

THIS AIN'T NO TIME FOR WIMPS

2ND TIMOTHY 1:7

For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Introduction

There is a marked contrast between Paul's first and second letter to Timothy. When Paul first wrote to Timothy, he was on the road hoping to visit Ephesus. The first letter focused on the church and is a kind of church administrative manual for a young pastor. At the writing of the second letter tough times had befallen both Paul and Timothy. Now Paul is in prison waiting the executioner's axe. Timothy is experiencing all kinds of trouble and confusion in the congregation he was pastoring at Ephesus. The second letter focused almost entirely on Timothy's mindset and behavior. Paul addressed Timothy in a very personal way. The purpose of the second letter is to charge Timothy to persevere in the ministry, to not give up, nor let the heretics and other trouble makers intimidate him. Paul gave Timothy a dose of tough love. He did not pamper him. He challenged Timothy. The mood is like a father giving his grown son a stern lecture. If Paul were speaking in today's vernacular, he might put it this way: "The Spirit of God does not make us timid; The Holy Spirit gives us power, love and good judgement. Stop whining like a wimp. This ain't no time for wimps. Man up, put on your big boy pants, and learn to deal with your challenges. You call yourself a pastor- so start acting like one." This message is true for everyone-not just for a young pastor. This message has more relevance today than perhaps ever. There is racial unrest, blatant police misconduct, senseless shootings in our own neighborhoods, political polarization, a pandemic, high unemployment, road rage, and the list goes on. I say again, this is no time for wimps. We must hold fast to our faith. During these difficult times we must be led by the Holy Spirit and use good judgement. We must always demonstrate the love of Jesus. Let's perform a quick exegesis of this verse.

Exposition

1. The Spirit Gives Us Courage-not Cowardice

(Courage Is Not Aggression-Sometimes We Get Them Confused)

2. The Spirit Gives Us Power

(To Endure Pain in All of Its Forms)

(To Survive Disappointment)

(To Overcome Discouragement)

3. The Spirit Gives Us Love

(Power without Love is Ruthless)
 (Love without Power Can't Get Anything Done)
 (Timothy Had Become Resentful of the People He Was Leading)

4. The Spirit Gives Us a Sound Mind

("Saintly Sanity")
 (Our Minds Can Control Our Bodies and Our Emotions)
 (We Must Keep a Cool Head and a Compassionate Heart)
 (We Must Commingle Faith with Reason)
 (We Must Commingle Technology with Tradition)

5. We Must Remain Appreciative Through It All

(It May Be Bad, but It Could Be A Lot Worse)

Closing Thoughts

Let me quote an old aphorism: "Tough times don't last, but tough people do." God can make us tough and tender at the same time. Now let me quote Galatians 6:9: "And let us not be weary in well doing" for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Stay Safe! Stay Strong! Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Related Scripture

1st Corinthians 16:10
 Romans 8:15

Theological/ Linguistic Note:

The English phrase "sound mind" does not provide the original Greek with "translational justice." The word implies many things. It implies self-control. It implies rational thought. The image is of an athlete who keeps his/her cool no matter what happens during the contest. It is used to describe a soldier who maintains his/her composure in the heat of battle. The word is "*sophronismos*." It is a concatenation of two words: "Sozo" which means to save or to maintain and "phren" which simply means mind.

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