

Spiritual Formation for a Zealous Heart

“God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power and love and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to our Lord.”

— 2 Timothy 1:7-8

1) Boldness in the Spirit is resolve to overcome fears & difficulties, and constancy in the proclamation of the Gospel.

You say, “But, I’m not that bold”? Neither were the Apostles! It took the transformation of the Spirit to change the fear-ridden disciples into the fire-breathing Apostles of Pentecost. “God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power and love and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to our Lord.” (2 Tim 1:7-8) “For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe...” (Rom 1:16)

2) Afraid to evangelize?

Fear of the unknown: Perhaps we haven’t evangelized before, or we don’t feel qualified.

The Call of God: “It is precisely because he is ‘sent’ that the missionary experiences the consoling presence of Christ, who is with him at every moment of life – ‘Do not be afraid . . . for I am with you’ (Acts 18:9-10)...” (RM 88)

We are not doing our own thing! We are acting as God’s representatives with access to His power and authority.

Fear of rejection: “What will people think of me, if I evangelize?”

Love: Our love for God’s people must be “Perfect love [that] casts out all fear.” (1 John 4:18)

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We find our identity in Christ, and not in what others think of us.

Fear of failure: What if I turn someone off to the Gospel? No one seems to be responding.

Hope: “We ought not to become discouraged or cease to witness even when we are called to manifest our faith in an environment that is hostile or indifferent... For we know that we are not proclaiming a human truth, but the ‘word of God,’ which has an intrinsic and mysterious power of its own (cf. Rom 1:16).” (RM 45)

“God asks for our faithfulness, not success.” (Mother Teresa)

Freedom from fears is the freedom to be who we are.

PRAYER: Ask for the grace to overcome fear and be a bold witness of the gospel.

