

## STOKING THE FIRE

While sitting on death row, Paul spent his time walking down memory lane. On one of these trips, Paul reflected on his wonderful relationship with Timothy's and his family (2 Tim.1:3-5).

It was during this reflection that Paul wrote to encourage Timothy "to kindle afresh the gift of God, which is in you." (2 Tim.1:6, NAS)

The Greek word for "to kindle afresh" is the triple compound word (anazopureo / ana) [again] - (zoos) [alive] - (puroo) [fire]. It is translated as to fan the flame (NIV) or to stir up (KJ) or to rekindle the embers in order to keep the fire burning (AB) or to "stoke" the fire (RLA).

**Today's lesson will study five aspects of STOKING THE FIRE of the gift God that is in you.**

### **1. There are two sides to stoking the fire of God's Spiritual Gift in you. (1 Cor.12:11-13)**

One side focuses on stoking the embers in order **to get a better fire going**. The Greek word for Spiritual Gift in 1 Cor.12:1 is pneumatikos (belonging to the Holy Spirit). Therefore you must be filled with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit for your Spiritual Gift to catch fire (Eph.5:18; 1 Cor.3:1-3; Gal.5:16-17).

The other side focuses on stoking the fire **to keep the fire from going out**. This is maintaining the fire with word of God (the fuel) (Matt.4:4; Eph.4:11-14). It is necessary to keep putting fuel on the fire in order to keep it from going out. You have to continue to **STOKE THE FIRE!**

### **2. One way the Believer can let the fire go out of his Spiritual Gift is to neglect it.**

"Do not neglect (me ameleo) [careless or don't care] (p.a.impv. / 2ps) [STOP!] The Spiritual Gift (charisma) within you." (1 Tim.4:14a)

When I hear spiritual leaders of the church say that they have set aside spiritual gifts as essential to the life of the church, it bothers me greatly. Especially since Paul has commanded us against doing this very thing.

Stop thinking this way and **STOKE THE FIRE!**

### **3. In his writings to Timothy, Paul identified two important dangers regarding the function of Spiritual Gifts.**

- The danger of neglecting or becoming careless (1 Tim.4:14).
- The danger of not stoking the embers and letting the fire go out (2 Tim.1:6).

For Paul, Spiritual Gifts were the dynamics of the body of Christ, the Church (1 Cor.12:4-6, 11-13, 18, and 27).

Paul refers to the ministry of Spiritual Gifts as part of the "**spiritual service of worship** (logikos) [divine reasoning] (latreia) [priestly service]" in Rom.12:1-8.

## **STOKE THE FIRE!**

#### 4. How do we prevent these types of dangers from becoming realities in the CWL?

Paul encourages us to continually **STOKE THE FIRE** of the Spiritual Gift within us (anazopureo / p.a.infin) [it's a continual volitional (choice) decision].

Paul is encouraging us to understand that we must **STOKE THE FIRE** of our Spiritual Gift each and every day for its divinely designed ministry (FHS). Paul explains what he means by Spiritual Gifted ministries in Rom.12:1-8 and 1 Cor.12-14 and Eph.4:11-13.

For Timothy, it was the Spiritual Gift of evangelist (2 Tim.4:5). Therefore, Paul is saying to Timothy **STOKE THE FIRE** of the Spiritual Gift of evangelism no matter how much adversity the heat of the fire brings to his life.

#### 5. Paul is mindful that the heat of the fire of the ministry of the spiritually mature Believer's Spiritual Gift can bring all sorts of conflicts as well as victories to his/her life (2 Cor.11:8-15; 1 John 5:4).

This type of conflict is associated with all Believers who are willing to become ambassadors of the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ.

“For God has not given (ouk- didomi / a.a.ind) us a spirit of timidity (pneuma deilia), but of power (dunamis) and love (agape) and discipline. (sophronismos) [a sound or healthy mindset or way of thinking / NMDV].

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.” (2 Tim.1:7-8; 2 Cor.5:18-21)

As spiritually advancing Believers of Jesus Christ, we are instructed to put on the FULL armor of God for battle in the Angelic Conflict (AC) of Eph.6:10-17: “Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” (Eph.6:13)

Paul says that when adversities come to the CWL, we choose to either **fight or flee**.

Which one we choose is correlated to how we “think”!

- We can either apply OMCD thinking (the spirit of timidity, running from the battle and thus giving up the victory. (like King Saul and his army vs Goliath)

**OR**

- We can apply NMDV thinking (the spirit of power, love, and discipline - running to the battle and the victory. (Like David vs Goliath).

David's modus operandi (MO) for entering the battle is given by the following two battle cries:

- “Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go fight with this Philistine.” (1Sam.17:32)
- “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion (David stoked the fire!) and from the paw of the bear (David stoked the fire!), He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine (David once again stoked the fire for the Lord!).” (1 Sam.17:37)

**STOKE THE FIRE!**