

The Fire and the Blessing it Brings

Andrew Murray:

And is not just this the need of our Christianity in these our days – the presence of God truly revealed and felt? And is it not just this for which the Baptism of Fire was promised, and is so indispensable? In John's Baptism there were indeed tokens of God's presence and power. He could testify that God had sent him. He could hold forth the wonderful promise of the kingdom of heaven. He could with convincing power preach repentance and forgiveness. He could point to Jesus, on whom he had seen the Holy Spirit come down and abide, and who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. But more he could not do. He had been filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb, and there was a measure of the Spirit's power in his preaching. But with all this, the Baptism of Fire he could not give. Even Christ himself could not give it, until as a victim on the altar he himself had been consumed by the fire, and in that fire had been lifted up as a glorified One into heaven. When the Baptism of Fire came, was not its chief work the perfect consciousness that the fire had come from above, that it was God's fire renewing and filling the whole being with his presence? Without appealing to promise, or reflection, or argument, they knew and felt: this is God, this is God's Spirit filling us.

(Excerpted from The Cross of Christ, pg. 125)