

Confidence
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2 Timothy 1:1-13

Picture a loving parent who knows they will soon pass from this life to the next. In books and movies the children gather around the bed and the parent shares their most heartfelt words in a touching, poignant scene. It's rarely like that in real life. An unexpected and sudden passing or the unconsciousness of a coma often rob parent and child of that final closing conversation. But what if? What if you could compose the thoughts you'd want to convey to that child before you leave? **What are some things you'd be sure to include?**

- Paul's second letter to his "son in the faith" Timothy contained his last words to all of us. A Roman prison was his location and execution at the hands of the maniacal Emperor Nero was all but certain.
- If you break down these opening lines of this letter you see Paul get right to the mission of this missive by stating his love, passion, and purpose:
- Timothy, I love you! Timothy, I know and believe in you! I need YOU to KNOW some things. I need you to DO some things. I need you to have the courage to carry on when I'm gone – courage that comes from God.
- As you and I read over Timothy's shoulder, we can see that Paul's instructions to his "son" also apply to every follower of Christ.

Big Idea: God's power is available to every follower of Christ through His Spirit living in us. We can access that power for the supernatural courage to live the Christian life and to exercise our spiritual gifts.

- In this "preface" of Paul's heartfelt letter he begins by saying, in essence, "Timothy, I need you to know I love you and believe in you!"

³ Timothy, I thank God for you—the God I serve with a clear conscience, just as my ancestors did. Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. ⁴ I long to see you again, for I remember your tears as we parted. And I will be filled with joy when we are together again. ⁵ I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you.

- Paul made it clear he loved and thanked God daily for Timothy.
- Timothy’s tears when they had parted and Paul’s joy at the thought of being together again prove this is a deeply loving relationship.
- A praying parent talks to God “constantly” about their child.
- If that was your experience you know how encouraging it is to have the confidence of being lifted up to God daily by your parent.
- Timothy knew he had that in Paul. (Illustr. Prayer journals)
- An engaged parent knows their child; their personality, their strengths and weaknesses, their heart. Paul knew Timothy in that way.
- Paul knew Timothy’s faith going back to childhood.
- Timothy’s father was Greek and apparently not a follower of Christ (Acts 16:1.) However, his mother and grandmother made sure young Timothy knew scripture (2 Tim. 3:15,) knew about Jesus, and learned to trust Him.
- Paul was saying: “Timothy, I know what you are made of; that you come from solid, spiritual "stock." I know God has gifted you with what is needed to carry on His mission when I'm gone.”
- One of the things on my regular prayer list of thanksgiving is being raised in a Christian home. Not everyone had that privilege nor is it a requirement to be a follower of Christ because salvation is between the individual and God and not inherited, still, what a blessing.
- **As parents and grandparents what are some ways we can model what Lois and Eunice did for young Timothy?**
- Beginning in verse six Paul was saying: “Timothy, I need you to KNOW some things and DO some things.”

⁶ This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you.

- No one had natural gas in New Testament times. To have a fire you had to tend that fire. The word means “rekindle” and the grammar is active and present indicating this is to be an ongoing and continuous action.
- If you don’t rekindle a wood fire it goes out. **How do you rekindle a fire?**
- **How do you rekindle a relationship? How do you rekindle a skill or a type of knowledge (i.e. a foreign language or a musical ability?)**
- What happens if we neglect rekindling in those examples?
- Along came the furnace with a “pilot light.” **How does a pilot light work? What did the pilot light eliminate? How is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit more like a “pilot light” than a wood fire?**
- Every follower of Christ has been given at least one spiritual gift. (Check out <https://www.gotquestions.org/spiritual-gift.html>)
- To “fan” a spiritual gift “into flame” we must exercise that gift through the power of the Holy Spirit. Trusting the Holy Spirit’s power (pilot light) and adding fuel (exercising our gift) increases the heat of our Christian life.
- Conversely, neglecting to add fuel results in a loss of heat. The pilot light still burns but there’s no heat from the fire. The Christian life grows cold.
- Timothy’s gift was boldly preaching and leading the church. There’s no indication that Timothy was not serious about his mission from God and living a holy life. The most passionate believer still has to fan the flame.
- Stoking the fire of our spiritual gifts is standard operating procedure to keep our faith “hot.” Hence the old term, “on fire for the Lord.”
- So, how do we “fan the flame?”
- One commentator: “...*the Spirit only works in cooperation with those who desire his enablement. We keep fanning the flame by keeping “in step with the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25), by disciplining ourselves in godliness to produce the fruit which is his nature (Gal. 5:22).*”ⁱ

- A point about the “laying on of hands:” Wiersbe – “...no believer today has the same authority and privileges that the Apostles did. Today, when we lay hands on people for the ministry, it is a symbolic act and does not necessarily impart any special spiritual gifts to them.”ⁱⁱ
- It’s clear from scripture that Timothy had a timid personality and some health problems (1 Tim. 5:23) that I might speculate were stress related.
- Paul knew that Timothy struggled with fear and needed courage. Whether timid or not, we ALL need courage as followers of Christ. Verse seven is one of the classic memory verses to remind us that God’s power can overcome our natural fear and anxiety.

⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

- “Power is simply enablement to do what God requires. We are never asked to do anything beyond what God gives strength and ability to accomplish.”ⁱⁱⁱ
- “Self-discipline denotes careful, sensible thinking. It is the ability to think clearly with the wisdom and understanding that God imparts.”^{iv}
- We all have moments when the parade of our fears and anxieties comes marching through our minds. Usually it’s at 3 a.m.
- When our minds are racing from fear we need the same reminder Paul gave Timothy, God’s power can clear our heads and equip our hands.
- **How can we access God’s power to overcome fear and confusion?**
- Praying God’s promises from scripture back to Him reminds us that fear is not from Him. For example:

Isaiah 41:10 (ESV) fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Joshua 1:9 (ESV) ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Matthew 10:30–31 (ESV) Jesus you told us,
30 But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

⁸ So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, either, even though I'm in prison for him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News.

- We should never be ashamed to spread the news about Jesus or hide our membership in His family. Being bold for Jesus will mean suffering; but He will provide the strength to endure it.
- Our salvation should be motivation to be both bold and blameless.

⁹ For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus.

¹⁰ And now he has made all of this plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News. ¹¹ And God chose me to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of this Good News. ¹² That is why I am suffering here in prison. But I am not ashamed of it...

- Every follower of Christ needs to live each day reminded that God saved us when we did not deserve it, to display His grace through Jesus.
- We need to strive to live a holy life because of that grace.
- Jesus broke the power of death and pointed us to eternal life. That's why Paul dedicated his life to spreading the Good News, and could suffer with joy and not shame.
- Paul's testimony to Timothy in the last part of verse twelve challenges us as well: *“for I know the one in whom I trust, and I*

am sure that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until the day of his return.”

- God never promised to protect us from all physical harm. Jesus spoke plainly about suffering. Paul was beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, and imprisoned. Paul is speaking not of the temporal but the eternal, not of the body but the soul.
- Wiersbe: *“Paul had deposited his soul in the care and keeping of the Saviour, and Paul was sure that Jesus Christ would faithfully guard that deposit. What difference did it make to Paul what happened on any certain day? What really mattered is what will happen on “that day” when Jesus Christ rewards His servants (see 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:8).”^v*
- Paul concluded this opening section by reminding Timothy of the importance of teaching the truth.

¹³ Hold on to the pattern of wholesome teaching you learned from me—a pattern shaped by the faith and love that you have in Christ Jesus.

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- God’s power is available to every believer through His Spirit living in us.
- That power gives us the supernatural courage to live the Christian life.
- We access that Spirit power by continually rekindling the fire of our spiritual gifts by using them to carry out what God has called us to do as we depend on the power He gives us.
- Our motivation for fueling that fire comes from living each day reminded that God saved us when we did not deserve it, in order to display His grace through Jesus Christ.
- How will you and I “refuel” our gifts by putting them in action this week?

ⁱ Larson, Knute. Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: 9 . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

ⁱⁱ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 241). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

ⁱⁱⁱ Larson, Knute. Holman New Testament Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: 9 . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

^{iv} Ibid

^v Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 243).
Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.