WALK IN THE WORD WEDNESDAY

Biblical Solutions to Handling Fear: Part 2

A Life of Power, Love, and Sound Mind

2 Timothy 1:7 *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

BIBLE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The magnitude of the word fear cannot be overstated. As alluded to in lesson 1, fear is a powerful human emotion. It can alert us to genuine physical or emotional danger and help us respond appropriately. However, fear can also become a controlling force in our lives, even when there is no immediate threat. Fear can cause us to hesitate, withdraw, remain silent, doubt ourselves, doubt others, and—most importantly—doubt God.

The Bible does not teach that believers will never experience fear. Instead, Scripture teaches us how to respond when fear comes. David said: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."—Psalm 56:3. Notice what David did **not** say. He did not say, "I will never be afraid." He said: **"***When I am afraid, I will trust in thee***."** This is an important distinction. Feeling fear is not the same thing as surrendering to fear. Fear may show up in our lives, but it does not have to control our lives. God has already given the believer something greater than fear: **power, love, and a sound mind.** It is this truth that will become our defense and our springboard to living a life that is filled with Power, Love, and a Sound Mind! In this lesson, we will explore the unrestrained power of the child of God who does not live in fear. We excitedly ask: what possibilities are there in this life for us when we live without fear but in and with faith!!!

Central Truth: *Fear may be present in our lives, but it does not have to control our lives. God has equipped us to confront fear through His power, His love, and a sound mind.*

I. More, on UNDERSTANDING FEAR

Fear can take many forms.
It may appear as:

- Anxiety
- People-Pleasing
- Doubt
- Fear of the unknown
- Worry
- Avoidance
- Fear of failure
- Fear of speaking up
- Hesitation
- Intimidation
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of stepping into God's calling

Fear frequently begins with what happens in our thinking.

A Simple Pattern: Situation → Thought → Fear → Reaction
Something happens, or we imagine something happening. We interpret it in our minds, and that interpretation can produce fear. Fear then influences how we respond.
The question becomes: **Is my response being directed by God's Word or by my fear?**
A sound mind helps us answer that question.

II. FEAR AND DOUBT CAN CHALLENGE OUR FAITH

Fear and doubt often work together. Doubt and fear often collaborate to cause confusion and fear. There are times when fear masks itself as doubt. However, this is of no concern to the child of God, because its defeat is held in the same passage of power from *2 Timothy 1:7*. The Bible contains many examples of people who experienced moments of doubt or uncertainty:

Doubter	Doubtful Moment	Reference
Abraham	When God told him he would be a father in old age	Genesis 17:17
Sarah	When she heard she would be a mother in old age	Genesis 18:12
Moses	When God told him to return to Egypt to lead the people	Exodus 3:10–15
Israelites	Whenever they faced difficulties in the desert	Exodus 14:9–14
Gideon	When told he would be a judge and a leader	Judges 6:14–23
Zechariah	When told he would be a father in old age	Luke 1:18
Thomas	When told Jesus had risen from the dead	John 20:24–25

These examples remind us that people whom God used powerfully sometimes struggled with doubt, yet God still used them mightily, and the Lord desires to use each of us mightily as well.
The presence of doubt does not necessarily mean the absence of faith. The issue is what we do with our doubt. Honest questions can become the beginning of a journey of faith, but doubt should not become the permanent authority over our lives.

Satan Can Use Doubt
Genesis 3:1–6 shows how doubt was introduced through questioning God's Word.
Doubt can cause us to:

- Question God's promises
- Lose our peace
- Become vulnerable to temptation
- Focus on our limitations instead of God's ability
- Allow circumstances to become larger than our faith

But Scripture repeatedly calls us back to trust.
Thomas: Thomas doubted the resurrection until he encountered Jesus for himself. Jesus did not abandon Thomas because of his doubt. Instead, Jesus met him where he was and brought him toward faith.

Teaching Point: We should not be ashamed to acknowledge fear or doubt. We should bring it honestly before God and allow His Word to strengthen our faith.

III. HOW DO WE DEAL WITH FEAR?

The Bible gives us a practical pattern.

1. IDENTIFY THE FEAR

Be honest about what you are afraid of.

Ask:

- What am I afraid will happen?
- Why does this frighten me?
- Is this fear based on reality or possibility?
- What has this fear caused me to avoid?

Fear that remains unidentified can quietly control us.

---

2. BRING THE FEAR TO GOD

Do not hide fear from God. David said(Ps. 56:3): "*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee*."

- Pray about the fear.
- Give God the situation.
- Give God the outcome.
- Give God the uncertainty.

---

3. REPLACE FEAR WITH FAITH

Ask: *What does God's Word say about the situation?*

Instead of allowing fear to write the story, allow Scripture to shape your perspective. One of the clearest ways to understand this lesson is to compare what fear says with what faith says.

FEAR SAYS	FAITH SAYS
"I can't."	"God can help me."
"What if I fail?"	"I will trust God with the outcome."
"I'm alone."	"God is with me."
"It's impossible."	"Nothing is impossible with God."
"I'm going to fail."	"God can use me."
"I don't know what will happen."	"God already knows."
"I need to protect myself."	"I can trust God and walk in love."
"I should remain silent."	"I can speak with courage, wisdom, and love."

Supporting Scriptures

- Proverbs 3:5–6
- Isaiah 41:10

- Psalm 23:4
- Psalm 56:3–4
- Mark 4:40
- Philippians 4:6–7

Key Thought: *Faith does not necessarily erase every fearful feeling. Faith keeps fear from directing our decisions.* God does not desire His children to live as though they are abandoned, powerless, and without help.
Key Teaching Point: *Fear is not your identity.* You may experience fear without being defined by fear. You may feel fear without obeying fear. You may acknowledge fear without allowing fear to make your decisions.

---

4. DRAW ON GOD'S POWER
Do not assume that you must overcome fear through your own strength. Ask God for strength through His Spirit.

---

5. WALK IN LOVE
Fear often causes us to withdraw. Love causes us to move toward God and others to: Serve. Encourage. Forgive. Witness. Give. Love.

---

6. DISCIPLINE YOUR THOUGHTS
Not every thought deserves to be believed. Bring fearful thoughts under the authority of Christ. Replace destructive thoughts with truth.

7. TAKE THE NEXT STEP OF FAITH
You do not have to see the entire path before taking the next step. Sometimes faith simply means doing the next thing God has called you to do.

Now that we have addressed most aspects that we have to contend with when handling fear, the glory of this lesson is upon us, because we now move to what God has given us to completely eradicate fear from our lives so that we can live in the power and glory of God's calling to be living testimonies of His truth, redemption, and power!

IV. GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US THE SPIRIT OF FEAR

*"**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear**…"*
This is where 2 Timothy 1:7 begins. Paul does not merely tell Timothy, "Don't be afraid." Paul identifies what God has **not** given Timothy—and then identifies what God **has** given him. The word translated "***fear***" carries the idea of timidity, cowardice, or enslaving dread.

V. GOD HAS GIVEN US POWER

"*…but of power…*"

The first thing Paul identifies as God's gift is **power**. This points to divine strength and spiritual empowerment. The believer does not have to confront fear solely through human strength or willpower. Scripture says the following about the believer's power…

Acts 1:8 "*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you…*"

Ephesians 3:16 *Paul speaks of being strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner person.*

2 Corinthians 12:9 *God's strength is demonstrated even in human weakness.*

Philippians 4:13 "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*"

This does not mean that Christians are personally capable of everything. It means that Christ provides the strength necessary to accomplish what He calls us to do.

Fear Says: "I can't handle this."

God Says: "You don't have to handle it alone."

There is a difference between **self-confidence** and **God-confidence**.

Self-confidence says: "I can do this myself."

God-confidence says: "God will give me what I need to do what He has called me to do."

VI. GOD HAS GIVEN US LOVE

"…and of love…"

Why does Paul place **love** alongside power? Because fear often turns our attention inward.

Fear says: "Protect yourself." Love says: "Trust God and continue to serve others."

Fear can make us focus entirely on ourselves—our safety, our reputation, our comfort, our future, and what might happen to us. Biblical love moves us beyond ourselves.

According to…

1 John 4:18: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear…" Understanding God's love changes how we respond to fear. When we understand that God loves us, we do not have to live as though everything depends upon us. In **1 John 3:16–18** love is not merely something we say. Biblical love is demonstrated through action. In **John 15:12–13** Jesus teaches His followers to love one another and demonstrates the highest expression of love through sacrificial giving.

The Greatest Commandment

Jesus teaches us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves as is stated in each of the gospels (Matthew 22:37–39; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27).

Teaching Point: Love changes the focus of fear.

- Fear asks: "What will happen to me?"
- Love asks: "How can I trust God and serve others?"

VII. GOD HAS GIVEN US A SOUND MIND

"*…and of a sound mind.*"

This may be one of the most practical parts of the entire study.

A sound mind involves:

- Self-control
- Disciplined thinking
- Spiritual wisdom
- Clear judgment
- Emotional steadiness
- Thinking according to God's Word

Fear frequently begins or grows in the mind. That is why we cannot simply accept every thought that enters our minds. **2 Corinthians 10:5** says "…bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The believer must learn to examine thoughts rather than automatically believe them. In **Philippians 4:6–8**, Paul teaches believers to replace anxiety with prayer, thanksgiving, and disciplined attention to things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. Finally, in **Isaiah 26:3**, the prophet teaches us "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee…"

Teaching Point: *Fear can distort reality. A sound mind helps us see our circumstances through the perspective of God's Word.*

Ask yourself: *"Is my fear based on what is happening—or on what I think might happen?"*

That question can help expose fear before fear becomes our decision-maker.

VIII. PAUL'S MESSAGE TO TIMOTHY: FEAR DOES NOT HAVE THE FINAL WORD

2 Timothy 1:7 becomes even more powerful when we consider Timothy's circumstances. Paul was writing from prison while facing serious consequences, and Timothy was a young leader facing opposition, false teaching, responsibility, and pressure. Timothy's fears were not imaginary. Yet Paul reminded him to: "stir up the gift of God"—2 Timothy 1:6.

The message is clear: *Do not allow fear or timidity to cause you to abandon what God has placed in you.*

Reflection Question: *What gift, responsibility, calling, ministry, decision, or step of obedience might you be holding back because of fear?*

IX. WHEN FEAR COMES, REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU…

POWER — *For My Circumstances, God gives me strength to face what I cannot handle by myself.*
LOVE — *For My Heart, God's love reminds me that I am not abandoned and teaches me to continue loving others***.**
A SOUND MIND — *For My Thoughts, God helps me think biblically rather than allowing fear to control my thoughts***.**
This gives us a simple framework to remember:

- **POWER for my circumstances.**
- **LOVE for my heart.**
- **A SOUND MIND for my thoughts.**
- And above all: **GOD IS WITH ME.**

X. CONCLUSION

Fear is real, but fear does not have to rule us. Doubt may come, but doubt does not have to define us. Circumstances may be difficult, but circumstances do not determine who God is.
The believer has something greater than fear.
God has given us:

a) **POWER** — so we can face what we cannot face in our own strength.
b) **LOVE** — so we can remember that God has not abandoned us and continue to love others.
c) **A SOUND MIND** — so we can discipline our thoughts and see life through the truth of God's Word.

The goal is not necessarily to reach a place where we never feel fear. The goal is to reach the place where ***fear no longer makes our decisions*****.**

- When fear says, **"I can't,"** remember: **God can.**
- When fear says, **"I'm alone,"** remember: **God is with me.**
- When fear says, **"What if everything goes wrong?"** remember: **God already knows tomorrow.**
- When fear says, **"Protect yourself,"** remember: **God has called you to walk in love.**
- When fear fills your mind with uncertainty, remember: **God has given you a sound mind.**

And when fear comes, remember David's words: **"*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*"**—Psalm 56:3 Then return to the foundation of this entire study: **"*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*"**—2 Timothy 1:7

FINAL THOUGHT

Fear may show up—but fear does not have to have the last word.

- **Faith must rise.**
- **God's power is greater than my circumstances.**
- **God's love is greater than my fears.**
- **God's truth is greater than my thoughts.**
- **And God's presence is greater than anything I may face.**

Herein is where your power rests once you have restrained fear and given it no place in your life. Think of how exciting your life will be as you answer the following questions…

IF FEAR NO LONGER CONTROLLED YOU…

Imagine that fear no longer made your decisions!!!!!

What would you attempt?

Who would you forgive?

Who would you witness to?

What ministry would you pursue?

What decision would you make?

What would you trust God with?

Now, go for the in the power of the Lord, knowing that according to Philippians 4:13…

You can do all things through Christ which strengthens you.

BIBLE STUDY APPENDIX / ADDENDUM:

A. PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Think about one area of your life where fear has been influencing your decisions.
Write it down.
Then answer these questions:

1. What am I afraid of?

---

2. What does fear tell me?

---

3. What does God's Word tell me?

---

4. Where do I need God's power?

---

5. How can I respond in love?

---

6. What fearful thought do I need to bring into captivity?

---

7. What is the next step of faith I need to take?

B. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between experiencing fear and being controlled by fear?
2. Why do you think Paul specifically told Timothy that God had not given him "the spirit of fear"?
3. How can doubt affect our relationship with God?
4. Can a person have faith and still experience fear? Explain.
5. What does God's power look like when we are facing circumstances beyond our control?
6. How does understanding God's love help us overcome fear?
7. Why is having a sound mind important when dealing with fear?
8. What is the difference between what fear says and what faith says?
9. What fearful thought do you need to bring "into captivity" according to 2 Corinthians 10:5?
10. What would you do differently if fear no longer controlled you?

Notes:_____