

Focused or Distracted? Part 2 – Bible Study Notes

Introduction

2 Timothy 1:6 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.

In this series we are seeking to be reminded that there is something, someone within us that empowers us to handle everything we face around us. Like Timothy here, there are seasons of life where we are intimidated by the pressures around us, so Paul is reminding us;

- 1) of what we have inside us
- 2) that we need to stir up, rekindle, fan into flame, the gifts in us.

You have gifts within you! God saw everything that you will encounter, and he equipped you to face it! He equipped you with the His Spirit. He equipped you with faith. So, Paul says, remember your gifts & stir up your gifts!

These are not gifts of survival, these are gifts given to rule and reign. If we are to rule and reign in accordance with the design of God, then we cannot afford to have dormant, latent gifts within us. **We will dominate in life if we live life with gifts that are stirred up.**

To stir up something is to fan it into flame, it is to rekindle something. It is to turn something like a latent heat into a roaring fire. The gift of the Holy Spirit on the inside of you, and indeed every gift within us is not supposed to be a latent. If He (Holy Spirit) is latent on the inside of you, life will overwhelm you even though you have the equipment to deal with life.



So, stir up that gift of the Spirit of power, the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind! Don't quit! Don't give up! Don't cave in, Stir up that gift on the inside of you!

Last week we talked about focus and distractions. Because the difference between a gift that is latent and a gift that is stirred up is your focus or distractions. Whatever you focus on will be magnify! We stir up our gifts by focussing on our gifts, by increasing our consciousness of our gift. You will get more out of the gift of Jesus if you focus on Him.

Galatians 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

When you live more conscious of the Spirit in you, you defy laws. Walking in the Spirit is living and walking through life more conscious of the presence of God within you than the presence of the storm around you. You will defeat the Goliath outside you when you discover the God within you!

Have you identified some things in your life that are a distraction from your gift? What have you been doing to turn away from those distractions? What have been doing to focus on your gifts?

What is your focus?

1 Samuel 30: 1 Three days later, when David and his men arrived home at their town of Ziklag, they found that the Amalekites had made a raid into the Negev and Ziklag; they had crushed Ziklag and burned it to the ground. 2 They had carried off the women and children and everyone else but without killing anyone. 3 When David and his men saw the ruins and realized what had happened to their families, 4 they wept until they could weep no more.



5 David's two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel, were among those captured. 6 David was now in great danger because all his men were very bitter about losing their sons and daughters, and they began to talk of stoning him. But David found strength in the Lord his God.

In this scripture we find a terrible situation that happened around David everything was destroyed! their wives and children were taken captives by the enemy. Imagine what was going through the mind of David and his men for a minute Are they alive? Are they dead? How were they dragged away? Were they crying? I bet little john screaming for me...the torment of what had just happened was a real circumstance.

Not only that, all the men where now bitter and David was in great danger...These men were feeling a great pain in their flesh, feeling all kinds of anguish in the souls, they had become very bitter, and were about to do something really stupid.

When we are led by our emotions, even in situations like this where it seems justified, it rarely ever leads to decisions that are well thought through.

When the circumstances that you are facing gets into your heart, you start to act out of your flesh. And when your flesh is ruling you will find justified reasons for bitterness! And once that root of bitterness sets in...you will begin to plot ways to kill the "Davids" in your life!

The problem is that David was a gift from God to them! And when we don't check our flesh, we can make the instrument of our victory, the object of our hatred and bitterness. Bitterness in your heart is the product of focussing on the wrong thing. This is where these men are, regardless of how difficult the circumstances were, they had chosen to give more weight to the devastation that the enemy brought, so much so that they began to despise the gift of the deliverance that God gave them in the person of King David.



Bitterness is dangerous, even when the reason for it appears justified. We have to make a decision; do we want to be justified in our bitterness or do you want real victory which comes from focusing on Christ your gift.

Let's see what David chose;

7 Then he said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring me the ephod!" So Abiathar brought it.

8 Then David asked the Lord, "Should I chase after this band of raiders? Will I catch them?" And the Lord told him, "Yes, go after them. You will surely recover everything that was taken from you!"

No one, looking at what these men are going through would find it strange that they ended up bitter. These are devastating circumstances. However, we don't have to be bitter even when we are faced with devastating situations. What do you think would have happened if David chose bitterness as well?

Look at what David did...He said, GIVE ME THE EPHOD...the Ephod is the garment that was worn by the high priest. The high priest was the only one who could go in to the holy of holies...into the place where God dwells.

You see there are times in your life when you need to switch garments. Where you need to remember that you are not just a person who has experienced something terrible by all accounts but remember that you have a gift on the inside of you. You remember that you have been given a garment of righteousness, a garment that gives you access to the very presence of God! You are not just a person who lost their job! You are not just a divorcee or a widower, you are not just a person who got made redundant, you are the righteousness of God in Christ!

This means that you are a royal priest hood. You have access into the very presence of God. When your heart is overwhelmed, when circumstances around you seem to be out of control, when it seems that things are going from bad to worse...stir up the gift within you...put on the ephod. Take your position as a high priest in your family! Stir up that gift of God's presence, the very Spirit of power.

The effects of stirring up the gifts

But here are somethings that David found when He stirred up the gift...

- **Strength** - David found strength in the Lord. Strength here means to strengthen, to prevail, to be encouraged, to be made firm. When we stir up the gift within you...if you engage the Spirit of God within you, you will find fresh strength! If you feel you have no more strength to fight this fight of faith, I want to remind you that there are rivers of strength within you, in the Holy Spirit! Don't deny that you feel powerless, don't deny that you feel discouraged...but remember that you have the gift of the Holy Spirit in you. Wait on Him, stir Him up in you, He will strengthen you. You're not done yet my friend! My God, Your God is within you! He will strengthen you! He will uphold you!

Isaiah 40:31 But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

- **Direction** - There is no better place to seek direction from, than from the Spirit of God in you! When we are in the kind of position that David was, we feel all kinds of things, and our emotions lead us to take certain actions! Some emotions are leading you to respond to these men who now want to kill you, some emotions are leading you to want to quit, some are leading you to do things that contradict God's perfect will for your life.



Acknowledge what you feel but choose to stop and ask for direction! Ask the Lord, what should I do about this? Before you lash out, ask for direction, because you have the gift of the Holy Spirit in you...He is the ultimate guide!

- **Recompense:** 1 Samuel 30:17-19 Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. So, David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; David recovered all.

When you stir up the gift, and engage the gift of God in you, it doesn't matter what you lost...or even how you lost it, the Holy Spirit in you can bring restoration and recompense! In God you never really lose! It's called GRACE!

Conclusion

I don't mind repeating this, YOU HAVE A GIFT ON THE INSIDE OF YOU! Don't quit, don't settle, don't cave in, stir up the gift within you. Let the God in you rise! You have this treasure in earthen vessels! Don't be deceived by the way you look, don't be deceived by your failures, don't be deceived by what is going on around you, don't be deceived by the way you are perceived in society, you have treasure on the inside of you! Stir it up!

2 Corinthians 4:7 ⁶For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.⁸ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;



Discussion

- In what practical ways can you focus on the gift within you?
- What kinds of things distract you the most?
- What other things do you get when you stir up the gift of God in you?
- Why do you think it is important to live life stirred up?
- What does living life stirred up look like to you?