

in this issue >>>

News Brief

The Spirit of Power and Love

Prayer Needs

Zoom Meetings

Youth & Young Adult Online

Games Night



Issue

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EBC Update



News Brief

- ❖ As the COVID-19 outbreak slows and the BC “Restart” plan unfolds, our leadership is monitoring developments closely. We will be updating everyone about eventual steps to reopen Sunday services when we have a full plan and timeline.
- ❖ Our online services are available [here](#) on YouTube. They can also be accessed through our Facebook page and website. The next will be on Sunday, May 24, from 10:30 a.m.
- ❖ Our Prayer Chain remains fully functional. Confidential prayer requests can be made by phone or email to Sharon Iseli (604-244-1636) or Freda Ross (604-326-5123).
- ❖ Pastor John can be reached in the event of an emergency at any time on 604-779-2356. His email is: seniorpastor@rockofhelp.com.

The Spirit of Power and Love

“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So 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.” (2 Timothy 1:6–8)

We live in a society where the open presentation of the gospel in any kind of public arena can increasingly cause problems. In Canada, we rightly lay strong emphasis on tolerance and compassion. But the exclusive claims of Christ and his offer of salvation sometimes seem too hot to handle.

And in such a climate, of course, it is all too easy for the church to lose confidence and to start to hold its tongue. We rightly affirm the value of mutual respect. But as these verses from 2 Timothy 1 remind us, God doesn’t call us to silence or compromise the truths of the gospel, however tough the challenges or pressures that we may face.

Writing to Timothy, the apostle Paul is very clear that his young friend should stand firm in his faith, especially when confronted with the lies of false teachers. Throughout the epistle, we will find this theme repeated. “Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord,” Paul says in verse 8. Then he gives himself as a living example in verse 12. “That 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.”

So wonderful is the grace of God, so complete the victory of Christ over sin and death, so infinite the love and power of the Holy Spirit, that Paul has full assurance that even his worst sufferings are worthwhile. Nothing will make him ashamed of what he knows to be the truth or prevent him from preaching it. And he urges Timothy

to take a similar attitude.

But although Paul clearly makes an appeal to the will here, our passage is not simply a call to get things together or on the right track. The apostle's words have little to do with positive thinking, or with moralistic advice. Paul is not just telling Timothy to "pull his socks up," to "get his nose to the grindstone," or perhaps "put his shoulder to the wheel"—to use some well-worn phrases from my own childhood.

If Timothy is to hold fast in his faith and not to lose the courage of his convictions, he will clearly have to choose to do so and to be prepared to accept the consequences. But verses 6 and 7 also remind us that the young church leader has God's own help and resources on which to draw.

"For this reason," Paul says, "I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a Spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." And who is this Spirit? He is obviously the Holy Spirit, whose coming we'll soon celebrate at Pentecost and who is the birthright of all Christians when we come to faith.

So however young and reserved Timothy may be, he does not have to rely solely on his own strength and resources to stand true and preach the gospel in difficult circumstances. He can turn to God and be uplifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit "of power, of love and of self-discipline."

The same is true for us today. We may live in a society, in a cultural climate and right now in circumstances where a clear and decisive witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ can go against the flow or be unwelcome. But thank God, we do not have to depend on own strength or courage to tell about Jesus. "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a Spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." God has given us the Holy Spirit to build us up in our faith and to enable us to reach out to others.

Pastor John Oakes



Prayer Needs

- Our sick & shut-ins
- Government leaders
- Doctors, nurses and care workers, especially those from our own community
- Our online services
- All who are anxious, depressed or lonely
- The complete defeat of COVID-19

Zoom Meetings

The Friday Zoom Bible Study and Prayer Meeting has become weekly, starting at 7:00 p.m. We're studying Paul's letter to the Galatians. Tomorrow's passage is Gal. 3:1–14. To participate, please go to this [link](#) on your computer. The meeting ID is: 851 704 4556. You can call in by phone, if you prefer, to 778-907-2071, using the same meeting ID when requested.

Also continuing weekly is a Zoom Women's Prayer Meeting, hosted by Rhea Ravanera on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m. To join, please go to this [link](#) and use meeting ID 349 890 420, or call 778 907 2071.

Youth & Young Adult Online Games Night



Pastor John and Kirsten invite Ebenezer youth and young adults to a Zoom online fun night on Saturday May 23 at 7:30 p.m. The evening will include games played on jackbox.tv and an EBC quiz.

Please RSVP to Pastor John before Saturday if you'd like to take part. We need to know how many people want to play due to the limited number of players jackbox.tv can have (8 per game). To access the event on Zoom, go to this [link](#) and enter Meeting ID: 851 704 4556. Hope to see you there!