



The following is the summary of the Sunday sermon that is sent to the body at Steadfast in an email called "The Weekly"

2 Timothy 1:1-7

My Responsibility With God's Gifts

We know from Acts 27-28 that Paul was on house arrest in Rome for two years. While we are not certain of all the details, piecing together what we do know, it is likely that Paul was released from prison in Rome and traveled throughout the Mediterranean desiring to bring stability to the churches. After some time in Crete, he left Titus there to continue the work. After a brief time in Ephesus, he left Timothy there to continue the work. During his travels, somewhere around AD 64-65, he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. He was rearrested by Rome in AD 67 and from prison wrote 2 Timothy before he was executed. By the time Paul was rearrested, the environment towards Christians had changed. Emperor Nero had become ruthless towards Christians. The church was under attack from the Roman Empire. Paul knows his time on earth is short. Who was on his mind? Timothy! Paul wanted to see the church of Jesus Christ flourish after he was gone. He knew for that to happen key leaders like Timothy would need to persevere in faithful ministry while in some incredibly challenging circumstances. In the midst of suffering, Paul wanted Timothy to fulfill the ministry God had given him. 2 Timothy was the last letter in the Bible that Paul wrote. In chapter 1:1-7, Paul encourages, affirms, and challenges Timothy. He calls Timothy his beloved (object of ones affection, one who is loved) child. Even though in prison, Paul says that he thanks God night and day as he remembers Timothy. He longs to see Timothy because he knew Timothy's presence would fill him with joy. Paul affirms Timothy's sincere faith and spiritual heritage. Then, he tells Timothy to "kindle afresh" (stir up, fan into flames, keep ablaze) the gift of God that was in him. Paul also reminds Timothy that the Holy Spirit that lives inside of him is not a Spirit of timidity, but of power, love, and a sound mind. As quality of a man as Timothy was, he was still human and he needed encouragement. We get the impression from Paul's letters to Timothy that he was easily discouraged and that he had physical ailments he had to deal with.

The opening of this letter would have been a tremendous encouragement to Timothy. As you seek to apply this passage to your life, ask yourself these questions:

- **Is encouraging others a priority in my life?** Encouragement starts with you personally having a spirit of gratitude (thanksgiving). Are you developing a thankful heart or a critical heart? Is the environment in your home characterized by criticism or thankfulness? Encouragement involves praying for people and affirming people.
- **Are you “kindling afresh” (stirring up) who God has made you to be?** God has a ministry for you to fulfill. He also has a ministry for the local church to fulfill. It glorifies the Father when we are participating in the work which He has for us. There’s a variety of gifts represented in this body. Are you honing the talents and abilities God has given you? Are you getting to know Him through His Word? Are you in regular fellowship with people who challenge your faith. Are you getting the rest, time away, and refreshment you need so that you maintain perspective and the fire stays hot?
- **Am I living in the flesh or in the power of the Holy Spirit?** Allowing your flesh to control you will lead to selfishness, fear, self doubt, pride, and no real lasting impact spiritually. Allowing the Holy Spirit to control you will lead to power, love, and a sound mind. Will I choose to surrender to the flesh or the Holy Spirit?

Pastor Matt