

"I am not ashamed" 2 Timothy 1

Proposition: Don't be scared to use the gifts that God HAS given you. God has not given you fear, He has given you Power, love and self control.

How many of you watch the Fear Factor on TV occasionally?

I do. I enjoy the stunts that they have to do and I cringe at the live spiders and bugs and decaying stuff they have to eat. And always at the end the presenter says to the winner; Congratulations on winning the \$50,000 obviously fear is not a factor for you.

Right now our young people have the opportunity to invite their friends to youth group and to Easter camp. Daily each one of us has the opportunity to pray for the sick person at work or University, to prophesy over someone, to share our faith with someone and the issue is for all of us is this, is fear a factor for us. Or are we scared of embarrassing ourselves, or doing some harm, or being judged as religious nuts.

I see so many of our teens and young adults with such giftedness and leadership gifting. Our young people in this church are hugely gifted by the Holy Spirit but will they use those gifts? Will they step out boldly and speak and serve and witness or is the fear factor holding them back?

If you are a Christian, regardless of your age, God has given each one of us gifts. Are we scared to use them, is fear a factor for us?

For the next month we are going through Paul's second letter to Timothy, a young, godly, but shy man, and Paul who is on death row as he writes this letter, the last letter he will ever write anyone, wants fear to not be a factor for Timothy and for Timothy to boldly start stepping out in faith and not ashamed of the gospel message, or God's call and gifting on his life.

The greatest danger I face in my life is probably from eating too much butter chicken or from the duct tape falling off my boat. I am not like Paul in any significant way except; I believe that God has gifted our young people and this church family so profoundly and fear of being shamed out, or shyness, or timidity, call it what you will, is standing in the way of you and I using our God given gifts boldly and supernaturally changing our world.

Let me explain this chapter verse by verse and as I do I pray that the Holy Spirit will take Paul's words to his protégé Timothy, challenging Timothy to step out in Power and love and self-control; I pray that as we hear these words to Timothy, God would speak to us.

Here's the context of our letter:

On Paul's first missionary journey he came across this young man Timothy who had seen faith lived out at home through his Godly mother and his Godly Grandmother. In his interactions with Timothy God uses Paul to develop Timothy's faith significantly and Paul begins to feel like a spiritual dad to Timothy.

On his second missionary journey Paul encounters Timothy again and this time he recognises what God is developing in this young man and Paul wants to invest his time into mentoring and

developing Timothy's faith and ministry and so he takes some risks with him and takes him on a mission's trip with him.

The first time Paul had been imprisoned in Rome he had been under house arrest; kind of like having an ankle band on him. There was still a lot of freedom for people to come and go and to live reasonably comfortably.

After his second missionary trip he returned again to Rome and church historians say that Paul shared the gospel with Caesar Nero. Again church historians say that it was after he rejected the Good News about Jesus and had Paul thrown in a deep, dark, damp dungeon that Nero began to go completely insane.

In July of AD 65 he set Rome on fire and watched it burn while he played the fiddle on his deck. His plan was to become known as the great architect of the Roman rebuild. The problem was most people thought that Nero had ordered the fires and so he needed a scapegoat, so as the anger mounted in the community Nero said; "It wasn't me. Do you know why those Christians call themselves the light of the world? Well it's because they are a bunch of arsonists. And they drink blood and eat flesh, bleating cannibals, and ...they are always talking about loving one another. You know what that means. And so the persecutions started. Nero went totally insane.

Paul was back in confinement but now it's the worst of the prisons. He has only a few days to live. He's looking forward to heaven. He's full of praise for God and he wants that young man he has mentored and loves like a son to do well and so he writes this last letter to him.

2 Timothy 1

¹From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus.

God himself chose me to be an apostle, and he gave me the promised life that Jesus Christ makes possible.

²Timothy, you are like a dear child to me. I pray that God our Father and our Lord Christ Jesus will be kind and merciful to you and will bless you with peace!

³Night and day I mention you in my prayers. I am always grateful for you, as I pray to the God my ancestors and I have served with a clear conscience. ⁴I remember how you cried, and I want to see you, because that will make me truly happy. ⁵I also remember the genuine faith of your mother Eunice. Your grandmother Lois had the same sort of faith, and I am sure that you have it as well. ⁶So I ask you to make full use of the gift that God gave you when I placed my hands on you. Use it well. ⁷God's Spirit doesn't make cowards out of us. The Spirit gives us power, love, and self-control. ⁸Don't be ashamed to speak for our Lord. And don't be ashamed of me, just because I am in jail for serving him. Use the power that comes from God and join with me in suffering for telling the good news.

⁹God saved us and chose us to be his holy people. We did nothing to deserve this, but God planned it because he is so kind. Even before time began God planned for Christ Jesus to show kindness to us.

¹⁰Now Christ Jesus has come to show us the kindness of God. Christ our Savior defeated death and brought us the good news. It shines like a light and offers life that never ends.

¹¹My work is to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher. ¹²That's why I am suffering now. But I am not ashamed! I know the one I have faith in, and I am sure that he can guard until the last day what he has trusted me with. ¹³Now follow the example of the correct teaching I gave you, and let

the faith and love of Christ Jesus be your model. ¹⁴You have been trusted with a wonderful treasure. Guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit, who lives within you. ¹⁵You know that everyone in Asia has turned against me, especially Phygelus and Hermogenes.

¹⁶I pray that the Lord will be kind to the family of Onesiphorus. He often cheered me up and wasn't ashamed of me when I was put in jail. ¹⁷Then after he arrived in Rome, he searched everywhere until he found me. ¹⁸I pray that the Lord Jesus will ask God to show mercy to Onesiphorus on the day of judgment. You know how much he helped me in Ephesus.

I want you to notice several things about this passage.

Paul was in a horrible place waiting to be beheaded. What is he doing? Is he moaning? Is he complaining that God has allowed him to suffer too much? Is he bored? No, he is making the best use of time anyone of us can do.

1. PAUL PRAYED NIGHT AND DAY FOR TIMOTHY

Have you ever felt that life was really tough? Have you ever been doing a boring job that didn't challenge you at all? What opportunity do you have at that point? The most powerful thing you can do in this life is to pray. If you pray in your prayer language you will get powered up from God and tune into God. And if you intercede for others you begin to move the hand that moves the world.

Paul didn't get downhearted. Instead he is looking forward to the promised life as he said in verse two and he became a co-labourer with God.

Last week I visited one of my favourite people Vera Newman in hospital. She has been there for around a month and medical people have often said to her, today could be your last day. As I talked to her about the church and family, several times she just reached out her hand, grabbed mine and committed it to the Lord. Later on she said to me, "Russell, the Lord will take me home when he wants to but I don't understand why he hasn't already, I'm ready."

I said "Vera. You are a woman of prayer and action. God doesn't act supernaturally unless someone prays. Maybe there aren't enough Vera's in the world for you to go home yet."

He prayed day and night for this young man that he had encouraged in ministry and mentored practically. He chose the best way to use his time.

The second thing that I want you to notice about this passage is that he recognised that:

2. TIMOTHY HAD RECEIVED HIS GENUINE FAITH AT HOME

Timothy is one of the few people that the bible describes as a truly godly man. Now I think young Tim had issues. When Paul left him the second time he cried and said "Paul don't go." He had stomach problems from feeling stressed and so Paul tells him to drink a little wine each day. Timothy is really shy and so as we read this morning Paul tells him not to be a coward, to speak up, and use his gifts, and not to let fear be a factor.

But Paul saw in Timothy real faith, faith that God can use; faith that pleases God and so he invested his time into this young man with his issues because Tim had real faith. Where did he get that faith from?

He had it modelled for him by his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois.

Grandparents, mums and dads, if you want your children to do well, the greatest gift you can ever give them is a godly heritage and coach them in their relationship with Jesus. The greatest gift you can give them is faith and no-one in the world will do it better than you.

Paul said “Tim, you are a real man of God, and I saw that genuine faith in mum and grandmum as well.”

3. **TIMOTHY WASN'T USING HIS GIFT BECAUSE FEAR WAS A FACTOR FOR HIM.**

Timothy knows that when he received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as Paul prayed for him that God gave him the ability to preach and teach but... he thought;

What if people think I am useless?

What if they think I am a religious nut?

What if they think that I am pious and arrogant?

What if I say something stupid?

What if I give a word of knowledge and no one responds?

What if I bring a message in tongues and no one interprets?

Paul sees God's gifting in Timothy as we do in each other and in those we mentor and he knows that Tim's world changing gifts are being blocked by his fear, and his shyness.

I wonder how many Timothy's are sitting here today. How many of us know God has given us gifts that could really change the world around us but what if...

4. **GOD'S SPIRIT DOESN'T MAKE US COWARDS. THE SPIRIT GIVES US POWER, LOVE, AND SELF-CONTROL.**

Timothy, young adults, family at Ranui Baptist Church, we need to remember who we are and who we have been given. As we invite the Holy Spirit to fill us daily, as we pray in our prayer language God begins to impart into us boldness, power, a supernatural love and self control.

Fear, timidity, and shyness is not part of Gods plan for you if those things are getting in the way of you stepping out in faith and being who you are called to be. God has prepared good works for each of us to walk in and fear cannot be a factor for us. We have to oppose it. We received like Timothy the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We can't get comfortable and retreat behind what if... like cowards. This is our generation or whisper of a short life to live and we need to power up and move out of our shells.

5. **PAUL IS A PREACHER THAT IS SOME ONE WHO EXPLAINS SALVATION TO THE PRE-CHRISTIAN.**
PAUL IS AN APOSTLE - AN EMBASSADOR FOR JESUS, A SENT OUT ONE.
PAUL IS A TEACHER – SOMEONE WHO EXPLAINS THE BIBLE TO BUILD UP BELIEVERS.

From my perspective of churches in the West, people are getting lots of preaching, good messages of salvation and inspiring topical sermons, but what the church needs most is teaching. The Church needs people who won't focus on their favourite topics but preach the full council of the Word giving Gods' full perspective in the right portions at the right time.

6. PAUL SAYS TO TIMOTHY “DON’T BE ASHAMED OF OUR LORD.”

Teenagers and young adults, you have been raised in a relativistic world. Everyone is telling you that there is no ultimate truth, there is no one-way. It’s whatever works for you, it’s all the same anyway they say (it’s the theology of the end times). In today’s culture there is more reason than ever before to think that people might think you are weird. I say with Paul do not be ashamed of the Lord. Do not be ashamed of the gospel it is the power of God to salvation.

The older I get the more amazed I get about the power of the spoken word of God. When Christians speak scripture, or a prophetic word or an inspired word to non-believers God turns up and starts working in the hearts of those people. You don’t need to make any apologies for being a Christian or for going against the trend and believing there is only one way – Jesus. It’s the truth and the words you speak out in faith will not return to you empty, they will achieve the things that God purposed them to achieve.

7. PAUL KNEW THE “ONE” HE HAD FAITH IN

Ask yourself this question: Does philosophies and theology and knowing lots of facts about God really help when you are in a deep, dark dungeon experience in life? I don’t think it helps much at all. But knowing the One in whom you trust, talking to Him, hearing His voice, sensing His presence, recalling His faithfulness, knowing the One in whom you trust really does make a difference because you hit the dungeon experience and you are able to say well Jesus, I don’t know what is going on, but I am not stressed, you are with me and I am just going to pray night and day and worship because I trust you.

Everyone intuitively, at least when they are young, knows that there is a God, a creator. Many have read books and had experiences but do they really know the One in whom they have faith in. If you are here this morning and you are unsure of how to do that pick up a free DVD from the foyer on “How to Connect with God” and contact one of us for a coffee some time soon.

This chapter ends with Paul reminding Timothy how the people in modern day Turkey turned against him and the worse two were Phygelus and Hermogenes.

And he reminds Tim of a man who was not timid, was not ashamed of Paul or the gospel a man called Onesiphorus as an inspirational model.

If fear is a factor for you, if you know you have received gifts but you are not stepping out in obedience to the Lord and making a kingdom impact yet, then today young adults, today church, don’t neglect the gift that is in you, the gift that will invigorate your walk with the Lord.

Fear, timidity is a trespasser.

Stir up the gift. Pray in tongues. Receive from your Heavenly Father, power and love and self control.

You don’t need to copy anyone. Just be who God has called you to be.

Like a lid that limits the capacity of a box, take fear off your life and do in this generation what God is calling you to do.