

**RCMI L-Path Teaching**  
**April 16, 2023**

TITLE: EMPOWERED OVER FEAR

TEXT: 2 Timothy 1: 6-7

DATE: April 16, 2023

B.I.: Fear Is not of God and we have been empowered with the gifts of power, love, and self-discipline to be effective Christian witnesses.

Introduction

- As Christians, we're called to live lives that are distinctly different from the world. And one of the ways we can demonstrate that distinction is by overcoming the fear that seems to characterize the lives of so many today. The Apostle Paul speaks to this in our text today.
- <sup>6</sup>“This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. <sup>7</sup>For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” – 2Timothy 1: 6-7, NLT
- This was Paul's last letter, he was confined to a dank, dark prison cell in Rome, awaiting his execution. He knew his days were numbered and sent this last letter to Timothy to encourage him not to lose heart.
- Paul knew Timothy would be facing all kinds of difficult questions about the love and power of God. If a courageous and faithful man of power like Paul could be arrested, tried, and sentenced to death, what chance did a young man like Timothy have against similar charges?
- So Paul writes to encourage him and spur him on to not lose heart or faith. Let us see what Paul is saying to Timothy and what the Holy Spirit is saying to us.

**I. Be Encouraged By The Fact That Fear Is Not Of God. [v.7a]**

- This word for “fear” means *cowardice*. It's the kind of fear that hinders a person from doing what's right for fear of personal harm.
- Paul's concern was that Timothy would lose heart and abandon his post as pastor of the Church in Ephesus when he heard of Paul's imprisonment and sentence.
- Here's Timothy, living in the openly hostile city of Ephesus, and his main occupation is as a preacher of this scandalous message!?!? Furthermore, the man everyone knows has been his mentor is now considered to be a traitor to the Empire and a criminal sentenced to death!
- **“The Spirit you've been given is not the Spirit of fear.” “No – the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of power, a Spirit of love, and a Spirit who comforts and controls the mind.”**
- Paul sends Timothy this exhortation because he knows it's his *natural* inclination to become fearful in the face of difficulties. But he wants to remind him that being a Christian means moving *out of* the natural into the *supernatural*.
- The moment he was born again, he received a gift from God – the Holy Spirit who came to set up permanent residence within him.

## II. Be Empowered By The Gifts That God Has Already Given.

### A. Be Eager To Fan Into Flames The Gifts You've Received [v.6]

- Here Paul tells Timothy to fan the flame of the gift of God in his life. What that gift was is made clear in the next verse . . . **“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”**[v.7]
- The gift Paul's referring to was not the special calling to be a pastor or apostle, he means the gift of Timothy's *conversion* when he first came to faith in Christ.

### B. Be Expectant Of The Gifts Already Given

- Paul tells Timothy that when he was born again, God did not give to him a Spirit that brings fear – but that he DID receive a Spirit that brings power, love, and self-discipline!
  1. Spirit of Power
    - Rather than imparting a cowardly fear, the Holy Spirit who indwells Timothy provides *power*. This word was one of Paul's favorites. It's the Greek word *dunamis* from which we get our word *dynamic* and *dynamite*, it speaks of the kind of power that's able to do things in such a way that it's not exhausted or used up.
  2. The Spirit of Love
    - The Holy Spirit is also the *Spirit of Love*. 'Love' is agape– the kind of love that comes from God alone. It's a concern for others that moves us to seek their best with no thought of personal reward. It's God's love for us and is demonstrated on the Cross!
  3. The Spirit of Self-Discipline
    - Followers of Jesus do not need to be a slave to anything. Through the power of God, we can break free from the things that once ruled our lives. We don't need to be tossed around by our impulses; we can live in the freedom God has for us.

### How Should We Respond to Fear?

- The Bible presents a simple three-fold response to fear in your life. You need to cast, fill and trust.
  1. Cast
    - Everything you fear, everything you are worried about, everything that makes you anxious or nervous, give it all to Jesus.
  2. Fill
    - The disciples overcame their fear not by trying harder but by getting more. They were constantly being filled with power and strength from the Holy Spirit allowing them to overcome every fear they could ever have.
  3. Trust
    - Learn to trust God through the process. He has promised that even if you walk through the fire, you will not be burned. Regardless of how great the opposition may be God be with you and you will not be overcome. He can be trusted.

### CHALLENGE

- **F.E.A.R. is an acronym for *False Evidence Appearing Real*.** F.E.A.R. is an illusion. Something we fabricate in our minds and pretend is real.

- ***What IS Real:*** Jesus Christ is Lord over all! In His death He defeated sin and in His resurrection He conquered death!

#### DISCUSSION

1. Based on the message, how are we to respond to fear?
2. What kind of fear do you have in your life? Do you have any testimony to share that demonstrates the truth of what we have learned today?