CARE GROUP LESSON
OBSTACLES TO THE SPREADING OF THE GOSPEL

2 Timothy 1:1-12 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has 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 to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For this reason 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 what I have committed to Him until that Day.

Here we have Paul writing to his disciple Timothy. Paul knows that he is near the end of his life so he writes for Timothy to come and visit him. But, Paul realizes that Timothy may not make it to him in time. So Paul begins to encourage Timothy about his responsibility as a minister of the gospel and to give himself to that fully. Paul knew that young Timothy would have to go through the same thing he had gone through (2 Corinthians 11:22-33). Therefore, he reminds Timothy in verse 7 not to fear.

2 Corinthians 11:22-33 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more
frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils of the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness-- 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? 30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. 31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. (NKJV)

FEAR A HINDRANCE TO THE GOSPEL

Fear is one obstacle that can cause each of us not to be faithful to the Gospel. This problem wasn’t only related to Timothy, but also a problem for Paul and Joshua as well.

Acts 18:9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent;

Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

WHAT IS FEAR?

Fear is a dreadful, uneasy and sometimes incapacitating feeling when we are facing a threat or danger, especially something that we are unsure how to handle. It comes from a spirit of fear.

THREE TYPES OF FEAR

1. Defensive fear that God has given all of us is vital to our survival.
2. The fear of God (reverence Him, honor Him, and exalt Him)
3. The enslaving type of fear.

The enslaving fear will cause us to not be faithful to the Gospel. This type of fear is injected into our life by Satan. It will usually attack our mind. As we entertain these thoughts, we will become more and more enslaved. Satan will try to put a spirit of fear into our life. We need to resist this spirit.

HOW DO WE BREAK FREE FROM ENSLAVING FEAR?

By having confidence in the Lord.

We are to have confidence in the Lord. It is so easy to put our confidence in our techniques, abilities, and skills. This will cause us to fall on our faces every time. Our confidence is to be in the Lord because He never fails.

**Psalms 27:3** Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.

**Proverbs 3:25-26** Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes; 26 For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

How can we have this confidence in the Lord? There are four reasons I believe we can have confidence in our Lord to help us overcome fear in our life.

We have the assurance of the presence of the Lord.

**Hebrews 13:5** Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you.

**Psalms 23:4** Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

For those who walk in righteousness, God has assured us that His presence will be with us to comfort and protect us. Therefore, we don’t have to be afraid.
We have confidence because of the peace of God.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

When the world seems to be spinning out of control, we don’t need to be troubled or afraid. God’s peace will keep us grounded. The peace we receive from God isn’t dependent upon our circumstances.

We have confidence because of the provision of God.

Philippians 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Our confidence is strengthened by the power of God.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

As believers, we have the indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit to help us effectively share to a lost world. We must daily make a commitment to rely on the Holy Spirit.

QUESTIONS

1. Now that you have learned this lesson, what will you do different when sharing God’s gospel?
2. What are you planning to do after this lesson to build your confidence in sharing the gospel?