



CONNECTION

July/August, 2016

“Fan Into Flame the Gift of God”

³ I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. ⁶ 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, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. (2 Tim 1:3–7 ESV)

Last week, I had the opportunity to be at the General Assembly meeting of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, held this year in a suburb of Detroit, MI. One of the blessings of being a part of the EPC is that every congregation may send teaching elders and ruling elders as commissioner to the assembly. The days are full of meetings, but also many worship services.

One of the highlights for me was the worship on Friday night. The music was wonderful. Keith and Kristyn Getty were there to lead worship, along with their seven-piece band. And Leighton Ford was on hand to give a simple, but powerful sermon on the passage above from 2 Timothy 1. Dr. Ford is a Presbyterian minister and evangelist who was mentored by Billy Graham and married Billy's sister. Dr. Ford is an evangelist and has a ministry to encourage young Christian leaders.

In his message to the assembly, he reminded us of Paul's plea for Timothy to “fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.” Most of us can think of a person or two who have encouraged us in our Christian walk. It is good for us to remember such people with thanksgiving to God. The Lord has blessed us through them. It is also important for us to realize that sometimes we may be able to encourage others. We pray that God will help to recognize such moments and to make the most of them.

God has graciously given spiritual gifts to every Christian. Each believer has been given one or more gifts from the Holy Spirit, to be used to honor God and to build up others. But it is all too easy for us to neglect those gifts. They can grow cold and fall into disuse. We might even forget about them. But God urges us to fan them into flame, not to ignore them.

What gift has the Lord given to you? Is it teaching, helping, leading, or something else? God has designed that gift for especially for you. Do you need to rekindle it?

I was grateful for Dr. Ford's message. We have been blessed by gifts from the Spirit and the encouragement of other believers. With God's help, we can fan them into flame once again, and use them with renewed confidence and commitment.

Yours, in Him,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave".

Pastor Dave

Men's Bible Study

The Men's First Saturday Bible Study will meet on July 2 and August, at 9:00 am in the church Lounge. We have been discussing the book of Hosea. This July, we will cover Hosea chapters 4-5. I expect that we will cover chapters 6-8 in August. Come and join us as we learn together from God's Word and pray together for God's blessings.

Upcoming Sermons

July 3

Celebration of the Lord's Supper
1 Peter 2:9-25

"Live as People Who Are Free"

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. (1 Pet 2:16–17 ESV)

July 10

Ephesians 4:7-14

"Equipped for Ministry"

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. (Eph 4:11–14 ESV)

July 17

Ephesians 4:11-16

"Speaking the Truth in Love"

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph 4:15–16 ESV)

July 24

Ephesians 4:17-24

"Godly Thinking and Living"

...to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds... (Eph 4:22–23 ESV)

July 31

Ephesians 4:25-32

"Watch Your Words"

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. (Eph 4:29 ESV)

August 7

Ephesians 5:1-14

"Pure Minds and Right Relationships"

Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. (Eph 5:8–10 ESV)

August 14

Ephesians 5:15-21

"Godly Wisdom and Thankfulness"

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. (Eph 5:15–16 ESV)

August 21

Text and Title

To Be Announced

August 28

Ephesians 5:22-33

"Husbands and Wives, Christ and the Church"

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Eph 5:31–33 ESV)