

Overcoming Spiritual Shyness

Scripture Reading — 2 Timothy 1:3-12

3I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. 4Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. 5I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. 6For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. 8So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, 9who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, 10but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. —

God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power ... 2 Timothy 1:7

Spiritual shyness is that uncomfortable feeling or sense of anxiety that grips you when you have an opportunity to talk with someone about the Lord. We've all been there, haven't we? The opportunity presents itself, but we choke under pressure.

Spiritual shyness afflicts all of us at times. In some situations we never quite get around to asking someone "the big question" or offering "the invitation" to come and see Jesus.

Back in the early 1900s, Henry Ford purchased a large insurance policy for all his employees. A newspaper got wind of the story and publicized the details. One of Ford's close friends, who was an insurance salesman, read about it and became quite upset. He called Ford and asked why he hadn't purchased a policy from his company. Ford replied, "Because you never asked me."

How many of our family, friends, coworkers, and acquaintances could say to us, "I never believed in Jesus because you never asked me to? I never joined God's family because you never invited me to." Paul reminds us that "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power."

God is the One who can tame our fears. With prayer and practice, every believer can become an effective witness.

Prayer

Father, open our mouths to speak of your transforming love. Replace our timidity with confidence and courage so that others may know you and live. In Jesus, Amen.

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