8-5-18 Message – Faith

2 Timothy 1: 5 – 8

 I am sure some of you if not all, have been camping at some point in your life. Spending time in the great outdoors, eating food cooked over an open fire, sitting around that same fire in the evening mesmerized by the flames, and waking up to the same fire in the morning.

 As children you may not have thought about how the fire kept burning all night or who got up in the early morning hours to feed and stoke the fire to keep it going strong till morning.

 Fire is used in Scripture to represent the presence and Holiness of God, His Spirit. In Luke 3: 16 John the Baptist spoke of One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with Fire.

 After ascending to Heaven, Jesus sent the Promised Gift, the Holy Spirit of God to the waiting disciples.

 *Acts 2: 2 – 4 2 Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. 3 Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. 4 And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.*

 God's Gift, His Holy Spirit is represented by tongues of Fire, the Fire of God. To live as God wants us to live, the indwelling of His Spirit is essential for the power needed to live Christlike in our world.

 In Galatians 3: 5 Paul asks *5 So then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law or by hearing with faith?*

So, what is the answer, through faith of course.

 Paul begins his second letter to Timothy with this greeting, *1 This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I have been sent out to tell others about the life he has promised through faith in Christ Jesus.*

 In our passage this morning Paul is writing to Timothy, a young pastor in Ephesus to encourage him to be faithful. Paul is in prison, possibly a cold dungeon in Rome, much harsher circumstances than his previous imprisonment. He is instructing Timothy to call believers back to the Scriptures and their faith in Christ Jesus.

 Realizing his death was imminent, Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 4: 6 – 8, *6 As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained* ***faithful****. 8 And now the prize awaits me— the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of His return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to His appearing.*

 Paul was encouraging Timothy and us to persevere in our faith with courage and confidence in the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

 2 Timothy was Paul's last word, his last letter, his last thoughts sent to his spiritual son, Timothy. A great deal of importance is placed on someone's last words or writings last will and testament, a death bed confession, or revelation.

 Paul was passing the torch of leadership to this young pastor and hoped to prepare him for the challenges and the blessings of Christian service.

 Paul wrote to encourage Timothy in his faith to endure the difficult days to come.

**1. Faith - Living and Sincere**

Greek word **(Without Hypocrisy)**

 *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.* NIV

 **A. Godly Upbringing**

 Paul wrote of the sincere faith living in Timothy's mother and grandmother they passed on to him.

 His Godly upbringing was no guarantee Timothy would grow a strong genuine faith, but Paul believed the influence of these family members led Timothy to accept Christ Jesus as Lord and receive the Living Spirit of God.

 Christian parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, friends… All have the call from God to pass their faith in Christ Jesus to every member of their families and all their friends.

 Nothing in this life has more **eternal value** than making sure our family and friends join us in Heaven for eternity.

 **B. Love Relationship**

 Just because your parents and/or grandparents have accepted Christ Jesus as Lord does not give you a free pass into heaven.

 A personal faith, a love relationship with Christ Jesus is necessary for salvation, eternity with God.

 Sometimes I am blown away by the conectedness of the Scripture. *1 Timothy 1: 5 The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.* NLT

 In both passages, 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy 1: 5 Paul emphasizes the importance of a living genuine faith in the believer's life. It is through God's gift of faith that we experience the power of God's Holy Spirit.

 Paul had traveled and worked with Timothy and knew the faith he possessed came from a strong intimate love relationship with Christ Jesus.

 Paul met Timothy during his second missionary journey and explains the connection in *Act 16: 1 - 3*

*1 Paul went first to Derbe and then to Lystra, where there was a young disciple named Timothy. His mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was a Greek. 2 Timothy was well thought of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium, 3 so Paul wanted him to join them on their journey.*

 By the time of this letter Paul and Timothy had been traveling together for a while, Timothy had been ordained by the Elders, and Paul was convinced of Timothy's trust in Christ Jesus.

 **C. Sincerely Trust God**

 Paul wrote in *2 Timothy 3: 15 You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus.*

 From experience Paul knew to trust God for everything in all circumstances as in *2 Corinthians 12: 9 – 10 Each time He said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. 10 That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

 Trusting God in all things gave Paul the boldness to proclaim the Gospel with confidence, a boldness he was instilling in Pastor Timothy.

**2. Faith – Gift through Holy Spirit**

 2 Timothy 1: 6 – 7 *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 the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.* NIV

 **A. Fan the Flames**

 Paul's reference to Timothy fanning into flames the Gift of God has to do with the Spirit of God, His presence in all who faithfully believe in Christ Jesus.

 Just like the camp fire at the beginning of the message, the flame of God's Spirit in you needs to be fed and stoked, the KJV says "stir up" to develop a holy boldness in sharing the Gospel of Christ.

 The Greek word used here for stir up, *anazopureo* means, "to rekindle afresh" or "to keep in full flame". Persistence in seeking God's presence through prayer, worship, and praise can help us keep the fire of our faith in Christ Jesus strong and boldly used to build up and serve the Body of Christ.

 The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit draws us to faith in Christ Jesus through repentance of our sins and surrender/trust in Jesus as Lord.

 Is the Fire of God, His Spirit dwelling in you? What are you doing to fan the flames?

 **B. Courageous**

 The letters Paul wrote to Timothy are full of encouragement from an older experienced Apostle to a younger seemingly timid pastor. Timothy had seen Paul endure great hardship and pain for witnessing to what Christ Jesus did for all of us.

 Have any of you faced situations where fear took over and you were held back from doing what you knew you were called to do?

 Paul wrote "*For God has* ***not*** *given us a spirit of fear and timidity"* to encourage Timothy and us to be courageous in our faith to witness for Christ Jesus.

 God gives each of us gifts to be used to build up and serve the body of Christ and it is our responsibility to use, develop, and nurture those gifts and boldly encourage others to do the same.

 **C. Gifts to Grow Gods' Kingdom**

 Paul goes on to list three spiritual gifts we receive from God power, love, and self-discipline.

 In his commentary on this passage David Guzik wrote, "God has given us a spirit of **power**: When we do His work, proclaim His word, represent His kingdom, we have all **His** power supporting us. We are safe in His hands.

 God has given us a spirit of **love**: This tells us a lot about the **power** He has given us. Many think of **power** in terms of how much we can control others; but Jesus’ power is expressed in how much we can love and serve others.

 On the night before the cross, in John 13: 3 is written *3 Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that He had come from God and would return to God.* – and what did Jesus do with all that power? He humbly washed His disciples’ feet.

 God has given us a **sound mind**: The ancient Greek word here had the idea of a calm, self-controlled mind, in contrast to the panic and confusion that comes in a fearful situation".

 *1 Timothy 4: 14 Do not* ***neglect*** *the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you.*

**3. Faith - Shared**

 Paul continues, *2 Timothy 1: 8 So never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord. And don’t be ashamed of me, either, even though I’m in prison for Him. With the strength God gives you, be ready to suffer with me for the sake of the Good News.*

 **A. Do Not Be Ashamed**

 Paul is restating what he wrote in Romans 1: 16 – 17, *16 For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes— the Jew first and also the Gentile. 17 This Good News tells us how God makes us right in His sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, “It is through faith that a righteous person has life.”*

 Paul is instructing Timothy and us to be an example of what genuine living faith looks like to the world. Not to be ashamed to share the truth and hope of the Gospel with everyone.

 **B. Share, Testify, and Witness**

 Paul writes in Romans 5: 1 -2 *1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.*

 God has given believers so many gifts, life He created us, His son saved, redeemed, and restored us, and His Living Holy Spirit guides, directs, and sustains us.

 The gift of faith is not given for us alone, to hide, and hoard. It is meant to be used for His Kingdom, to build up the Body of Christ.

 Testifying to how faith in Jesus Christ and receiving the Living Holy Spirit of God has transformed your life to Christlikeness has **eternal value**.

 **C. Faith - Eternal Value**

 Paul was compelled to convey the urgency of sharing your testimony and leading people to faith in Christ Jesus.

 No matter your circumstances persecution, imprisonment, or even the threat of death, giving others the opportunity to know Jesus personally and accept Him as Savior and Lord is the task Jesus gave us.

 *Matthew 28: 18 – 20* 18 Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

 We serve a living God who has given us the Gift of faith and the Living Spirit of God to share with others to fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples.

 Are you using God's gifts of faith and His Holy Spirit living in you to serve others and lead them to accept Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord?