

Fan the Flame

2 Timothy 1:3-7

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. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

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. (2 Timothy 1:3-7)

I. Does the fire of Christian faithfulness need to be fanned into a flame in your life today?

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Physical problems:

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No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments. (1Tim.5:23).

John Calvin:

“He was plagued with constant headaches which hardly ever left him. The pain was so intense that many nights he could not sleep. He also had some kind of disease of the trachea which, when he spoke too much, caused him to spit blood. Several attacks of pleurisy prepared the way for consumption, of which he finally died.

He had acute hemorrhoids, the pain of which was unbearably increased by an internal abscess that would not heal. He had gallstones and kidney stones in addition to stomach cramps and wicked intestinal influenzas. To top it all off, he had acute arthritis. In one of his letters to a friend he said, “If only my condition were not a constant death struggle.”

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

(2 Cor.12:8-9a)

Personality/psychological/emotional issues:

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Timothy was shy/timid:

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. (2Tim.1:7)

When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. So let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him with the brothers. (1Cor. 16:10-11)

“My spirits were sunken so low that I could weep by the hour like a child, and yet I knew not what I wept for.”

- Charles Spurgeon

II. Will you ask God to help you fan your fire of Christian faithfulness into a flame right now?

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for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. (v.7)

... for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
(Phil.2:13)

“Because Timothy had genuine faith, Paul urged him to set it ablaze. The expression “fan into flame” describes the act of rekindling the embers of a dying fire. The command does not imply that Timothy had let his spiritual flame go out. It is an appeal for a continual, vigorous use of his spiritual gifts.

Rekindling his gifts would involve fervent prayer, obedience to God's Word, and demonstration of an active faith.”

– Tommy Lea