

Relationship (1.3-4)

- These verses point to a deep personal relationship— Paul describes tears at their last parting, daily prayers of thanksgiving, and joy at the idea of reunion.
- Paul loves Timothy like a father would his son.
- Their relationship is a small example of God's love for us.
- God's love is unconditional. He loves us even when we act out like we shouldn't (see Rom. 2.23-25).
- Relationship with God gives peace, a new purpose in life, healing, truth, love, grace, forgiveness, mercy and a new life.

Genuine Faith (1.5)

- Timothy became a Christian in early adulthood. Most likely due to the influence of his mother and grandmother mentioned here.
- Timothy's faith is genuine and personal.
- Paul's mention of the women in Timothy's life is important, as women were not given much mention or status at that time.
- We are all given the opportunity to share our genuine faith with family, friends, and coworkers. We learn genuine faith from others as much as we foster it individually.

Fan into flame (1.6)

- Genuine faith leads to the Spirit of God indwelling, empowering, and encouraging us.
- Paul reminds Timothy of his gift to lead, teach, and preach. A gift that gives him an ability beyond the scope of his own power.
- The image of fanning a fire implies effort and participation. The embers are there, but they need air and fuel.
- We have all been gifted by the Spirit for our everyday life.
- The Spirit empowers us to face difficulty and accomplish what God has called us to.
- Rely on the Spirit and not your own strength.

Power, Love, and Self-Discipline (1.7)

- Timothy was facing difficult challenges. Paul reminds Timothy that fear is not from God.
- Fear is a powerful thing. It grabs us and makes us feel helpless. We fear life loss, change, the unknown, sharing Jesus, and relational difficulty.
- Fear reminds us of the need to be courageous and rely on the Holy Spirit.
- The Spirit gives power to be bold and face difficulty, the courage to speak and live out our calling.
- The Spirit gives love. The mark of a believer, we are given the ability to love like Jesus loved.
- The Spirit gives self-discipline. We are empowered to participate in the Spirit's work in our lives—to fan the flames.

- These characteristics come from giving Christ control of our lives. They grow like fruit as we know, love, remember, and imitate Christ.
- God is not a God of fear and timidity! He is a God of power and love!

Discussion Questions

- If you have faith in Jesus, who taught you the way of genuine faith? How did they teach you?
- Describe a time you had one of your gifts recognized.
- How have you fostered the growth of that gift? How have you stunted the growth?
- Was there a time when the Spirit empowered you to face a fear? Describe it.
- What are the benefits of remembering your status as Spirit-filled? How do you remind yourself?