

*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 2 Tim 1:1,2*

Paul, writing this letter, describes himself as an apostle, a sent one, *not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father. Gal 1:1* He realized he had not assumed the office of his own choice but *by the will of God*. He understood he was chosen not as the other apostles, who had know Christ in the flesh, but by the power of the Spirit when he was blinded and chastised for persecuting Christians. From that point he was commissioned to be an apostle to the Gentiles, *I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. 1 Tim 2:7* He had the confidence of the other apostles.

*Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. Act 4:13*

Paul was writing to Timothy who he refers to as his *beloved son*. In this journey of newness of life we must see that we are not left alone with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, God gives us an earthly family as we learn to walk out our faith, brothers, sisters, parent, and children. Paul saw Timothy as his son in the faith but also to the believers in Corinth.

*14I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me. 1 Cor 4:14*

As Christians we are in a family relationship with other believers. Paul writes that we need to, as God's family, be devoted to each other.

*10Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Rom 12:10-12*

*So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Eph 2:19 NLT*

Paul prayed constantly for all Christians. The depth and wonder of his vision for the saints can be seen in his great prayer in Ephesians.

*14For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, 16that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, 17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Eph 3:14-19*

But in this book he was praying intently a certain child in the faith, Timothy.

*3I 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, 4longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy. 5For 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. 6For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. 2 Tim 1:3-7*

Paul had genuine love for this son in the faith. So much so that he prayed constantly for Timothy and his ministry, *I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day*. Paul knows of Timothy's sincere faith and he acknowledges that this faith had its roots in the faiths of his mother and grandmother. There was a Christian speaker and author named Ann Kiemel who I heard when I was first a Christian. One of her statements has stuck with me all these years, 'It pays to follow Jesus.' Many times our 'friends (not real friends)' and the world and the devil don't reinforce this truth. The truth is everything we do in our lives matters. If we will live *Our Utmost for God's Highest* we will begin to form a righteous environment, a force field, about ourselves that will influence all those we come in contact with for the good. The world calls this effect karma (*the spiritual principle of cause and effect where intent and actions of an individual (cause) influence the future of that individual (effect)*). But that is just on a fleshly level whereas Christians are involved in creating an *eternal weight of glory*, storing up treasures in heaven. Paul wrote,

*17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Cor 4:17,18*

Paul knew of the faith that was in Timothy's family, *5 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. 2 Tim 1:5* This gave him confidence of the work God was doing with Timothy. When we are around believers that really love the Lord we can see how God is not just working in their lives but he is also working in their families and with their friends. Even when things seem to be not working out financially or health wise their faith is affecting those with whom they come in contact. Many times God moves among very poor people and in the years that follow they become more prosperous and their children have the blessing of the righteous lives they have lived. 'It pays to follow Jesus.'

*6For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. 2 Tim 1:6-7*

Timothy had this godly heritage and had been gifted by the Holy Spirit, *the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands*. But it seems like the trials of life, the ministry, persecution for belief had caused him to falter, grow weak in his faith. How can this be? Timothy was called to the ministry, he had been a leader in the Ephesian church. But he was a man. Jesus told the disciples at Gethsemane, "*Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" Mark 14:38 We must be careful to guard our faith. Even the most gifted Christian can fall if they don't remain rooted in the vine, *let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall*. Even church leaders must observe their behavior. An elder *must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil*. Our reputation must be good not just in the church but also in our communities.

*6For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline (sound mind). 2 Tim 1:6-7*

Paul wrote to kindle the gift which is in you from the laying on of hands. Jesus told His disciples to tarry, wait in Jerusalem until they receive the promised Holy Spirit.

*4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Acts 1:4,5*

John's baptism was for repentance, turning from sin and dead works. Those that came to him acknowledged they were fallen men and in need of God's forgiveness. *"As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Matt 3:11* John knew that the Messiah would come to take away the sins of the world, to pay the penalty for sin. As Peter wrote, *He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. 1 Peter 2:24* But he also knew Jesus would bring in the promised Holy Spirit. More than just paying the price (justification) for our sin, Christ sends the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit dwelling in us, to empower us to live godly (sanctification, growing holier day by day in our Christian walks) Peter wrote, *By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. 2 Peter 1:3 NLT*

There is the Spirit's power for daily living but there is also the power for ministry. Jesus commanded His disciples to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them, *you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. Acts 1:8* Jesus knew that God was going to pour out His Spirit in a powerful way and the apostles were going to have the ability to spread the Gospel. There is a power for ministry. We need the power of the Spirit to live godly lives but we also need the Spirit's power to minister to the lost souls God is calling to Himself. Paul had laid his hands on Timothy so that he might receive the power to be a witness for Christ, *kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

*Chrysostom brings home the great lesson taught by this word, which belongs to all Christ's people alike, when he quotes 1Thessalonians 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit;" for it is in our power both to quench this Spirit and also to fan it into flame. The "gift of God" here alluded to is that special gift of the Spirit conferred on Timothy at his ordination, and which included, in his case, powers necessary for the performance of the many and important duties to which he was in the providence of God called, especially those gifts of ruling and teaching which are necessary for the chief pastor's office. Ellicott's Commentary*

Like Timothy we need God's power to be witnesses but we also need the Spirit to help us live our lives, overcoming a spirit of *spirit of timidity*. The Psalmist wrote, *When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. Psalm 56:3* We must constantly remember that God is not the one causing us to be afraid, instead He *has given us everything we need for godly living*. He gives us *power and love and discipline (sound mind)*

*1:6-14 God has not given us the spirit of fear, but the spirit of power, of courage and resolution, to meet difficulties and dangers; the spirit of love to him, which will carry us through opposition. And the spirit of a sound mind, quietness of mind. The Holy Spirit is not the author of a timid or cowardly disposition, or of slavish fears. Matthew Henry*

Each of us must stir up the Spirit that dwells in us and *kindle afresh the gift of God*.