*Fire*

I remember reading a theological article on the Fire of God. It states that the Fire that burns Heaven is the same Fire that burns in Hell. Sounds wrong right? Well, let’s think about it. Remember, were talking about a Spiritual Fire and God is the Fire of Divine Love. Where do we see this image of God? Actually, it permeates scripture. There are many other metaphors but Fire is my favorite.

We see it in the Old Testament at the Burning Bush. Remember, it’s a Spiritual Fire. That’s why the bush doesn’t burn yet Moses experiences God’s Presence. We also see this image in the psalms. God is described as Fire from a furnace refining and purifying us like sparkling silver. Where else do we see this image? We also see it in the New Testament. Where? At Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descends on the heads of the Apostles how? In Tongues of Fire. Remember it’s a Spiritual Fire. Thank goodness! Otherwise all the Apostles would have been permanently bald. Just kidding. So, the image of God as the Fire of Divine Love is pretty cool. Love transforms the world like Wildfire.

But let’s get back to my first point. How could the Fire that burns in Heaven be the same Fire that burns in Hell? Well people in Hell don’t love – love! C.S. Lewis says that in Hell the doors are locked from the inside out. Let’s consider an example. How about Martin Luther king? He was on Fire with the Holy Spirit. He loved both whites and blacks and believed in peaceful protest. In fact, he talks about a close childhood friend who was white. His mother no longer let him play with Martin due to prejudice. Now, some folks loved Martin Luther king. Kennedy was one. Martin’s “I have a dream speech” is amazing and powerful. I think others were changed by his message who at first maybe weren’t. But let’s face it. There were some folks who hated Martin Luther king. They hated his message of love because it meant they would have to change. They rationalized hate instead.

In conclusion, let’s not be like them. Let us be open to the spark of the Fire of Divine Love. Like the Apostles and disciples, like Martin Luther King, --- let’s set the world ablaze. Amen.