

# Bluefire

By  
Timothy Fish

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# Bluefire

By Timothy Fish

The spirit, Bluefire, entered the auditorium earlier than he really needed to be there. It was an indulgence. He enjoyed this quiet time before worship service began. In a few minutes, the battle would begin, but he could sit there and observe until it came. Maybe the extra time would give him a better chance at victory.

Bluefire sat near the back of the auditorium watching the three people on stage. Their voices carried across the empty room.

"When we get to the last verse, we need to raise it a half step," the music minister told the pianist. "Can you do that?"

"I can do it, but I wish you'd told me earlier."

"I sent you an e-mail."

"Well, I didn't see it."

The third person, the soundman, wasn't involved in that conversation. Instead, he was busy setting up microphones.

"You said you needed four mics?" he asked.

"No," the music minister said, "Just three for the special."

Bluefire had seen a similar scene play out many different times in many different churches. As many times as he had seen it, it should have gotten old, but to him, this was every bit as much of a worship time as the more formal worship.

People began to file into the auditorium. Some of them went directly to their seats. Others stood around talking to each other. As the worshippers began to arrive, the angels and demons began to arrive as well. The worshipers couldn't see them, but it gave Bluefire a sense of pride as he look around and saw his brethren. Some of these angels were standing near some of the church members with swords drawn. At the entrance a very large angel, Gatekeeper, stood. He served one purpose and that was to deny access to the enemy forces. Not even Satan himself had the power to force his way past this particular angel. If it had been up to to Bluefire, he would have convinced the church to put up a sign that read, "This church be defended!" but it wasn't up to him.

There was only one way for a demon to gain access to this church. They had to have permission and as much as it hurt him to do so, Bluefire let six of them in the building that day.

Karen and her parents arrived one minute before the start of the worship service. No one would have known it to look at them, but Karen and her mother had had a fight that week and Karen wasn't speaking to her mother. Bluefire hadn't seen it himself, but he heard about it when he received his assignment. It was all about a boy. This boy was a rather despicable fellow, but Karen had chosen not to see that, creating

a rift between her and her parents.

When Karen arrived, the big angel at the door called Bluefire to the door. As the family walked up the steps to the building, six evil spirits walked along beside them.

"Should I let them in or not?" the Gatekeeper asked Bluefire.

"We're with her," the evil spirits said. "If we leave, she leaves."

"Let them in," Bluefire said, knowing that they were right. If they weren't allowed inside, they would convince Karen to leave. If she left, the battle was lost before it started.

Once they were inside, Karen and her parents chose different seats. Karen went and sat with the teenagers and her parents sat farther back on the opposite side of the building. The evil spirits left Karen alone and spent some of their time taunting Bluefire. They knew as well as he did that they did not need to convince Karen to make the wrong decision. She already had when she had chosen to ignore what the Holy Spirit was telling her and what her parents had been telling her. She had done it all because she enjoyed the company of one particular boy. Unless she could be convinced to reconsider, she would walk out the door of the church, climb into a car with her boyfriend. It would be many years before her parents saw her again.

"She won't listen to you," the spirits said. "There's six of us and one of you."

"Even if she doesn't listen to me, you can't win," Bluefire said. "She's a child of God. He won't give up on her."

"You overestimate your ability."

"Maybe it won't be me, but someone will succeed," Bluefire said, thinking about what he had heard the Lord foretell about Karen. "One day, she will become a great Christian song writer?"

The six spirits laughed.

"We've heard of God's plans for her, but do you think we care? Someday she will be quite the songbird, but what about before that? Did God tell you what would happen before then? What will happen when you fail to convince Karen to change her mind?"

"God will keep drawing her back to him."

"Of course he will, but do you think he'll keep sending you to whisper in her ear? No, he'll have to take more drastic measures. He'll let her run off with her boyfriend. He'll let her get pregnant. He'll watch her have an abortion to try to keep her boyfriend, only to have her boyfriend move on to someone else. He'll let her try to drown her sorrows in a bottle of whiskey. He'll let her try to commit suicide a few times. He'll let her do all of those things and then when she finally goes back to him she'll have wasted most of her life. O, she'll be a song writer, but tears will stain every page. She won't write a note without thinking of all she's lost. With each tear that

falls, we will laugh.”

“You may laugh, but you will not win,” Bluefire said.

“O, no? Do you not understand? We will win because God will have no choice but to bring bad things into her life. She will turn back to God eventually, but not without God weeping bitter tears at every trial he has to place in her life. What God will do for her own good will hurt him much more than it will hurt her.”

The spirits went away laughing. The song service began and Bluefire watched them. Some of them were going through hard times. For some of them, it was just part of life. For others, it was situations that they had brought on themselves. Bluefire had seen God weep for them. When his children were hurting he hurt too, but nothing seemed to hurt him as much as when he caused them pain. Even though it would work for the best, he didn’t like causing his children to suffer.

Bluefire had never understood the love that God had for these people. He had made them and then they turned their backs on him. At times, they seemed to go out of their way to make him angry. He told them what was best for them. He warned them that sin would cause death. He went out of his way to help them and they still kept doing the same old stuff over and over. Bluefire didn’t understand why God would love these people, but he did know that he didn’t want to see God hurt by them. He couldn’t control them, but he wanted to do everything he could to persuade them not to hurt God. For that cause alone, Bluefire wanted to persuade Karen to do the right thing.

Having a desire serve God was one thing, but going up against six spirits, every one of them as skilled as he, was something else. He could look around the church and he could see angels protecting the church members, but they weren’t part of this battle. They had their own tasks to perform, their own battle to fight. Bluefire would fight this battle alone. God knew the situation, but did that mean that God had sent him into this knowing that only one spirit was needed or planning for it to fail? Bluefire decided that it was best not to think about it. He had been doing this for thousands of years and he still couldn’t wrap his mind around it.

One of the things Bluefire liked about what he did was that he had to rely on the choices people made. He could sit beside a person and whisper thoughts in their ear; he could point at a Bible verse and show them a way of understanding it that they hadn’t seen before; he could try to persuade people, but he couldn’t force them to do anything. The decision was always up to them.

With Karen, Bluefire was at a loss. He had never faced six evil spirits alone before. With one or two, he could fend them off enough to plant a few thoughts in a person’s mind and often that was enough to get the person to give things a second thought. With three or four, it was almost impossible for him to communicate with the person, but six? One spirit could convince an army of men to take action. What was it

about this battle that made it important enough to send six spirits? And why had God only sent him? Did Satan consider this to be a crucial battle and God didn't? Maybe they both thought it was crucial and God thought he was up to the challenge.

Bluefire didn't know how crucial the battle was, but he had been sent to fight. Maybe he had been sent to win. Maybe he had been sent knowing he would lose. Win or lose, he was determined to do it spectacularly. He wanted to walk away from this battle knowing that he had done everything he could to win. If they thought they needed six to win, then so be it. He would take on six. He just wished he knew how.

As the singing was ending and the associate pastor, Wayne Hiller, prepared to deliver the message, Bluefire noticed a woman near the center of the building praying. She wasn't the only one, but there was something that drew Bluefire to this woman. Her prayer had an odor that filled the room, like the smell of roses.

The woman was Beatrice Bumble, or as she normally introduced herself, Bumble Bee. How different she was from the first time Bluefire had seen her. She had been about Karen's age when he had first encountered her. In the fifty years that had passed, she had suffered plenty. She had gone from a unwed, pregnant teenager to faithful widow in the service of the Lord.

None of the people sitting near her could hear her prayer or smell its sweat aroma, but Bluefire could. He tuned everything else out and listened.

"...and I ask you to give Wayne preaching grace this morning. I know that you are in control and can reveal your will to us. Give Wayne the words you would have him speak and help us to apply them to our lives..."

Bluefire stopped listening. He had been looking at the situation all wrong. He needed to change strategies. With six spirits working against him, Bluefire couldn't hope to talk to Karen, but maybe she would listen to Wayne Hiller. Most of the teenagers of respected him, so maybe she did too.

The trio was singing the last verse of their special when Bluefire went up on stage and sat next to Wayne.

"You need to convince Karen to forgive her mother," Bluefire whispered in his ear. He repeated it a couple of times. Sometimes it took a while for people to understand new ideas, especially when they're busy doing something like preparing to preach a sermon. Bluefire hoped that he could get through to Wayne soon enough that he could stop Karen and talk to her before she slipped out the door. He said it once more, for good measure. That would be enough for now. He would remind him closer to the end of the service.

Wayne went and stood behind the pulpit.

"Open your Bibles to First Kings chapter nine. If you don't have your Bible, the words are there for you on the screen." Wayne began to read. "And it came to pass, when Solomon..."

Bluefire slipped off to the side. He would wait until it was time for him to do something else.

Wayne stopped reading and began flipping through his Bible.

"I'm sorry guys," he said. "You might as well turn off the screens. I'll be preaching on a different topic. For some reason, I feel like the Lord is leading me to preach something else. Sometimes that happens. It isn't a sermon that I really want to preach. I feel like there must be someone here that really needs this message or the Lord wouldn't ask me to preach it, but it hurts me to think that someone might be struggling with this right now."

Wayne continued to flip through his Bible.

"Hey, Bluefire!" the angel standing next to Wayne called to him. "Are you going to help him or what? You're that one who started this."

Bluefire was pretty sure that Wayne changing his sermon wasn't his doing. It didn't work that way. Maybe that meant he wasn't in this thing completely alone. Wayne was probably paying much closer attention to the Holy Spirit than Karen was, that could make a world of difference.

"Matthew 5:23," Bluefire whispered into Wayne's ear. He would find out quickly if he was supposed to be helping Wayne preach to Karen. If Wayne decided not to use Matthew 5:23 then his change in sermon was completely unrelated.

Wayne flipped over to Matthew 5:23 and looked at it for a moment. He flipped away from it and Bluefire thought the change was related to something else, but then Wayne flipped back to it.

"Turn in your Bibles to Matthew Five. We'll begin reading with verse twenty-one."

At first, Bluefire fed him several verses. Wayne used some of these, but others he ignored. Bluefire continued to suggest some things that he thought Karen needed to hear. Many of those things made their way into the sermon, but it was clear that Wayne was concerned about a broader audience than just Karen.

When Bluefire noticed one of the teenagers near Karen being disruptive, he went down and tried to persuade the kid to sit still. When that didn't work, Bluefire asked one of the angels to give the kid a case of diarrhea. That proved to be much more effective, since it sent the kid rushing to find a restroom.

Back and forth he went between making suggestions to Wayne and encouraging the teenagers to listen to the sermon. Bluefire was able keep the topic directed toward Karen and to minimize the distractions. It seemed to him that Karen was listening. She was sitting forward in her seat and her eyes were on Wayne.

Bluefire turned his full attention to Wayne once more. The sermon had reached a point where Bluefire believed that Wayne could really bring it home that Karen needed to reconcile with her parents.

"Really emphasis this point. Don't quit now," Bluefire whispered into Wayne's ear.

With enthusiasm, Wayne presented the key point. No one would have guessed that he had not prepared this sermon. Even Bluefire felt moved by the sermon and he needed it less than anyone did. No one would be able to leave unmoved by this sermon. The enemy forces were rethinking their strategy. They were pulling back from some of the lost people in the service and turning their attention toward Wayne. They wouldn't be able to reach him without a fight, but it was clear that he was getting to them. The strategy was working.

Then Bluefire looked over at where Karen sat. She wasn't listening. Instead, she was looking at her cell phone and the six spirits were laughing. Bluefire took a closer look at the cell phone.

"I'm outside," the text message on the phone read.

How could that be? Karen's boyfriend wasn't supposed to show up until after the sermon. Bluefire looked at the clock. Wayne had already run overtime. His sermons were never this long.

Karen gathered her things and stood up to leave. She looked so happy. She didn't know the trouble she was heading into. Bluefire did. If she walked out the door of the church building and got in the car with her boyfriend she would have nothing but trouble for many years. The day would come when she would blame herself for killing her unborn child. She would struggle with the guilt the rest of her life.

"Good try," the six spirits said as Karen made her way to the exit. "Better luck next time."

It was over. There was nothing more that he could do. He couldn't ask Gatekeeper keep her there. It had to be her choice. He couldn't convince the boyfriend to leave. He had already tried that and failed.

Bluefire was beginning to wonder if he was just the one God sent in when he knew people wouldn't listen anyway. He should have known better than to have gotten his hopes up. It was six against one. Why had he thought he could win that fight?

One more time he would have to go back and say that he had failed. When was the last time he had succeeded? It had been a while.

Bluefire followed Karen to the foyer. He looked out the front door and saw the gathering storm clouds. How fitting. Karen was about to walk out the door of the church and into the storm that her life would become.

Her boyfriend's car was outside waiting, but Karen didn't go outside. She stepped into the restroom instead. She would want to look the very best for her boyfriend. It gave Bluefire some extra time, but could he do something with it? Could he stall her long enough that someone could talk to her? He would need some help.

Bluefire looked in the auditorium. Wayne was still all fired up and preaching

away. Bluefire's gaze fell on Bumble Bee. While others were listening, she was praying. For whom, Bluefire did not know. For Wayne? For her daughter or granddaughter? For the lady sitting next to her? Bluefire didn't know, but he could see those prayers rising like incense before the throne of God. He would need her help.

"Pray for rain," he whispered into her ear.

She kept praying, but not for rain.

She wouldn't. There had already been so much rain that the area farmers couldn't get in the fields.

"One more day with rain and it will top the record consecutive days," Bluefire whispered. That did the trick.

"Lord, I know this is selfish," Bumble Bee prayed, "but could you make it rain today?"

A sudden clap of thunder shook the building. That was followed by another and another. Then the rain fell. The sound of it hitting the roof made it hard for people to understand what Wayne was saying. The lights flickered for a moment, but he kept right on preaching.

"You're needed in the foyer," he whispered in Bumble Bee's ear. Bumble Bee stood up and walked out to the foyer.

Karen stood looking out the glass doors. Out in the heavy rain, her boyfriend was trying to get the top on his convertible up. It was rather pointless. The fuzzy dice were already soaked.

"Karen," Bumble Bee said, getting the girl's attention. "You're just the girl I wanted to see."

Karen turned around and looked at her, raising her eyebrow slightly.

"I've had you on my mind all week and I've been praying for you," Bumble Bee said. "I don't know if this will make sense to you, but I just feel like I need to tell you something."

"What's that?" Karen asked.

"Your mother loves you very much."

"Don't listen to her," the six spirits whispered.

"She doesn't act like it," Karen said.

"That's right! She doesn't!" the spirits whispered.

"Maybe not, but I know she does," Bumble Bee said. "When I was your age, I gave up my daughter for adoption. It was probably for the best, but I missed out on a lot of time that I could have had with her. I get to see her some now, but I loved her even when I couldn't see her. Don't you think it's time to forgive your mother?"

"My boyfriend is waiting for me," Karen said.

"Think about it," Bumble Bee said before she returned to the auditorium.

Karen stood at the door. The rain stopped as quickly as it began. The sun came

out from behind the cloud.

“Hurry up! He won’t wait forever,” the spirits said, but Karen didn’t move.

Then, as if she had come to a decision, Karen returned to the auditorium, where the invitation had just begun. The six spirits screamed at her that she was going to ruin whatever chance of happiness she had. Karen didn’t seem to hear. She looked over at where her parents had been sitting. They weren’t there.

“See? They’ve already left without you,” the spirits said.

“They’re down front,” Bluefire said. He didn’t know if she heard him above the screaming of the other spirits or not, but she looked toward the front of the building. There, kneeling beside each other and praying were her parents.

Karen ran down the aisle, with the six spirits yelling at her the whole way. They tried to follow, but Gatekeeper stopped them.

“You must leave,” he said. “Now!”

Karen touched her mother on the back.

“Mom, I’m sorry,” she said.

Her mother turned her tear swollen eyes toward her daughter. She pulled Karen to her and held her tight.

“I thought we were going to lose you,” she said. “I love you, so much.”

The angels and the demons were already beginning to leave. Some would stick around until the people they were with left, but others were already headed to churches in another part of the world, where the worship service had not yet begun.

Bluefire waited until everyone left and the building was dark. He wanted to take it all in. This one was a victory.

**About the Story:** In I Kings 22 and II Chronicles 18 we are told of Micaiah’s vision in which the host of heaven presented themselves before the Lord and they came with suggestions of how they would convince Ahab to go up to battle and die. A spirit said that he would be a lying tongue in the mouth of the prophets. This story, though completely speculative in nature, is somewhat based on that concept.

Perhaps spiritual warfare takes place around us like what is shown in this story. Then again, maybe it doesn’t. Someday, we will find out. Until then it is largely speculation.

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**About the Author:** Timothy Fish is the author of both fiction and non-fiction books. Titles include *Church Website Design: A Step by Step Approach*, *Searching For Mom* and *How to Become a Bible Character*. More information about the author and the books that he has available can be found on his website, <http://www.timothyfish.net>.