

# ***Fort Payne church of Christ***



## **The Weekly Moment**

*A Weekly Motivational Message*

Wednesday, August 5, 2020

### ***Don't Let the Fire Go Out!***

A fire requires just a few basic things to keep going - starter, combustible material, oxygen, and maintenance. It can take a while to get a fire started, but it needs ventilation to get going and stay going. After it's caught, the fire must be cared for and tended. Otherwise, the fire dies.

In 2 Timothy 1, Paul says something interesting to Timothy as he writes a last letter to his spiritual son. In it, he urges the young preacher to *"kindle afresh the gift of God."* The word "kindle," found only here, means *"to cause to begin or blaze again."* Josephus uses this word to speak of Herod the Great who, after killing his beautiful wife in a jealous rage, eventually *"his affections were kindled again; and indeed the flame of his desires for her was so ardent"* that he addressed her affectionately as if she were still alive. Paul is most concerned that Timothy was in danger of losing his spiritual passion, and he writes him to reignite the flame. Perhaps the fire had already gone out. What's interesting is what Paul does to try to help rekindle Timothy's fire.

Paul tells Timothy he prayed for him day and night. Not only *was* he praying, he *tells* Timothy he's praying for him. It had to help Timothy to know how much Paul longed to see him. Timothy may have felt alone at Ephesus, without faithful fellowship and Christian companionship. Knowing of Paul's desire for a joyous reunion, especially Paul's recall of Timothy's previous emotional engagement ("your tears"), may have been fire-starter! The mentor challenges the minister to raise the bar. He says, *"Don't be ashamed"*; Onesimus wasn't and neither was Paul. He says, *"Hold fast the form of sound words."* Then he says, *"Guard the treasure."* Paul did everything he could from within prison walls to support a struggling saint whose spirit was soggy and smoldering.

Do you know any Christians whose fire is going out or maybe has already been extinguished? Have you wondered what you might do for them? Follow Paul's pattern. Pray for them, then gently let them know you are. Try to spend time with them, if they'll let you. Then, as a spiritual, self-examining one, appeal to their courage, the trustworthiness of divine truth, and the impact that the Word will have in keeping them on course in fulfilling their true purpose in life.

If I ever find myself struggling and wavering, I will want a Paul to do for me what I read about in 2 Timothy 1. However hardened sin might make my heart, I hope I will still realize - if only deep inside - that my most important objective is to be ready for heaven when I die. I would hope I could still be reached by a caring Christian who wouldn't let my fire go out permanently!

Think about it.

Here's hoping you'll make the "*most of your minutes*" this week.

Hope to see you at Bible Study *soon!*

In Christian Love,

***Bob Strickland***