

# God's Succession Planning

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[ 0 : 00 ] A pleasure for me to be with you and it's also a privilege to gather to worship God and with us and God will bless His Word to us as we do worship Him together.! We're going to begin our worship by singing to God's praise from Psalm 105 at the beginning of that Psalm.

And we're singing from verse 1 to the verse mark 7. Psalm 105 at verse number 1. Give thanks to God, call on His name, to men His deeds make known.

Sing it to Him, sing psalms, proclaim His wonders, works each one. See that He in His holy name to glory do accord and let the heart of everyone rejoice that seeks the Lord.

From verse 1 to verse mark 7 to God's praise. Give thanks to God, call on His name.

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Him, sing it to Him, sing it to Him, sing it to Him, sing it to Him, sing it to Him, sing it to Him,  
In His holy name, His holy new accord.

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[ 1 : 35 ]      And let the hearts of everyone rejoice and sing the Lord.

The Lord Almighty, on His strength, with strength, my heart's heart, see He.

His rest lay down His gracious face, taking continually.

Thank God the works that He hath done, which not many shun bleed.

His one version of judgmental, which from His mouth proceeds.

[ 3 : 02 ] For He hath done all the countries, His heaven well-alonged.

And He hath made our children, and He holds all His own.

Because He and He only is the mighty Lord of God.

And His most righteous judgments are. In hope we earn alone.

Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. Almighty and most gracious God, rejoice in Your Word as we gather together to worship Your name.

[ 4 : 30 ] Amen. We are reminded to give thanks to You. And help us today by giving to us a sincere heart before You.

So that in coming to worship You, we may give through thanks. Thanks for the great God that You are. Thanks for the wondrous works that You have done.

And thanks for the promises that we have before us in Your Word. And help us to rejoice in Your presence today.

As those who firmly believe, not only that You exist, but that You are working in our hearts and in our lives. By the power of Your Holy Spirit.

Because of what Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has done. Because of what He did in the life that He lived. Because of what He achieved by the death that He died.

[ 5 : 32 ] And because of that glorious day of His resurrection. When the tomb was found to be empty. And when it is written that death was not able to hold Him.

That He rose with power on the third day. That He is installed at Your right hand. That He is King of kings and Lord of lords. That all authority in heaven and earth belongs to Him.

We come to You today in His name. We are thankful that He is our Saviour. We are thankful that He is the head of the church.

We are thankful for the great promise given in the Gospel of Matthew. That on this rock I will build my church. And the gates of heaven will not prevail against it.

Help us, O Lord God, today in our worship. To discover and to come to know that we belong to You. Help us with Your Holy Spirit working in our hearts.

[ 6 : 40 ] Giving us to know and to see. That You have brought us from darkness to light. That You have taken us from the kingdom of Satan to God.

And that You have given us the great honour and privilege of knowing You as our Father. And of being the children of God. We give thanks to You today that Your Word reminds us so clearly.

That we are saved by grace alone. And we rejoice in that news today. That You are the one who saves. Because we cannot save ourselves.

And Your Word has highlighted as we have sung it together. The blessing, the privilege of seeking You continually. And we pray that You will give to all of us in Your presence here today.

A heart that desires You. A heart that hungers after You. And a heart that realises that we are indeed saved by Your grace alone.

[ 7 : 45 ] And we pray that if there is anyone gathered with us who thinks otherwise. Who thinks that they may be saved by the things that they are doing. And by stopping doing the things that they were doing.

We pray for a special light for such. That You will shine into their hearts. Confirm to them that they can do nothing without You.

And help them to see that all that You have done in Christ Jesus, O Lord. Is sufficient for our salvation. And that through faith in Him alone we shall be saved today.

And through faith in Him alone. Will we enter the glory of Paradise. At the end of our journey. Through this world. And at the end of time. So bless us as we do worship You.

We do give thanks to You for all that have gathered. And we pray blessing to be upon each and every one. We give thanks to You for old and young alike. We reflect on Your people here.

[ 8 : 49 ] And we recognise that with the passage of time. There is the passage of a generation. We think of those who have gone before. And at last you are called to be with yourself.

We give thanks to You for every memory of them. And we give thanks to You for families. For young and old here today. Who are following them as a generation.

And we pray for each and every one here. That they may follow You as their Lord. That they may walk in the footsteps of those. Who are a people of great faith.

And may they know what it is day by day. In their own hearts. Even from their early years. The blessing of faith in Your name. Of knowing Your Son as Saviour.

And knowing where it is to sense their need to follow You. And to serve You. To be the light of the world. And the salt of the earth. And to continue the light of the Gospel.

[ 9 : 51 ] And the witness of the Gospel. In this community we do pray. Bless the whole community we do ask. Every home, every heart and life. All are known to You.

Today, wherever they are before You. And we pray, O Lord God. That You will reach beyond our worship here today. That You will reach out. And touch the hearts. Of those who are far from You.

And of those who have no thought after You. We pray Your mercy and Your grace for them. Bless those connected to the congregation. Who may be unwell. Bless those who mourn in grave.

Bless those who are confined through illness. We commit them to Your care. And we pray that You will give to all such a sense of Your presence with them.

And especially for Your people in their confinement. May they know that You are their Lord of God. And may they sense Your shepherding of them. Every moment of the isolation that comes because of their affliction.

[ 10 : 51 ] May they know that You are God. The God who is with them. We pray Your blessing to be upon the evening communities. And the wider island community. We commit to You all today. Do mourn and grieve in the evening communities and beyond.

And we pray Your comforting presence for them. Give them to know the rest that comes from Your embrace. And cause those whose hearts are broken today to sense them.

You are the God who can restore and who can give a strength to them. In the midst of the burden and the weight of grief. We commit all to Your care. Bless Your word as it is preached across all of our communities today.

We do thanks to You for faithful ministry. Give thanks to You for the gospel. As it does go out and pray that You will accompany it with power. And that You will make Your name great by building up Your kingdom.

Adding to the number of Your people. And blessing Your people today as they gather for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We remember them before you also pray Your blessing to be upon them. And what we seek for ourselves.

[ 11 : 56 ] We remember the nation to which we belong. The great need that we have of Your intervention. Of Your hand to come in and to work in the midst. To rescue us and to deliver us from the course that we have taken away from You.

And to turn us to You once more. That as our people may come to acknowledge You as our God. And put our trust in You. So You can go to them and grace from You. For all of our leaders and all of those that are in authority.

That they may rule over us with Your fear in their hearts. And bless the nation of the earth. We pray for peace to be restored. We pray for an end to conflict and war and strife.

We pray for an end to oppression of people in different parts of the world. And we pray today for the witness of Your church across the world. May it be owned by You and blessed by You.

For the encouragement of Your people. And for the salvation of those perhaps who are the greatest enemies of Your church. May Your light so shine upon them.

[ 13 : 01 ] And cause them to fall down at Your food store. Bless all we gather today. We give thanks to You for our children. We give thanks to You for the Sunday school. And we pray that You will bless in their teaching.

May they come to understand You as their God. And come to know Your Son as their Saviour. And may their young lives be so enriched with Your blessing. And may all that they hear and all that they are taught.

Be truly inscribed in their hearts. By Your hand upon their lives. And bless those who teach them. We give thanks to You for them also. And pray that You will bless every aspect of ministry amongst our young people.

In a day that is difficult in so many ways. For them to manage and to live through. We pray that You will be gracious to them. We ask You presently to be with us.

As we continue before You now. Your blessing upon Your Word. As we continue to sing from it. And as we continue to read and study together. May Your hand be upon us. May You keep us from anything that would distract us.

[ 14 : 01 ] And may Your mercy upon us we pray. For we pray all of these things. For the forgiveness of our sins. For Jesus' sake. Amen. Well boys and girls it's really good to see your church today.

It's always a joy to see the boys and girls in church. And today our Bible message is coming from a letter that Paul wrote to a man called Timothy.

Timothy was a really young lad. And Paul wanted to encourage him. And he wanted especially to give him to know the Lord Jesus as a Saviour. And to remember the things that he had learned at home.

And it's very important for us to do that. And I want us to think about that. And I just wanted to think about three different things. And the first thing. The other note P. So it should be easy to remember. The first is the problem.

And if I was going to ask you what was the biggest problem that we came across this week. I wonder what you would say. I think the biggest problem that we came across this week was that Heathrow Airport.

[ 15 : 06 ] The biggest airport in the country was actually closed down. There were no flights able to come in. And no flights could go out.

So we had all of these people that travelled to London and wanted to go somewhere special. They had chosen where they wanted to go. But on this day they arrived and the airport was closed.

So there were 1,300 flights that couldn't fly. There were 200,000 passengers that couldn't go anywhere. That's a real big problem. They couldn't get where they wanted to go.

I want us to think of that because for you and for me we're just like Paul and Timothy. We want to be the children of God. We want to be in God's family and kingdom.

And we want to go to heaven. But the problem is that we cannot go ourselves. We simply cannot do it. And the Bible tells us that in so many different ways we have a problem.

[ 16 : 09 ] We know where we want to go. But we cannot go by ourselves. And the second thing I want you to remember is that it was a power problem.

In other words, the lights went out. There was a fire in an electric station. And because of that fire there was what we call a power outage.

The power stopped running into Heathrow. And all the computer systems, all of the security systems, all of the air traffic control systems, all of them stopped working.

There was nothing to guide planes coming in. There was nothing to guide planes going out. There was nothing to check that all the passengers were secure. It was a power problem.

And when we read the Bible, that's what Jesus tells us. That we are in darkness. That we need him who is the light.

[ 17 : 09 ] That we have no power. That we are weak. That we can't do nothing. That we are living in darkness. And again, in different ways, the Bible wants us to understand that as much as we want to go to heaven and be the children of God, the Bible wants us to understand that we are in darkness.

That we have no power. And that we cannot go by ourselves. So, second thing. And the third thing is, a power up. The lights come back on.

And after the fire began to control the fire. After everything was sorted in a national grid. Fed power into Heathrow. So, the lights come back on. And then flights can go and come.

And passengers can go where they want to go. The power has been restored. Because Heathrow was reconnected with the national grid. And that's what Jesus does for us today.

If we believe in his name. We have no power unless we believe in the Lord Jesus. And there was a lady who came to Jesus. And she was sick. And she knew if she touched the garment of Jesus that she would be better.

[ 18 : 22 ] And she did that. And you know what Jesus said to her? Who touched me? Because I know that power went out from me. The power was in Jesus.

She was healed. And when she made herself known to Jesus. She said that your faith has made you whole. So, the power that you and I need today.

To get us into the kingdom of God. Into the family of God. And into heaven. Is the power that we can have by believing in the Lord Jesus. And coming to know him as our saviour.

And with his promise. He is the light of the world. And if we follow him. We will not walk in darkness. But we will have light. So, remember the problem.

We can't get to heaven by ourselves. Remember the problem is we don't have power. And remember that we have power in Jesus. And if we believe in his name. Then we will have light.

[ 19 : 18 ] And he will keep us safe. And we will travel through the world. And he will take us into heaven at last. Thank you for listening. So, we are now going to sing Psalm number 78.

It is a psalm that speaks about the importance of families. Learning the word of God. And remembering what they have learned. And passing that on to other generations.

Psalm 78. And at verse number 5. And we are going to sing to verse number 8. His testimony and his law. In this real heated place.

And charge of fathership to show. To their succeeding race. From verse 5 to verse number 8. To God's praise. His testimony and his law.

In this real heated place. And charge of fathership to show.

[ 20 : 26 ] To their succeeding race. That's all the rich which was to come.

By twins and earth and old. And sons and born.

Who should God rise. Might do their sons and show.

But they might set that hope in God. And suffer not to fall.

His mighty want. Don't talk their mind But keep its precepts on And might not lie Yet another tree A stippling bed of spirits A wish not right His heart will not Her stead of stead was born We'll start together now to hear and to read the word of God from the New Testament from the second epistle of Paul to Timothy and chapter number one.

[ 22 : 25 ] 2 Timothy chapter one and we'll read the whole of this chapter. Let us hear the word of God.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus to Timothy, my dearly beloved son grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

I thank God whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience that without ceasing I remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day greatly desiring to see thee being mindful of thy tears that I may be filled with joy when I call to remembrance the unfamed faith that is in thee which dwelt first in my grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice mercy and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands for God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me as prisoner but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel wherent too I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles for the which cause I also suffer these things nevertheless I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which you have committed unto him against that day hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me and faith and love which is in Christ Jesus that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us this thou knowest that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me from her Phygelus and her Mogenes the Lord give mercy unto the house of Anaciphorus for he oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain but when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently and found me the Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day and to her many things he ministered and to me at Ephesus thou knowest very well

[illegible]

The cross has burned in filthy rooms.

For over it has been in the past. And in the way it is gone.

And of that place where once it was. It shall no more be known.

But after that I could end here. God's sanctuary never ends.

[ 27:45 ] And to this hundred children's quilt. His righteousness ends.

To such a deepest covenant. That my hope and always.

Of this hope just long again. O We're going to get out of 2 Timothy and chapter 1 and we can read at verse 5.

2 Timothy 1 and at verse 5. 3 Timothy 1 and so on.

Now it's not just fashionable but helpful today in many organisations to think about succession planning.

[ 29 : 31 ] What's going to happen when this person leaves their post? What's going to happen when this team moves on? Who's going to take over from them? Who's going to continue the good work that they were doing?

Succession planning is really important. When Paul wrote his letter to Timothy, he was implicit in Rome. He was fairly sure that he was close to death.

Timothy was somebody, as I read this letter, Timothy was somebody that he was very close to. He calls him his dearly beloved son in verse number 2.

And we see that apart from that closeness which was personal to Paul, Paul was thinking about the bigger picture.

And the big picture was who was going to succeed him. That is Paul. When his life came to an end, how was the work of the gospel going to continue when he, the apostle of Jesus Christ, was taken away?

[ 30 : 42 ] And therefore he's addressing and encouraging Timothy. So that the things that are of concern to Timothy, he may address them and remove the fears that he has.

And it's important for ourselves today. Where the gospel is to continue. Where the gospel is to continue. God has a succession plan.

And the generation that has gone before you have moved on and God has taken them away. And now the kingdom of God, for it to continue in this youth community, is dependent upon you following in their footsteps.

And having their faith. And so giving that continuity to the work of the gospel. And I want us to think about that today. And from these verses here, to think about the nurture and the maturity of faith.

I want us to see first of all, that we have in this passage, a family faith. And we see that from the way Paul introduces himself to Timothy from verse number 3.

[ 32 : 02 ] I thank God to myself from my forefathers with a pure conscience. He is engaged in the service of God. For Paul, the Old Testament scholar, that meant serving God in the religious sense of worshipping him.

Serving him in the sense of following him. Doing his commands and service in the sense of serving in the gospel. To bring the message of the gospel out to those who were around him.

And to whom God had sent him. And as we have that insight into the Paul who was the servant. We see that he served from my forefathers.

He instantly makes the connection between himself and those who went before him. And as he writes to Timothy in his prison in Rome.

His mind goes back to his family, to his ancestors. To all those who passed down through the years.

[ 33 : 16 ] The covenant salvation. The purpose of God. The good news of God that had been passed down to himself. He cannot think of Timothy without thinking of those who were before him.

And as he thinks of them, he thinks of serving that same God with a clear conscience. He is imprisoned in Rome.

And for anyone imprisoned anywhere to say that they are writing with a clear conscience before God. Being not guilty of any crime. That's a great statement.

But such is Paul's closeness to his God and to his Saviour. As he writes these words. That clearly in his mind. There is nothing on his conscience that would condemn guilty.

He is free from any kind of conviction. He has peace with his God. And it's important for us to recognise that at the outset.

[ 34 : 24 ] Could we write? Could we think? Can we think today about our ancestors? Those who have gone before us. Can we think of them? To have a clear conscience before God.

That we are serving God as they served God. And that we can say that in the presence of God. With a clear conscience.

Not guilty of the fact that when we say that and claim that. The reality is that we are not. The reflection. as Paul introduces the whole concept of a family faith.

And when he thinks of that, he connects that whole reflection to Timothy to whom he is writing. When I call to remembrance the unfaint faith that is in you, he thinks of all that's been handed down to himself, what was instructed by God to the children of Israel, teach them diligently to your children.

He then thinks of Timothy and he remembers Timothy's own sincere faith. He's reminded of that. He's reminded of that because he can think of Timothy's life.

[ 35 : 58 ] He can think of the way which God wanted Timothy's life. He is familiar with him personally. He knows what's in his heart because he's had his conversations, because he's taught Timothy and he's come to understand and to appreciate the fact that Timothy himself has this very same faith.

It is that sincere faith. Paul then is reminding us that Timothy is not on the stage acting out a faith that he doesn't have in his heart.

Timothy is living his life on the world stage with a faith that is true and that is genuine. God wants us, as we think of Timothy, again, to reflect on our own relationship with God, to reflect on our own faith and is it a faith that's lived out in the public domain and that has no substance in our hearts.

It was true in the gospel stories. It was true in the churches that Paul visited and wrote to and it is true in every generation of the church that there arose and there's an act going on and it's an act of faith that's to impress others but that does not arise from a heartfelt love for the Lord Jesus.

And Paul brings Timothy to the very essence and the centre of a family faith which dwelt first of all in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and I am persuaded in you also.

[ 38 : 10 ] First in your grandmother Lois there's a family home here and today we would describe it as a Christian family home and there's a grandmother that has faith.

There's a grandmother that loves the word of God. There's a grandmother that loves to teach the word of God to her family. In this story she is the head of this home because she is the one who has the faith and that faith then appears in Timothy's mother Eunice and we understand from the book of Acts in chapter 16 that she might somebody who was a Greek.



She took her faith outside of the kingdom of Israel and she loved her faith in this home with her Greek husband because the faith that she had been taught and the example that she had seen in her old mother was now lived out in her old life and even the challenges of being married to a Greek person who did not share the same faith even in the midst of these challenges she remained faithful to what she had been taught and what she had heard.

And now there is a third generation here because we have Timothy and Paul is sure that this same faith dwells as found in Timothy also.

It's a faith that has a home in Timothy's life and in Timothy's heart. It's a family faith. A powerful picture of the way in which there is succession planning on the part of God working through families and families being loyal and faithful to the things that they themselves have been taught and are passing them on to those who are coming after them.

[ 40 : 21 ] And today God wants to remind us all of our responsibility that in our homes as grandparents we must show our faith and we must teach our faith.

We must not be our minds must not be invaded and overtaken by the whole concept that we leave our children to find our things for themselves.

God does not work like that. As grandparents we have the responsibility to teach the faith to show the faith so that our children learn and the children having learned from their grandparents then have the responsibility to share that faith to show that faith to teach that faith to live out that faith in homes and in families so that the children as they do grow up they understand the Bible they understand how faith works they understand how faith lives and they grow to appreciate that themselves and so there are the building blocks that we see in the Bible where God gives continuity to the work of his kingdom generation after generation and as we move on today let's embrace that together let's embrace our responsibility before God let's not shy away from it because God blesses such faithfulness he blesses it in children he blesses it in parents he blesses it in grandparents it's the powerful way through which

God works and let's today remember those who have gone before us and let's take up the responsibility the matter as Elisha did let's take up the responsibility and work a family faith that the blessing of God will be a blessing to our children there is a family faith secondly there is a faltering faith a faith that is in danger of stopping to work and we see that from verse number six I want you to remember something in order to think about your mother and your grandmother in order to think about your relationship with me I want you to remember something really important and what you have to remember is with regard to the gift of God and clearly in this passage the gift of God is the gift of the Holy

Spirit of God which God gives to us as we put our trust in his name that in the day when we're born again by the Spirit of God the Spirit of God comes to dwell in our hearts and it is that Spirit which bears fruit in our lives which enables us to to learn to discover to be disciples and ultimately to share our faith and to teach others about their faith to remember that you stood up the gift of God that you found the flame what is the image that we have here it's a smouldering fire that's ready to go out we would look at a smouldering fire when we are perhaps more familiar with open fires we would look at a smouldering fire and we would wonder if there was any life left in the fire perhaps no visible smoke there is great amount of work to be done in order to rekindle this fire in order to still it up because the fire has been neglected and it was more crucial in the past generation that we would not forget to stoke the fire and to keep the fire going and there's the alarm that suddenly you realise that I forgot to put something on the fire and the house is getting cold and it affects the whole of the house it affects all of the people in the house the fire is ready to go out and let's think about that together today we can understand it first of all exactly like that a fire that's ready to go out and we should ask ourselves what is going on in our hearts in our relationship with God a people whom

[ 45 : 45 ] God has brought to himself and given to us that gift of the spirit and because of the nature of life and because of the way in which we have allowed life that that fire is nearly extinguished that there is no sense of the warmth of God's love that there is no sense of the lack of the witness of God's word and that there is no sense of the joy that comes from having our trust in the Lord Jesus and from living our lives in faithfulness to him and perhaps today when you look at your heart that's how you see yourself and you can remember times when the fire was burning brightly and when you had all the joy and when the light was shining and you knew the strength and the grace of

God in your life rekindling taking the kindling in order to stoke up the fire taking the dry pieces of wood in order to fire this fire up once more using all of the equipment and the right kind of fuel in order to stir up this fire so that it begins to blaze and perhaps one of the reasons that the fire is not burning brightly is because your heart has been filled with the wrong things and your heart has been filled with the very things that choke the fire and that cause the fire to nearly go out and when we think of a fire in natural terms and physical terms we think of things that we can put on a fire that will do the opposite to rekindling it things that will smother it and eventually put it in.

And as we're journeying on through life we are so likely to fall into habits and behaviours that leave us gruesome in love for our Saviour in love for his word and therefore it has a dwindling effect on the faith that we should be sharing in our families and in our homes and in our community we need to rekindle to remember says Paul to remember to muddle it in your mind to make a picture in your mind of what your heart looks like and to see if it is filled with the burning flame of the love of God in Christ Jesus or if it is actually a cold place to live in the rekindling well perhaps today as God asks you to to mull in your mind what your heart looks like perhaps it's not a kindling a rekindling that you need but the actual kindling itself as we reflected in the message to the children it's the absence of that power it's the connection to the national grid of the power of the kingdom of God that comes to the spirit of God it's that connection that God can give to us that we need to have in our hearts so that the fire begins to burn so there is a flame so there is not just an artificial flame but the genuine flame of love for God and of the life of

God in your heart and only you can tell today if it is the case that what you need is the fire to come in the first place that you're living your life and you know nothing of the warmth of God's love and that today what you need most is to have that brightness of that warmth and of the zeal for God and love for God to fill your heart and your life stir up the gift of God that is in you which is in you by the putting on of my hands there was the public moment in the life of Timothy when Paul recognised that God's work had taken place in Timothy's heart and so it is for ourselves today that there is the public witness there's a fire that cannot be hidden and once the fire is ablaze then the testimony of Christ himself and of the church of Christ the testimony is recognising and acknowledging that that fire is truly burning brightly a faltering faith along with that family faith and thirdly that brings me to a fearless faith

God wants to remind Timothy in verse number 7 for God hath not given us the spirit of fear God gives to us the gift of his Holy Spirit when we come to faith in his name and let's read that with the spirit with a capital S yes because Paul is referring to the Holy Spirit and Paul repeatedly reminds us that we become the children of God and that that point that God gives to us of a spirit to dwell in our hearts as the guarantee of belonging to him and Paul wants to remind Timothy that you did not receive the spirit of fear that sense not so much fear but that sense of being cowardly and being timid and being inclined to hide the faith because of your fear and that was Paul's concern in looking at Timothy to be a successor he was paralysed by fear he was overcome with the sense of what it might cost him to follow

[ 53 : 09 ] Paul and to be the servant of the Lord Jesus he was filled with fear and that fear that timidity is something that happens when we are faced with danger and we see that in every area of life if we are faced with danger we become afraid we take a step back from it there is that sense of inward response to the danger and we take a step back so that we are no longer in the danger zone in the gospel sense we absent ourselves from the very place where our faith should be shown in serving and in following the Lord Jesus and when we think of fear in the Bible we think of healthy conflict in organizations it's a conflict that enables good and better decisions there is such a thing as healthy fear that is what Paul calls godly fear there is the fear of God which we must have in our hearts that's the fear that enables but this fear is a fear that disables and that paralyzes and that stops the person from doing what they should in following the Lord

Jesus and today perhaps that describes your own faith I don't know today but you may have faith sacredly in your heart it may have been in your heart for some time and instead of letting that faith show itself by following the Lord Jesus you're spending your efforts and your energy in trying to hide that faith because you're afraid you're afraid of what might happen out there when you show that you have faith you're allowing yourself to be paralyzed in a similar way to which Timothy was allowing himself to be paralyzed you're afraid of everything connected with the gospel and of living that gospel in home and in family and in community and in work and in school wherever it might be there's too great a cost and too afraid to do

I can't cope with that kind of exposure so I'm going to take a step back from that I'm going to upset myself from following the Lord Jesus with his people publicly I'm not going to do what the generation before we did I'm going to be different to them so I'm introducing my own discontinuity by failing to live out the faith that God has planted in my heart it's a serious moment it's a serious fault today if we are denying the Lord by denying your faith because of our fear what is the answer to that to remind Timothy that the spirit that God has given to him is not one of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind it's completely different to

Timothy's thinking because of his fear she's forgotten what the spirit of God is like and he's forgotten what the work of God is like in the lives of his people in other words he's forgotten what it looked like in Paul's own life and in a sense Paul is the one who went before him and in that generational sense Timothy is to follow Paul but he's forgotten the power that he has seen in Paul's life the power that simply means the ability to achieve something and how appropriate that was for Timothy he didn't think he could do certain things in following Paul because of his fears he didn't think he had the ability to cope with the pressure of facing a life of serving the Lord but Paul is reminding him that the spirit that God gave to you is in fact the spirit that gives you the ability to achieve that gives you the skills to do what

God requires you to do that gives you everything in quality and in ability to overcome your timidity and to be strong in the power that there is in Christ Jesus and Paul reminds the church in Ephesians in chapter 1 that there is nothing less working in their lives than the same power with which God raised Jesus from the dead and there is no greater power it's a power that should leave us with the godly fear that brings respect before God but it's a power that brings to us to be daring and to follow the example of Paul and not to be afraid of what it means to live out our faith but to be strong with the grace that there is in Christ and to sense the energy that comes as we put our trust in him and in many ways sensing that energy is when we act out our faith when we live out our faith the power comes in the moment of living our faith not in preparation for it and we discover this power as we serve as we follow as we live a life committed to the

[ 59 : 24 ] Lord Jesus the spirit of power the spirit of love here is the fire the love with which God has loved us what manner of love is this says John with which God has loved us that we are the children of God it's a love that enables us to respond in love to him we love him because he first loved us and John when he said that in 1 John 4 he says there is no fear in love but perfect love casts out fear the person that we love most in the world today it's the person that we would do anything for if that person is in danger I will put myself in danger in order to try and rescue that person from danger it's a love that is shown in its commitment in its devotion in times of joy and in times of sorrow in times of security and in times of danger it's a love for God it's a love for the people of

God it's a love that's strong and powerful and it's the spirit of sound mind or as you perhaps say of self control and that simply means that we understand what the Bible says and we base our decisions on what we understand the Bible says and that process enables us to live out our lives following the Lord Jesus it's not a magic portion in any way it's simply a process through which we are learning what the word of God tells us we study it for ourselves we have learned much from a generation that has gone before we have the knowledge of the word of God and the spirit that God has given to us in our hearts is a spirit that shows us the secret things of

God and we make our decisions based on that and because of that when we make the ultimate decision with regard to our faith our fears will not vanish but our fears will not control us our fears won't be there but we will be able in a self controlled way to think of what God says and what the spirit of God does and we see the way in which what the spirit of God does corresponds to my fear and pushes them to the side so that they are no longer an obstacle to me in living out of my faith but that I understand that according to the promise of God that the spirit of God is what gives me strength and power and ability and love and self control but also helps me in all of my infirmities so let's today hear the encouragement of the word of

God let's think of the importance of family faith and a role in God's kingdom let's think of the possibility of our faith perhaps faltering and let's hear the encouragement that this faith is fearless because it's not based on you strength or mind it's based on the power that God gives to us by the Holy Spirit which he places in our hearts and may God help us to reflect on these things further and to make blessed this word to us and let's call upon his name in prayer st give to us hearts that truly long for you, desire after you, and hearts that discover day by day that our strength is in God, and that in the midst of our fears and our failings and our weaknesses, that you are greater than all of these, and that you enable us along life's way.

So bless your word, and hear it clear. We ask all these things for Jesus' sake. Amen. Our glory psalm is psalm number 31.

[ 64 : 33 ] And at verse 21. It's a psalm that encourages us to put our trust and our confidence in God. Psalm 31 at verse 21. All praise and thanks be to the Lord, for he hath magnified this wondrous love to me within a city fortified.

From verse 21 to the end of the psalm, to God's praise. All praise and thanks be to the Lord, for he hath magnified this wondrous love to me.

God of God, to God's praise. God of God, to God's praise. God of God, to God's praise. God of God, to God's praise.

God of God, to God's praise. God of God, to God's praise. God of God, to God's praise. God of God, to God's praise.

God of God, to God's praise. O love the Lord, all ye his sins, because the Lord of God, the faithful and the plenteous wheat, proud to earth the free war.

[ 66 : 33 ] Be of good, carry and be of good, and to your heart shall stand.

All ye who's hope and confidence, that of the Lord be in.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.