

2 Timothy

I. Introduction

- A. **2 Timothy 1:3-7** . . . I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, [4] longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy. [5] For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well. [6] For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. [7] For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
- B. **Reminder: From 2 Timothy 1:3-2:13**, Paul's primary focus is on urging and encouraging Timothy, and by extension church leaders directly and the rest of us indirectly, to remain courageous in standing with God and proclaiming God's truth – wherever we may be – in spite of the threat of being criticized, rejected, persecuted, imprisoned, or put to death.
- C. Prayer

II. A gift from God, and a spirit of power, love and discipline

- A. [6] For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
 - 1. **For this reason:** Because of Timothy's sincere faith, which was passed from his grandmother Lois to his mother Eunice and on to Timothy, Paul is reminding him to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in him through the laying on of hands.
 - 2. **To kindle afresh:** In urging Timothy to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in him, Paul is urging him to fan the embers and add more fuel to his motivation to make full use of the gift given to him through the laying on of hands.
 - 3. **The gift of God:** We don't know for certain what this gift was, but we do know that it was **from God**, that it was **in Timothy**, and that **he received it** when the elders laid hands on him.
 - 4. **Laying on of my hands:** There is a long history among God's people of the laying on of hands related to setting apart specific people for some specific ministry or service to the Lord.
 - a. The first record of this is found in **Numbers 27:18-20**, where God says to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom

is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him; [19] and have him stand before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and commission him in their sight. [20] You shall put some of your authority on him, in order that all the congregation of the sons of Israel may obey him.”

- b. **Deuteronomy 34:9** adds a bit more information to this account in Numbers: “Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.”
 - c. We know from church history that the early church followed this practice. We have an account of this in **Acts 6:6**, which says that after the congregation selected seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom (*for the specific task of handing out food to the widows*), they brought them to the apostles, who, after praying, laid their hands on them.
 - d. And again, in **Acts 13:1-3**, we read that at the church in Antioch there were prophets and teachers (*five are listed*) – including Barnabas and Paul. While this group was praying and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Paul for the work to which I have called them.” So when they finished their time of fasting and prayer, they prayed over Barnabas and Paul, laid their hands on them, and sent them on their way.
5. Returning to **2 Timothy 1:6**, we see that Paul speaks of having laid hands on Timothy himself, and God having given Timothy a gift.
- a. It is probable Paul spoke of this gift in **1 Timothy 4:14**: “Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through (*by means of*) prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery (*a group of elders*).”
 - b. As stated earlier, we don’t know for certain what this gift was, but since we know **God gave it to Timothy** when Paul, or Paul and the elders laid hands on him, it is probable that this gift was intended to enhance Timothy’s ability to do the work God was calling him to do.
6. However, more important than knowing the gift God gave Timothy is knowing that God gives enabling gifts to those called to serve Him in some capacity or specific way.
- a. In looking at my own life I have concluded that the way I think, the way I see the world around me, the way I understand human nature and why we do what we do, the way I approach the word

of God, and the emphasis I place on godliness are the result of what God has given me and what He has done in me in order to enhance my work as a pastor.

- b. I also recognize that God has not given the same gift(s) to every pastor or teacher or elder or missionary. Therefore, what matters most is not what gift(s) God has given us, but how we use what God has given us.
7. You may never have been set apart for some particular ministry or form of Christian service, but according to **Romans 12:3-8**, each of us has been given a gift or gifts in order to serve God and the needs of the church accordingly. Therefore, one of the lessons we can learn from **2 Timothy 1:6** and its surrounding context is that even though your gift comes from God, it is your responsibility to use it earnestly and use it well – even if it costs you what you’d prefer not to pay.
 8. What gift has God given you? Or more simply, where do you think you best fit in in relation to humbly yet earnestly serving God and the needs of our church, or those outside our church? May we each humbly and cheerfully serve according to the gift God has given us.
- B. [7] For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
1. It is clear from the context that when Paul wrote vs 7, he had Timothy and himself specifically in mind – and yet it can and ought to be applied to all of us. The purpose of these words is to encourage us to remain courageous in doing God’s work and speaking God’s truth in the face of resistance and opposition.
 - a. Applying these words to all of us is especially important in our day, because we live in a society where tolerance of all the things the culture accepts is treated as good and the only acceptable thing to do, while disapproval of anything the culture accepts is treated as evil and therefore intolerable – even if what is culturally acceptable opposes God, conflicts with God’s word, contradicts basic morality, or goes against nature.
 - b. In a setting like this, we need boldness. Not the kind of boldness that is obnoxious or derogatory and therefore needlessly offensive, but the kind that speaks the truth in love, that stands its ground with gentleness and patience, and that sets forth truth with reason and logic – even though it is met with irrational arguments, the twisting of truth, anger, condemnation, verbal abuse, and intolerance.

- c. In other words, we need a humble and respectful boldness that isn't intimidated or frightened into silence.
 - d. And so for this reason, God has not given us a spirit of timidity or cowardice or fear, but rather He has given us a spirit of power and love and discipline, or what can called, sound judgement.
2. **God has not given us a spirit of timidity** (fear and cowardice),
- a. The word “**spirit**” is in not capitalized in the NASB because it does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but rather to the disposition or mindset we have in response to the resistance received from advocating God's standards and proclaiming Biblical truth.
 - b. As this verse makes clear, our disposition or mindset can go in two directions: either toward timidity or fear and cowardice, or toward power, love, and discipline (*or sound judgement*).
 - (1) The timidity or fear and cowardice direction is all our doing.
 - (2) The power, love, and discipline direction is the result of what God gives us – though we must live accordingly if what He gives is to have its intended effect on our service to Him.
 - c. A spirit of timidity (*or fear and cowardice*) is a disposition or a mindset that is concerned more about personal safety, well-being, financial security, approval, and acceptance than about God's truth, the good of the community, the spiritual health of the church, and being a faithful servant of Jesus Christ.
 - (1) Therefore, when the threat level becomes greater than the timid Christian wants to bear, he acts like a coward who fears the cost of going into battle along side his Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ.
 - (2) The reality is, when we allow people to intimidate us or the cost of standing with God to silence us, it results in hiding our light, which gives the enemy an advantage and allows the darkness that already exists to become that much darker.
 - (3) Admittedly, your light and my light and our lights shining together can never remove all the darkness that oppresses our world. Yet every bit of light that we shine into the darkness gives opportunity for those living in darkness to see the light and come to the Light.
 - d. Therefore, may we cast aside timidity and fear, and may we with boldness, humility, and thoughtfulness make use of the wisdom and empowerment given to us by the Holy Spirit to sow seeds of truth into the minds and hearts of those who oppose the truth.

3. **God has given us a spirit of power**

- a. When I observe the life of Christ, the experiences of the disciples, the persecution of Christians down through the ages, and my own experience, it seems obvious that the power God gives to those who stand with Him is not the power to defeat our foes.
- b. Rather, it is the power to remain faithful and unshakable when facing resistance to the truth proclaimed, or when being opposed and discredited, or when dealing with believers acting like unbelievers, or when seeking to resolve unnecessary conflict within the church, or when facing danger, persecution, and even death from those outside the church.
- c. Said differently, this God-given spirit of power is not a winsome personality or unseen force that enables us to win over the most resistant believer or defiant and evil-intentioned unbeliever. Rather, it is a strength of mind and character that enables us to boldly and confidently speak up – whether in the church or in the world – and call people to the truth.
- d. But what if you don't have this spirit or mindset or disposition of power, yet would like to have it? For this there is prayer, and an example prayer comes from **Ephesians 3:14-16**, "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, [15] from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, [16] that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man."
- e. Without question, this kind of inward power comes from God, and those who use it for the good of God and God's people are able to remain faithful and unshakable in any situation.

4. **God has given us a spirit of love**

- a. Though the Bible uses four Greek words to denote the differing manifestations of love, it's three primary definitions of love all point to the same thing: Love does no harm to anyone, therefore, love intentionally and thoughtfully seeks the good of everyone who is in any way effected by our choices and behavior (**Rom 10:13; 1 Cor 13:4-10; 1 Jn 4:10**).
- b. It is for this reason that power, conditioned and ruled by love, seeks the good of everyone – which makes it the safest and best kind of power there is.
- c. Of course, this kind of power ought to at least exist in the church – and it can because God gives us a disposition or mindset of love

to go along with and condition our spirit of power. However, when power is combined with pride or becomes insensitive and harsh or looks out for the good of some but not the good of all, it is a sure sign it is **NOT** the God-given spirit of power combined with the God-given spirit of love.

- d. May we thoughtfully and prayerfully condition our use of power with love, and may we use the spirit of power and spirit of love given to us by God to bless and serve and speak truth to others.
5. **God has given us a spirit of discipline** (*sound judgement*).
- a. This third disposition or mindset given to us by God is just as important as the first two. Why?
 - b. Because we need disciplined thinking, or what we can call sound judgement to maintain (1) power that is humble, (2) love that is honest yet patient and gentle, (3) ears that listen in order to understand, and (4) speech that is respectful – especially when facing opposition, or when dealing with bad theology, or when correcting errant teaching, or when calling a Christian brother or sister who has gone astray back to their senses and godly living.
 - c. In other words, we need this God-given spirit of discipline (*sound judgement*) added to our God-given spirit of power and love because we all deal with people who, at various times and in various ways, can be unpleasant or even difficult to be around – be they members of our household, friends, neighbors, co-workers, or fellow church members.
 - d. Therefore, may we, as God’s people, make proper use of all three gifts from God – the spirit of power, the disposition of love, and the mindset of discipline or sound judgement.

III. Conclusion

- A. God does not give us timidness or cowardly fear – these things we produce on our own.
- B. What God gives is a spirit of power, love, and discipline – **power** to remain faithful and unshakable in the face of opposition; **love** that deals appropriately with the most difficult or cantankerous people; and **discipline** that reveals itself through sound judgement in the bold use of power and the honesty of love.