

Fan into flame

Announce

- Saturday morning we will partner with House of Prayer to distribute food here
- We would love for you to come and help - or just meet those who show up
- If you can be here at 8:45, we should be done by 10:15
- Everyone pray!

Call to worship

- Earlier this week I was reading Lamentations 3. I was reminded of this passage:
Lam 3:22-23 (ESV) (22) *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; (23) they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*
- We have so much to praise the Lord for - His love is steadfast and never ceases. He renews his promises and mercy to us every day!
- He is faithful!

Message

Introduction

- I want to share some thoughts from Paul's final letter
- It was written to Timothy his "son" in the faith.
- Paul had been instrumental in leading Timothy to the Lord, and placing him in the ministry
- Paul had seen God's calling come upon Timothy as he lay hands on him.
- Paul now is in prison and about to die - and reaches out to Timothy to encourage him
- See **2 Tim 1:3 (ESV)** (3) *I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.*
- Paul is thankful for him - and prays constantly for him
- He left Timothy to carry on the great work in Ephesus

- Now **2 Tim 1:4 (ESV)** (4) *As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.* He longs to see him!
- He has a Godly heritage in his mother and grandmother
- Paul now writes these words: **2 Tim 1:6-7 (ESV)** (6) *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, (7) for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.*
- I want to share from this passage today

Message

Remind

- Paul uses this final letter to remind Timothy
- We need reminders
- None of us are immune to forgetting!
- Here is a young man - young pastor
- Paul uses this opportunity to remind hm to not neglect God's gift
- I believe Paul could detect some spiritual struggle in this young man. There was something going on - and Paul wants to remind Timothy not to neglect what God has done

Fan into flame

- Paul saw Timothy receive God's gift - through the laying on of his hands
- God called Timothy into the ministry at that moment
- Paul saw this, and was assured of Timothy's calling into the ministry
- Now Paul calls him to fan this into flame
- **Illustrate:** [Show slide] - Camping - build big fire at night, go to bed, wake up and seemingly out.
- First thing, kneel down over those coals and blow them (or fan them) and they'll begin to glow and become brighter. Flame will return and new fuel added
- **Point:** Paul wants Timothy to stir back to life the gift of the Spirit that Paul once saw burning brightly

Not of fear

- Paul is going to remind Timothy of the gifts God has given him - but first - let's take a second and look at what God didn't give
- **Point:** Fear does not come from the Lord!
- There is a fear of the Lord - an awe, respect, and a calling to walk in
- But this fear is not of the Lord - nor is it from the Lord
- The enemy is the one who deals in fear - and if he can - he will cripple you with it
- I have seen this at work in the church over the last 18 months
- We have reacted to FEAR
- Fear limits us, cripples us, causes us to fall in God's calling
- See the story of Peter. Jesus has sent the 12 on by boat, and he dismissed the crowd. They row into a storm and are fighting the wind and the waves. About midnight Jesus comes walking to them. They are terrified, but he calls out to them "Don't be afraid"
- **Matt 14:28-32 (ESV)** *(28) And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." (29) He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. (30) But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." (31) Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (32) And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*
- The storm didn't change - but his focus did
- He saw the circumstances, became afraid and began to sink
- Jesus still rescued him!
- The enemy will use fear to sink us
- We don't know the specifics of Timothy's struggle - but we know that Paul

What God gave

- God didn't give us fear - but with God's calling on Timothy's life - He gave His Spirit
- That is expressed in these three things

Power

- Acts 1:8 - this is the promise
- **Acts 1:8 (ESV)** *(8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria,*

and to the end of the earth."

- We have His power to do His work
- Timothy - defeated (needing to fan the flame)
- God has given us his power
- In fact apart from His power we cannot do his work - see **Psalm 127:1a(ESV)**
(1) Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. ...
- **Bottom line:** we cannot do the kingdom's work apart from the king's power!

Love

- This has to be the basis for ministry
- Cannot give it if you don't have it
- See **1 Cor 13:1-3 (ESV)** *(1) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. (2) And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (3) If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.*
- In these last days - let us do nothing for the Lord apart from His love in us!
- The world doesn't need more hypocrites - but needs to see the love behind everything we are and we do

Self control

- To live for the Lord is to die to oneself
- This is hard - to die
- But empowered by His Spirit

Applications

Don't be afraid

- This is the message today
- If you are away from the Lord - return. He receives, forgives and restores.
- Adam and Eve ran from him in the garden - but through Christ we run to him
- Beyond that - fear is not from the Lord - it is the enemy trying to hobble and hinder you
- What has made you afraid? Where has the enemy used fear to stop you?
- **Ask yourself:** what would you be doing for the Lord ... ***if you weren't afraid?***

Fan into flame

- This speaks to me. We have Gods' calling (go ye), but have allowed his fire to dim
- No longer bright and burning. He need the Spirit and gifts of God to be fanned into flame.
- Next week we will sing *Let the fire fall*
- We need this to kindle again to flame what God has put in us
- We have the potential for fire - but we must act on that
- We take responsibility for our spiritual condition
- **1 Thess 5:19 (ESV) (19) Do not quench the Spirit.**
- Are we quenching - or fanning?

God equips

- Whomesver God calls - he equips
- God has called each of us, and differently gifted us
- But we cannot do His will apart from His gifts
- He didn't place us into his harvest field without equipping us for the harvest
- Lord, make us aware of our gifts

Passing the torch

- One final thought - Paul was about to die
- But he had raised up and mentored Timothy so the faith would out live him
- Even here he's encouraging Timothy to continue in this work
- I believe Jesus is coming soon - but we must still *make disciples* and pass the torch of our faith along