

# The Spirit of Power, Love & Self-Control

## -Part 1: Talking about Fear-

### (2 Timothy 1:6-7)

We don't know how many letters Paul wrote to Timothy -

Two have been preserved in Scripture

Most scholars believe it was written from Rome -

- Nero was emperor
- Christians were being persecuted
- Paul was sensing that his time of ministry here was soon to be over
- He had been deserted by many
- Now he is writing to Timothy asking him to come & bring Mark

He begins the letter reminding Timothy of the legacy of faith he had received

Then, right off the bat, he challenges his protégé with these words:

*“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God,  
which is in you through the laying on of my hands.  
For God did not give us a spirit of timidity,  
but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”*  
(2 Timothy 1:6–7)

These two verses are short and straightforward, but packed with meaning - worth spending a number of sessions studying.

Like Timothy, we have a rich legacy of faithful forebears

- Saints generally,
- Reformers
- Resistance to evil
- faithfulness in life and worship

That rich legacy is not merely history or tradition. It comes as a living Spirit and a vibrant reality – living as those chosen, loved, and redeemed by God and from Him, possessing unique a unique spark of spirit and gifting

-a spark freely given but requiring and deserving ongoing tending

X - the task of tending fires in ancient times

-it took work

-it demanded faithful attention

-but unlike typical fire tending, this task was not for the timid

We have been called to follow Jesus in a spirit of power, of love and of self-control – literally said, “saved mindedness”

We will discuss these in more detail in future days

Today we will begin by talking about what we are not called to...

Let's talk about a spirit of FEAR

What does Paul mean when he says “God did not give us a spirit of timidity?”

-many Christians assume ‘gentleness,’ ‘kindness,’ ‘meekness’ ‘considerate’ mean we are to be soft, maybe a little hesitant or withdrawn – always on the retreat

### **FIRST THING TO KNOW ABOUT FEAR:**

**There are some things should be feared and some things should not be feared.**

Things that should be feared:

X<sup>1</sup> The Bible says much about the Fear of the LORD

*“The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever.  
The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.”*  
(Psalm 19:9)

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.  
To him belongs eternal praise.”*  
(Psalm 111:10)

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,  
and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*  
(Proverbs 9:10)

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,  
but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”*  
(Proverbs 1:7)

*“To fear the LORD is to hate evil;  
I hate pride and arrogance,  
evil behavior and perverse speech.”*  
(Proverbs 8:13)

*“The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life  
turning a man from the snares of death.”*  
(Proverbs 14:27)

*“The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high;  
he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.  
He will be the sure foundation for your times,  
a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge;  
the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.”*  
(Isaiah 33:5–6)

X<sup>2</sup> – Jesus said we should fear those beings & powers that have the power to kill the soul.

*“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.  
Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”*  
(Matthew 10:28)

Likewise there are some things we should not fear...

*“I, even I, am he who comforts you.  
Who are you that you fear mortal men,  
the sons of men, who are but grass,”*  
(Isaiah 51:12)

*“Fear of man will prove to be a snare,  
but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.”*  
(Proverbs 29:25)

*“Strengthen the feeble hands,  
steady the knees that give way;  
say to those with fearful hearts,  
“Be strong, do not fear; your God will come,  
he will come with vengeance;  
with divine retribution he will come to save you.””*  
(Isaiah 35:3–4)

How many times and in how many different settings did God and Jesus and angels tell people: “Do not be afraid” or “Let not your hearts be troubled”?

**SECOND THING WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FEAR:  
The fear of the LORD is pure, but my fear is a liar**

Fear that brings me to the LORD is from the LORD

*“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins...  
All of us also lived among them at one time...  
we were by nature objects of wrath...  
But because of his great love for us,  
God, who is rich in mercy,  
made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—  
it is by grace you have been saved.”*  
(Ephesians 2:1–5)

The command to fan into flame is the first part of working out our salvation – though we were saved to do good things, no good would come apart from the working of God in us

*“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—  
not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—  
continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,  
for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.”*  
(Philippians 2:12–13)

*C.S. Lewis quoted Samuel Johnson:  
“Where courage is not, no other virtue can survive except by accident.”*

Fear that runs or hides from the LORD is mine and it is a liar.

-NB every skillful lie begins with a seed of truth

-Don't let your fear speak for the LORD, let the LORD speak into your fear

X<sup>1</sup> - Stonewall Jackson was once asked how he could be so calm and stand so firm & unflinching in battle?

Jackson answered: "My religious belief teaches me that I'm just as safe on the battlefield as I am in my bed. The Lord has already appointed the day of my death so I need not worry about that. I live my life and prepare myself so I will always be ready to meet my Lord, when death does overtake me."

X<sup>2</sup> - Butch Timmer when his grand daughter asked if he got mad at God when he learned he had cancer:

*"Why should I be mad at God? He knew the number of my days long before I ever had cancer. Getting cancer didn't change that a bit."*

-Courage is letting God speak into your fear

**THE THIRD THING WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FEAR:  
When we let God speak into our fear, we can more truthfully discern the different factors at work in any fearful situation**

The Deciding Factor  
The Igniting Factors  
The Guiding Factors  
The Hiding Factors

**The Deciding Factor:  
God is at Work and God is good.**

*"But now, this is what the LORD says— he who created you,  
O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:  
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;  
I  
have summoned you by name; you are mine.  
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.  
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;  
the flames will not set you ablaze.  
For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior..."*

(Isaiah 43:1–3)

(God Speaks:)

*“I can love you more than you love yourself  
and I watch over you a thousand times more carefully  
than you can watch over yourself.  
The more trustfully you give yourself up to Me,  
the more I shall be watching over you;  
you will gain a clearer knowledge of Me  
and experience my love more and more joyfully.”  
(Catherine of Siena)*

### **Igniting Factors**

As with Job, as with Joseph, as with so many other saints who have gone on before, when we face fearful situations, there is always more to the situation than what we can see and perceive. There are causes behind the causes, and intentions behind the intentions – far more than we can discern or understand, but God sees and knows each one better than it knows itself.

### **Guiding Factors**

In every fearful situation there are things we can know, patterns we can discern and conventions that good and common sense can decipher. As Charles Spurgeon observed:

*“Courage needs eyes as well as arms.  
We must not blindly rush into danger.  
Fearless need not be heedless.  
True courage is not cousin to rashness.”*

### **Hiding Factors**

In every fearful situation, perhaps the most dreadful aspect of it is the fear of the unknown – the layers we cannot see or even imagine

(See the deciding factor)

Which brings us back to the point at which we began:

*“if my people, who are called by my name,  
will humble themselves and pray and seek my face  
and turn from their wicked ways,  
then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin  
and will heal their land.”*

(2 Chronicles 7:14)

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*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace  
as you trust in him,  
so that you may overflow with hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit...  
The God of peace be with you all.”*  
(Romans 15:13, 33)