8:34-38 This parallel passage adds the additional words in verse 38" *If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.*" (NIV) Jesus did not mince his words but was very direct with people who had an outward appearance of wanting the things of God but may have had mixed motives.

Look at Matthew 8:18-22 *When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. 19 Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." 21 Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."* (NIV) Then the parallel passage in Luke 9:58-62 adds: *Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family." 62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."* (NIV) Jesus wanted everybody to know what they were in for. Read Matthew 10:1-42 for a dynamic depiction of the Kingdom as Jesus calls his twelve disciples and sent them out. Again, he was not looking for people to give it the old college try. His message, while having the appearance of being hard, must be viewed through the lens of the fact Jesus was the exact representation of the godhead in bodily form. He fully represented the Father and the Holy Spirit on earth. When they listened to him there was a divine impartation of his life that they could embrace. They could feel empowered to do anything he said as faith rose in their hearts at his word. He told his disciples that when he left he would send "another" counselor to be with them. That word meant another of the same kind. The promised Holy Spirit would be just like Jesus and is available to us now to enable us to do everything he commands us to do, not with reluctance or fear but with an excitement about living a victorious life of miracles in him. The writer to the Hebrews said of Jesus that it was for the joy set before him that he endured the cross. He knew the dynamic import of what he was accomplishing.

The same holds true for us. When we respond with an "Amen in 2010" we are going to accomplish amazing things for God. God spoke to Moses when he saw him turn aside to look at the burning bush. In like manner he will speak to us as we "turn aside" to look at the things he is calling us to do. Stay attentive and be ready to say, "Yes, yes," "Verily, Verily," "Truly, Truly," "Amen and Amen!" Don't allow the appearance of hard things or resistance cause you to shrink back. Jesus said they would happen, but he set the example and called us to join him in the task. It's an exciting life to live for God. Let's take it to a new level this year. We want to be people of action not merely words. He said we would do what he did and even greater things. Well let's take him at his word! The life he's offering is the one he lived. We at Grace are believing God for a new facility in 2010. It's going to take faith, courage, commitment, consecration, sacrifice, prayer, and the fullness of the Holy Spirit to accomplish this. We will not shrink back because it's bigger than we can accomplish in and of ourselves. Nothing is impossible with God and nothing is impossible for the one who believes in him.

We want this facility so we can house the people that are going to come because of our individual and corporate renewed focus and vision ***to be a church after God's own heart*** with a mission ***to be a relevant church culture that transforms our community and beyond.*** We truly want to have a ***Passion for God and Compassion for People.*** There are so many in this community that are waiting to meet you and the God who dwells within you, wanting to have what you have. God wants to work in your life in 2010 and open up greater doors of opportunity for you and your family. He wants you to succeed in what you do, but not at the expense of your spirit. He wants you to advance his kingdom while you're succeeding at what you do, all the while enjoying a loving family relationship with him. We're starting this first full week of 2010 in prayer meetings. Check for the locations and join us if you're able. Make this message a matter of prayer and listen to what the Spirit of God is going to reveal to you. You matter! God bless your New Year.