**“Courage or Coward?”**

Sunday, April 26, 2020

Coronavirus video – Facebook Live

2 Timothy 1:7

As Proverbs 12:25 says: “Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.”

• Do you personally know people who are fearful right now because of the coronavirus or the circumstances brought on by this pandemic?

• If so, let’s take the words of Paul to heart as a reminder of who we are in Christ.

This morning we will look at the difference between a coward and the courageous and why the believer need not FEAR or be in the coward category.

• There are all different kinds of cowards, likewise,

• There are all kinds of courage.

• Have you ever truly been so scared, where you were shaking in your shoes?

Can you image Timothy and the courage it must have taken to step into Paul’s shoes, or follow Paul?

**In 2 Timothy….**

• Timothy is facing some real life or death, heaven or hell situations.

• He needed prayer, guidance and some heavenly wisdom from his mentor.

**Paul begins in: 2 Timothy 1:5**

I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

**1. Paul believed Timothy’s faith was sincere:**

In this letter, Paul reminds Timothy of the legacy of faith he inherited from the influence of his Jewish mother Eunice and grandmother Lois, both of whom were believers.

In 1 Timothy 1:2; Paul calls Timothy his “son in the faith” and so Paul can speak plainly to him about his situation.

**2 Timothy 1:6**

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.

**2. Paul believed Timothy was gifted by God:**

Because Paul was persuaded that Timothy possessed true faith, he urged young Timothy to fan into flame his God-given ability for ministry.

Now, right here you may be thinking (Roger, I am not a preacher, I am not ordained to preach the gospel. What does this have to do with me?

While it is true you may not have the same GIFT as Timothy but it is true that as a believer, you possess in you the call to follow Jesus; and same Holy Spirit as Timothy.

Paul told the Ephesians 4:4

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

• It seems as though Paul is attempting to instill “**COURAGE**” into Timothy with a reminder of his salvation, his ordination or calling.

• It almost seems as though Paul is encouraging Timothy to be **FAITHFUL**/even Courageous, possibly addressing some **FEARS** Timothy is facing. So Paul continues with his pep-talk to Timothy with verse 7:

**2 Timothy 1:7**

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid (a coward), but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

**3. Paul gives Timothy a call to courage:**

Here I like the Kings James Translation:

**2 Timothy 1:7** For God hath not given us the spirit of fear (a coward); but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

**a. The Spirit’s gift of power**

It is pointless for us to try to serve God without the power of the Holy Spirit. Talent, training, and experience cannot take the place of the Holy Spirit’s power.

The Greek word here for power is: dunamis, defined as force; spec. miraculous power usually implied as a miracle itself; meaning might power, strength. Do you feel spiritually strong today?

Paul is telling Timothy that this POWER lives in him by means of the Holy Spirit, and this is the same power as described in:

**Romans 8:11**

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you,

he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Selfishness leads to “**fear**” because, if we are selfish, we are only interested in what we will get out of serving God, and we will be afraid of losing what we selfishly desire (position, prestige, or influence).

**b. The Spirit’s gift of love**

When filled with the Spirit, true Christians have a love, strengthened by the Spirit that enables us to lovingly sacrifice for others and without fear.

• Think with me what the **EVIDENCE**; or the **FRUIT** of the Spirit gives the believer?

• Gal 5:22; “Love”

• And this Holy Spirit POWER in us gives us the ability to:

Love unselfishly, unconditionally, even supernaturally.

• If our lives offer that evidence of the Spirit’s power, love, and self-discipline, we can stand against our enemy and with COURAGE, we can boldly testify about our Lord.

**c. The Spirit’s gift of self-discipline**

The Holy Spirit gives believers the gift of self-control a word that is related to the words sober and sobriety.

“**Self-discipline**” can also be translated as “sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

Timothy did not need any new spiritual ingredients in his life; all he had to do was “stir up” what he already had.

Now he added, “Stir up—stir into flame—the gift of God.” The Holy Spirit does not leave us when we fail; but He cannot use us if we neglect the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

**So, how can we face the challenges/FEARS of today?**

Obviously, the answer is in God’s work in our lives through the miracle working power of the Holy Spirit!

For an example, let’s look at one of the most famous stories of all time in 1 Samuel 17 —David and Goliath.

Three thousand years ago, in the Valley of Elah, a 9 foot 9 inch Philistine warrior named “Goliath of Gath” stepped forward to taunt the army of Israel and its God. For forty days, he berated the Israelite warriors, heaping shame on them, but no Israelite soldier would accept his challenge to fight him in combat.

Not until a teenage Israelite shepherd boy named David showed up in the camp with some food for his brothers who served in Saul’s army. When David heard the giant ridicule the God of Israel, he was furious. So he took his sling, grabbed a few stones, hurled a stone square at the giants forehead, and then cut off the giants head.

**I. What did David have that the other Israelite soldiers didn’t? Faith!**

• While the Israelite soldiers saw a 9 ft, 9 inch undefeated giant; David saw the God of Israel who created the giant.

That day, in the valley of Elah, something we are still talking about 3,000 years later, only one person had power that led to victory for Israel – David!

**• What was the source of David’s courage? – The Holy Spirit!**

The Israelite soldiers had personally seen God do amazing things, but the men lacked courage to face Goliath because they personally lacked faith in God.

**II. David’s Faith in God gave him Confidence**

So what made David different? David’s courage was in God’s promises and God’s power to fulfill them.

David was not self-confident; he was God-confident.

**III. What’s the Source of Your Courage?**

Courage is always produced by faith, whether our faith is in God or something else.

For the Christian, a lack of courage, is what the writer of Hebrews calls “**shrinking back”** (Hebrews 10:37–38), and is always evident as a lack faith in a promises of God.

All of us experience some fear. David is so helpful for us because as we read the first 25 Psalms, we see that even David needed to encourage himself by remembering God’s promises.

**• How much courage do you have?**

“The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.” Proverbs 28:1

• **Coward or Courage?** Like Timothy, like David, you must possess the same miracle working - power of the Holy Spirit!

• Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to remind us that God is bigger than our FEARS!