

(1:6) - All of salvation is God's free and sovereign gift to sinners in and through the Lord Jesus Christ (*Rom. 5:16; 8:32; 1 Cor. 2:12; Eph. 2:8-9*). Through the blood and righteousness of Christ, we who believe in Him have the gifts of forgiveness, acceptance, all blessings (*Eph. 1:3*), spiritual life, righteousness, and eternal glory. We who are saved by grace have nothing and have done (nor will do) nothing to earn or deserve the least of God's blessings in salvation. Paul, however, is speaking here of the special gifts God had given Timothy for the ministry of the Gospel as an evangelist and pastor. All gifts of ministry and service are also sovereignly given by God (*1 Cor. 12:4-11*). So Paul reminds Timothy here to **"stir up the gift of God,"** which means to engage himself in cultivating and promoting these gifts rather than giving up or being discouraged in the face of opposition. It means to kindle them by encouraging a diligent use of them in the service of Christ. Considering the opposition Timothy, as well as all ministers of Christ face, and considering the fact that Paul was at present in prison, it would have been easy for Timothy to become so discouraged to the point of quitting. So Paul reminds Timothy that even though he is sorrowing, he has been gifted of God to preach the Gospel, to be a witness for Christ, to be a minister of the church. The **"putting on of [Paul's] hands"** refers to the outward sign of authority and power Christ had given to the apostles to bestow gifts for the ministry. So Paul was assured of Timothy's gifts, and he reminds Timothy of them.

(1:7) - Here is the substance of those gifts. They are not mysticism or magic. They are specific gifts for the purpose of promoting the glory of God in Christ, the salvation of sinners, and the edification of the church. The **"spirit of fear"** refers to a cowardly spirit, the fear of men, so as to be discouraged in or deterred from the ministry of the Gospel and either deny or compromise the truth (*cf., John 12:42-43*). Any spirit that considers the power of men or the honor of men is not of Christ (*John 5:39-44*). Paul lists three specific things that oppose and remedy the spirit of fear – (1) **"POWER"** – We know that our Gospel is the *"power of God unto salvation"* (*Rom. 1:16*). We know our God and Savior is omnipotent. We know that we minister the truth in the power of the Holy Spirit Who has convinced us of the truth of it. Therefore we should take courage that we are the ministers of Christ, and as we are convinced (*1 John 2:20*) we have the only message of eternal life and glory. (2) **"LOVE"** – This is godly love that is concerned first and foremost for the honor of God's redemptive glory and the preeminence of Christ. It is love of the brethren that causes us to stand with each other against the world and will not speak peace where there is no peace. It is love for our neighbor that will not promote his eternal destruction by saying, "You shall not surely die," when he is not submitted to the righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel. (3) **"A SOUND MIND"** – This is a mind enlightened by the Holy Spirit to the reality of sin and death and which sees no hope of salvation but in Christ crucified and risen. It is a mind convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (*John 16:8-11*). It is the spiritual mind that judges by God's testimony of truth (*1 Cor. 2:12-16*). It is the mind of faith fixed on Christ and His glory in all things.

(1:8) - Paul is calling on Timothy to be bold and courageous in the service of Christ and the ministry of the Gospel of salvation by God's grace in Christ. His desire is that Timothy have an uncompromising spirit and unwavering commitment to Christ, His truth, and the church. Paul knew that all of this was only by the grace and power of God in Christ and not by Timothy's own strength. Paul knew this of himself too - (1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 2:15-16; 4:6-14; 12:9). No true minister of Christ ministers of his own will and strength. To be "ashamed" is to be humiliated and afraid so as not to stand for and speak out boldly for the cause of God in Christ. It is the same as having the spirit of fear instead of the spirit of boldness and courage that comes from Christ by His Spirit. Paul later tells Timothy, and all of us who believe, to "*study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed*" (2 Tim. 2:15). As long as we look to Christ, as long as we live and walk in the power of His grace and strength, and as long as we keep to the Word of God, we have nothing of which to be ashamed. We need not be ashamed of "**the testimony of our Lord,**" His Word of truth, of grace, of life (Rom. 1:16-17). If we seek to walk in our own strength, our own righteousness and goodness (of which we have none), and our own words and opinions, we should be ashamed. But in Christ, we have no reason to be ashamed.

"**Nor of me His prisoner**" - We have no reason to be ashamed of God's true ministers when they suffer FOR HIS SAKE and for the cause of the Gospel. The fact that Paul was in prison was no reason for Timothy to be ashamed. Paul refers to himself here as "**HIS prisoner,**" meaning Christ's prisoner. Paul recognized that he was in prison by the sovereign will and providence of God and that his physical bondage here would glorify God and not hinder the ministry of the Gospel (cf., Php. 1:12-21). Paul recognized that when we are persecuted for Christ's sake, we are blessed of God and not to be ashamed (Matt. 5:10-12).

"**But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God**" - "**Partaker**" is a word of fellowship and community in which we as true believers join and stand together with Christ and with each other in suffering for righteousness' sake, for the Gospel. Our Lord taught us of this in John 15:18-16:4. This fellowship of suffering for Christ is one of the main evidences of a true child of God (Rom. 8:14-17; Heb. 12:4-8). Notice how Paul calls this suffering "**the afflictions of the Gospel,**" so as to distinguish this suffering from that which is common to all men. It is the suffering of those who follow Christ in opposition to the world. The first example of it was with Cain's hatred and killing of Abel. Abel joined with Christ and stood against Cain over the Gospel. This kind of boldness is not in us by nature. It is not of our own power. It is "**according to the power of God.**" Apart from God's grace and power, we all would compromise the glory and truth of Christ for our own safety and comfort, but only God gives His people power to continue even unto death against the world.