

A Sound Mind: The Gift of God

6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Tim 1:6-7)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. ***I remind you:*** Paul reminds Timothy to stir up the gift. This is one of the privileges and blessings of a community of believers. We are to remind one another to stir up the gift of God within each of us. It is the opposite of commiseration and steps into the realm of edification.
- B. ***Stir up the Gift of God:*** The intentional activation and engagement of the gift of God is to deliberately work the muscles of operating in the Spirit. Though we often start uninspired and weak we end up inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit..
- C. ***For God has not given us a spirit of fear:*** Few things rob the joy and courage of a believer like fear does. Fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of death, fear of physical hardship, fear of being misunderstood, fear of loss, fear of sickness...etc. Many people are driven by fear. Driven by trying to avoid something “bad”. Some even have fear of not having fear, they say, “fear is what motivates me...I won’t be motivated if I don’t have this fear of failure..”

8... Do not fret - it only causes harm. (Ps 37:8)

- D. Fear, anxiety, fretting are all from the same tree and the fruit of this tree is always harmful.

II. POWER, LOVE, AND A SOUND MIND

- A. ***Power:*** sometimes we don’t recognized the power manifest as excellent. Sometime we don’t recognize it at all. The excellence of the power is both seemingly small and at times very great. The grace of God on the human heart and mind to make right choices is an example of the power of God expressed in our life. His power flows through our ministry in subtle and not so subtle ways. We want to acknowledge and express gratitude for both the subtle and overt demonstrations of power.

7 ... that the excellence of the power... (2 Cor 4:7)

19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places. (Eph 1:19-20)

20 now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. (Eph 3:20)

- B. **Love:** The very same love that the father has for the son the son has for us. (*Jn 15:9*) We are to be rooted and ground in this love (*Eph 3:18*). This love is to abound still more and more and change the way we think and evaluate (*Phil 1:9*) and hope does not disappoint because this love has been poured into our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit (*Rom 5:5*)
- C. **Sound mind:** From the Greek word “*sophronismos*” to be sensible and self controlled.

III. A SOUND MIND: THE GIFT OF GOD

- A. We have been given the spirit of a sound mind, that is a mind that demonstrates stability in the midst of a destabilizing environment. It may be chaotic on the outside but rationale, slow Holy Spirit inspired, thoughts prevail for the believer operating in the grace of a sound mind.
- B. A sound mind is measured and restrained and does not give into the frenzy of curiosity.

5 Let your gentleness (reasonableness)(moderation) be made known to all men. The Lord is at hand. (Phil 4:5)
- C. 4 actions that lead to a sound mind.
 - 1. **Self Control:** There’s a dynamic link between a sound mind and operating in self control. Some versions of the Word use “self control” in the passage instead of “sound mind” We must resist, the compulsion within us, to know all the things which are not ours to know.
 - 2. **Holding fast the pattern of sound words:** “*Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus*” (*2 Tim 1:13*) Paul is instructing Timothy to hold tightly the foundational teachings and doctrine of the gospel. To not hold fast the pattern of sound words opens the door to a “bewitching” much like that of the church of Galatia. “*O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*” (*Gal 3:1*)
 - 3. **Mind your own business:** “*that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands..*” (*1 Thes 4:11*)
 - 4. **Be careful what you hear:** “*...take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.*” (*Mk 4:24*)

IV. AN UNSOUND MIND: THE FRUIT OF DOUBT AND OPEN DOORS

- A. An unsound mind is an unstable mind. A mind given over to the swirl of inner dialog that leads to great fear and doubt. James writes, “*He who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.. he is a double minded man, unstable in all his ways*” (*James 1:6-8*)

B. 4 actions that lead to an unsound mind.

1. **Casting off restraint:** We cast of restraint by indulging the thoughts of our own imagination that villainize our brothers and sisters in the body and day dream of their downfall and destruction while simultaneously making us the hero of our own story.

“Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us” (Ps 2:3)

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened” (Rom 1:21 KJV)

2. **Participating in gossip and slander:** Gossip and slander are the breeding grounds for an unsound mind. When we step outside the bounds of God’s ordained way of processing we open doors to our mind and emotions to the onslaught of demonic oppression. The oppression leads our minds down a road of irrational, exaggerated, and unfounded thought patterns towards our brothers and sisters.

“A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.” (Pr 16:28)

“A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.” (Pr 11:13)

3. **Being a busybody:** instead of minding your own business and tending to your own work you are in the business of peddling in the business of others.

“And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house... also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.” (1 Tim 5:13)

4. **Giving ear to a liar:** Listening to lies or gossip is itself a sign of deficient character. It is an evil thing to have an eager willingness to entertain a deceitful tongue.

*“an evildoer gives heed to false lips; a liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue”
(Prov 17:2)*

V. TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF THE MIND

- A. The Lord created and called us to love Him with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We are empowered to do this because He loves us with His heart, soul, mind, and strength.

30“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” (Mk. 12:30)

- B. We express love for God with our mind by putting things in our mind that inspire and enlarge our capacity to love Him and by resisting things that diminish our capacity to love Him. What we do with our mind greatly affects our ability to receive and express His love.
- C. As we change our mind, the Spirit changes our emotions, enabling us to love more. What we put in our mind determines much of how we feel, how we see ourselves, how we love, what we do.

2“...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Rom. 12:2)

- D. God designed our human make up so that we are able to “set our mind” on the things we choose.

5Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, [set their minds on] the things of the Spirit... (Rom. 8:5)

2Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col. 3:2)

- E. Knowing and loving are deeply connected. We grow in love for God by growing our knowledge of God and agreement with Him. Agreement is the essence of love and/or union. Knowing is both informational and experiential. Thus, there is a mental aspect and an emotional aspect.

9“...I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge...” (Phil. 1:9)

- F. Loving God with our mind includes meditation on the Word so that we may come into agreement more and more with who He is and how He views and leads us. When we think on what the Spirit thinks, then love is awakened in us and makes our emotions feel alive with holy desire.

VI. PULLING DOWN STRONGHOLDS

- A. Paul gave us understanding on how we can pull down spiritual strongholds in our life.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity [a tenacious commitment] to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

- B. A stronghold was a strongly fortified defensive structure. It was a fort or fortified city, which was often completely surrounded by a large stone wall. Some of these walls were as high as fifty feet.
- C. Satan seeks to keep us in bondage to him by establishing spiritual strongholds in our mind to keep God’s presence out of our life. He works to establish “walls of accusation” in our mind against God to keep the Holy Spirit’s liberating presence from invading our life and freeing our heart.