

The Spirit of Intimidation Part III

“For he did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear) but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”

II Timothy 1:7

We have been looking at what diffuses our spiritual gifts. It is so interesting that after an awesome service where the Lord touches our lives we can go out from there and run headlong into a world of intimidation. At the close of service a couple weeks ago I challenged us to share our God-story or our faith with one person during the week. I asked for a show of hands the next week of who took that opportunity and all I caught were five hands. I probably missed some, but in truth, it is intimidating to share our faith. I get intimidated too. Intimidation is a barrier in the mind. I was in a class two Saturdays ago and the man teaching said that we will do what we believe. If we believe that the mountain is too high we will not climb it. If we believe in God, but fear a bad outcome when sharing our faith, we will refrain from doing so. If we say, “I’m not an Evangelist,” then we will leave all the sharing to the folks who believe they can evangelize. The word “evangelism” comes from the Greek word meaning to share a good message or good news. Every day we have an opportunity to share a good report with others. When they say that the economy is a mess and we are headed for a depression, we can say; “That may be true but I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

The word “timidity” is best translated “dread or fear”. In our last devotional we were looking at another place that this word is used. It is when the disciples were in a boat with Jesus and a powerful storm hit the lake while they were in the middle of it. Jesus is asleep in the boat and when the disciples wake him up he rebukes them for not having faith. Faith in God is the weapon for intimidation. After Jesus rebukes them for having little faith and being afraid he gets up and rebukes the wind and the waves and it becomes completely calm. Twelve disciples stood there in their soggy sandals and could barely say a thing. Someone mustered up the courage to blurt out, “What kind of man is this?” That is a good question. What kind of man is Jesus? When you face intimidation from ungodly sources or a big windy trial, what kind of man is your Savior? Is he there? Is he able? Do you really believe that? Here is the test. You will do what you believe...

Jesus was not worried about the wind and the waves. He would have ridden out the storm and gotten to the other side. But his disciples were in a panic, just as you and I would be in the middle of a crisis when we could be using our gifts. Here is what I have seen among mature believers who have been churching for 5, 10, 15, 20 plus years. Many are not using spiritual gifts on the outside of the church, in our homes, at work, at the ball game, in the supermarket. When I talk to folks they say that they believe in the gifts of God listed in I Cor. 12 and Romans 12 but do not use them. Some tell me that they used to use them. Some still do not have enough faith that they can actually access a supernatural gift. What would Jesus say to us? Would he look at us and say; “Why do you have such little faith?” I am very challenged by this passage in Matthew 8:23-27. I have read it a lot through my spiritual journey. I have wondered why Jesus would give such a strong rebuke to his disciples. He is basically saying to them, “You should know better by now. All things are possible for him who believes.”

I have also heard some amazing testimonies from some folks who are picking up the challenge and sharing their faith and using the gifts. How faithful the Lord is! Do you believe it is the Lord’s will for you to, “Go for Him, re-presenting Christ and reflecting His Kingdom on earth?” You will do what you believe.