

Frozen by Fear

2 Timothy 1:7

The Bible tells us of two types of fear...

- **Virtuous** fear – **“The fear [respect] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”** (Proverbs 9:10) - Virtuous fear is the byproduct of **faith**.
- **Vicious** fear is the byproduct of **doubt**.

One builds up - the other destroys!

Fear and **faith** cannot **keep house together**. When one enters, the other must depart.

Much has been written about the futility of fear.

- **“Of all the troubles great or small, the greatest are those who do not happen at all.”**
- **“You can't change the past, but you can ruin the present by worrying about the future.”**
- **“Fear of failure is the father of failure.”**
- **“We have nothing fear but fear itself.”** (FDR)

Nothing so demoralizes the human soul as fear.

But from where does fear originate? Where does it come from? Today we will NOT look where fear comes from - that is the subject for another day – but instead we will examine where fear **DOES NOT** come from, from where it **DOES NOT** arise.

The text is the verse with which I concluded last week's message - **2 Timothy 1:7**, **“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”**

This text very logically divides itself into two thoughts, so today's message will have two points. **First** we will talk about what God **has not** given us - **then** what God **has** given us.

I. What God has **not** given you - The **Spirit** of Fear

Most Bible students believe that Timothy was timid, that he was not a strong leader. This is seen in Paul's exhortations

to him, trying to put some **steel in his spine**. Timothy's temperament made him a fearful person. By understanding Timothy's timid personality you can better understand why Paul says the things he does to him in his two letters to him.

We often visualize Bible characters **as super people** but the truth is they were just **normal people**. For example, Moses was a fearful, timid person. Yet God used him in a great way! And like Moses, Timothy is a weak, timid person. He has a hard time standing up to people, he is intimidated by older people, he is fearful.

It is interesting to contrast two men Paul mentored - Timothy and Titus.

- I visualize Timothy as tall, thin, with an effeminate handshake. Paul continually has to encourage him.
- Paul never has to do that with Titus. I visualize Titus as much shorter with a bull neck and a grip like a weight lifter.

Now if your personality is like Timothy's don't despair. God **used both Moses and Timothy and He will use you!** God formed your personality. As you study the Bible you will find God uses various personalities in mighty ways. Remember...

**Your personality is not important.
Your availability to God is important!**

Now everyone, at one time or other, is bothered by the **demon of fear**. Even we Christians are sometimes frozen by fear. We are engaged in **spiritual** warfare – **a very real war**. God does not so much let us see what is going on in spiritual warfare (**it would probably scare us to death**) but He does explain, ***“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*** (Ephesians 6:12) Naturally some might be fearful when they comprehend the warfare in which they are engaged.

BUT the apostle Paul steps in and tells us that **God has not given us the spirit of fear**. He tells us that God has given us the one thing that can dispel every kind of fear. And that one thing is the knowledge of God who **reassures us**, who **comforts us**, who gives us **hope** when all things look hopeless. When we combine the **purpose** of God and the **promises** of God and the **provision** of God, we have no reason to fear!

In spite of the fact we know all these things, fear still raises its ugly head. It takes many forms - **anxiety, timidity, indecision, withdrawal, loneliness, over aggressiveness, superstition, cowardliness, shyness, suspicion, and depression. *Fear within exaggerates fear without!***

Now v.6 gives us the **context of our text**. ***“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”*** This verse explains **the reason Timothy was not the leader he should be**. Having forgotten what God had given him, Timothy is fearful. So Paul tells him to **“stir up”** the gift God has given him - stop **listening to his fears** and **appropriate** God’s gift!
When you put those two verses together you realize that Timothy is frozen into inactivity by fear!

So Paul tells Timothy that the Holy Spirit, instead of causing fear, dispels fear. Paul had already taught this truth in **Romans 8:15, *“For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”***

Paul clearly says that despite all of the fears that grip the human soul, fears which at times freeze us into inactivity, **they never come from God!** The Scriptures tells us that our fears always have another source. It may be our **sins**, our **background**, our **temperament**, our **failures** – and a host of other things - **but fear never comes from God!**

The GK word in our text for **fear** is *deilia*. It is only used as a **noun** in this passage and no other place in the NT. As a **verb**, though, it is used **three** times.

To help us understand what we **should not** fear, let's look at two of the times the word *deilia* is used in the NT.

❖ **Matthew 8:23-27** - it is used in relation to Jesus and His disciples.

"Now when [Jesus] got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He [Jesus] was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing! 26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful (deilia), O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

The disciples are fearful because of the **circumstances** they are facing. They think they are in danger and they fear for their very lives. Jesus rebukes them for their **fearfulness**. He says, **"Why are you fearful. I am in the ship with you. And as long as I am in the ship you can have faith that everything will be all right."**

The Lesson: We are not to be worried about our **circumstances** because Jesus Himself is with us in our journey through life.

❖ **John 14:25-27** - Jesus tells His followers,

"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (deilia)."

The Lesson: Since the Holy Spirit has been **given** to you, there is absolutely nothing to be afraid of. Your fear does not come from God!

So we see that a fear that freezes us, that keeps us from effectively functioning as God would have us function, **most definitely** does not come from God!

II. What God **Has** given You

– **Power, love** and a sound **mind!**

At salvation the Holy Spirit begins producing **power, love** and a **sound mind** in you – **not fear!** This is the kind of person God forms **when He gets a hold of a human life** - a person full of power, love, and governed by a sound mind.

Let's look at the three things we are promised.

A. **Power** = GK *dunamis* (dynamite) used 120 times as a noun in the NT. **Certain verses come to mind!**

- **Acts 1:8, “*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*”**
- **Romans 1:16, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation...*”**
- **1 Corinthians 1:18, “*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*”**

God has given each of us the spirit of power! Please listen to me this morning. Each of you who are saved, born again, has **God's power!** **Then why are we so weak?** Because we don't use this power!

Now the spirit of power is given to you **EVEN IF YOU HAVE NOT USED IT!** **A person can die of thirst in a house that has water if he doesn't turn on the faucet and drink the water that is available.** You have God's power **whether you USE IT OR NOT.** You have power because you have the Holy Spirit. If you have the Holy Spirit you have power. Have you learned to use the **power** you possess?

Of course not all of us have the same evidence of power. We can see a difference between the power that Paul possessed and that Timothy possessed. The extent of the power is a determination of the Holy Spirit - not us! But in most cases **we do not have the power** we should have, simply because **we have not yielded** to God and **allowed Him to maximize the power** He has made available to us.

Think of Timothy. He is fearful, powerless, because he has failed to appropriate God's gift to him.

- If a pastor is intimidated by a person or persons in the congregation and does not preach the whole counsel of God, do you think he has power?
- If a Christian will not go to where God wants him to go and do what God wants him to do because he is fearful of his parents, or the future, or something else, do you think he has power?

We too must appropriate the power God has for us! God has not giving us a spirit of fear, but the spirit of power.

B. **Love** = GK *agape* - used 116 times as a noun and 142 times as a verb in the NT. In **1 John 4:19** we read, "**We love Him because He first loved us.**" You cannot have *agape* love until you know **the source** of *agape* love, and the source of *agape* love is **God! Until you know Him you will never love as He loves!** But once you know Him you can love as He loves. We love because Jesus first loved us. Without knowing God we can never have that love.

What is the **greatest** commandment? To love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength! What is the **second** commandment? To love your neighbor as yourself!

- Now, how do you love your neighbor without relating to him? **But if you are fearful, how can you relate?**
- How do you love your neighbor without talking to him?

- How do you love your schoolmate, the person you work with, the person you exercise with, if you are afraid of them? Of

To love your neighbors you must relate to them, you must get to know them and have a relationship with them. We call that **Investing** in people! That is the first step of **Invest, Invite, Include** - and investing means relating. **And you cannot do that if you are afraid of them!**

Now connect that to timid Timothy. How can Timothy relate if he is fearful of people? **He can't!** So Paul reminds him that God has given him a spirit - not of timidity - but of love. **Love overcomes obstacles and reaches out** so that the person who loves is less fearful than the person who does not love.

C. **Sound mind** = Gk *sophronismos*. This is the only time this word is used in Scripture. Its root has been translated in other passages **self control, sober mindedness, discreet**. NT translators have used various words in translating Paul's thoughts in this verse.

- ***"...For God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but one of power, love, and sound judgment."*** (HCSB)
- ***"...and of self-discipline."*** (NIV)
- ***"...and discipline."*** (New American Standard Bible)
- ***"and of wise discretion."*** (Darby)
- ***"...and good judgment."*** (God's Word)

Now, one of the greatest producers of fear in our lives is guilt. The more guilt you experience – real or psychological – the more fearful person you will be. Guilt does not produce a right relationship with God. And guilt can affect every aspect of your life.

After we are saved we have a provision for guilt. As you well know even we born again Christians sin. But when we sin, we have a provision for forgiveness. **1 John 1:9, "If we**

confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Now that is not an excuse to sin! We must not surrender to sin. But when we don't have victory in our lives or when we fall into gross sin, we will be frozen by fear and guilt will grow. It is inevitable. **You cannot, as a Christian, continue to live in sin and be exempt from guilt and fear.** No way! But you don't have to continue under Satan's power because you are God's child!

In the society we live in (**a desperately wicked society**), with the abundance of sin and its constant drum beat - **to be weak is to be wicked, to be timid is to fail!** And God has not given us a spirit of weakness but of self control, of a sound mind.

Since God has given us the spirit of a sound mind it should produce **two basic characteristics:**

- **Positive discipline.** You can pray, attend church, memorize the Word, witness no matter how hard it might be according to your temperament! Why? Because your mind is to be sound, controlled, disciplined.
- **Negative discipline.** You don't have to watch nudity in the movies, filthy TV shows, look at or read pornographic material. In fact you don't have to do anything that is unclean – **you have a spirit of self control – of a sound mind!** That is the spirit God has given you!

In **v.6** Paul tells Timothy **”to stir up the gift of God.”** In **v.7** Paul tells Timothy that God has not given him the spirit of fear but the spirit of **power, love,** and of a **sound mind.** Now look at **v.8.** Paul says, *“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord...”*

The practical application of this section is that Timothy (and you and I) **by not yielding to fear might be a witness for the Lord**. The practical effect of not being afraid is that we can do all that God has asked us to do.

A seemingly dead fire, at times, can be brought to life if you sweep away the ashes and gently blow on the warm coals until they turn red, and the fire is rekindled.

Paul says to Timothy **“Stir up the gift of God.”** In GK the words **“stir up”** allude to fanning a flame. The Holy Spirit says to you that you need to fan into a flame the gift God has placed in you. God has given you a spirit of power, love, and of a sound mind – take the fan of **prayer** and the fan of the **Bible** and stir up the flame in order to not be frozen by fear but to be all God wants you to be.

Points to Ponder:

- ✓ Of what are you **afraid**?
- ✓ Are you stirring up the **gift** God has given you?
- ✓ Are you, by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising **positive** and **negative** discipline in your life?