



*Presents*

# *“Facing Fear, Pursuing Power”*

**Discovery Guide**

**By**

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## Discovery Guide

*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the New International Version.*

**Prayer Focus:** Lord, deliver us from our fears and insecurities, and help us to use the power that you give us in ways that will please You.

**Reference Scriptures:** 1 John 4:18; 2 Timothy 1:1-7

### **I. Understanding Fear**

*Although we do not normally think of “fear” as the opposite of “power,” most of us would agree that fear disempowers us because, among other things, it often limits our capacity to be at peace, to make sound choices and to engage in trust-filled, meaningful relationships.*

Read **1 John 4:18**. “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.”

1. What is your earliest recollection of fear? Share your story with the group. How did you overcome your fear?
  
2. What do you think 1 John 4:18 means when it says that perfect love drives out fear? Give an example, personal or otherwise.
  
3. It could be argued that fear is an instinctive part of the human psyche since our fall from grace (in the Garden of Eden), and not necessarily detrimental to our normal functioning as human beings. Is John saying that every kind of fear has to do with an innate fear of punishment, and therefore harmful or wrong? If not, what specific kind of fear might he be referring to here? Discuss.

## Read 2 Timothy 1:1-7

Highlighted verse: “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear), but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”

*This message of encouragement is being sent to a young leader of a church, Timothy, who felt that he wasn't qualified because of his age and inexperience.*

*His mentor, Paul the apostle, reminds Timothy of his strong heritage of faith that was handed down to him through his mother and grandmother. Even more importantly, Paul reminds his mentee that the gift or ability he possesses was given to him by God.*

4. Have you ever been in a situation where you were fearful about a job or assignment that was too tough for you to handle? What were the issues that were up against you? How did you overcome your fears? If you didn't, why not? Share with the group.
5. Why was it so important for Paul to tell Timothy that although his grandmother and mother nurtured his faith, the Source and Initiator of his gift was God? Personally, what difference would it make when faced with a tough assignment for you to be reminded of that same truth?

## **II. The Bible's View of Power**

6. What is your view of power, based on your upbringing or experiences? Are you comfortable with power? Why or Why not?
7. What does a “spirit of power” mean in 2 Timothy 1:1-7? Is it the same as the sociologist Max Weber's definition of power as the ability to control the behavior of others, even against their will? Given what you know about the context of this scripture, how is a spirit of power different?

8. Why do you think all three of these gifts seem to be presented as one package—power, love and self-discipline? Are they interdependent? Why is that so? What do love and self-discipline have to do with overcoming fear and receiving power?
9. One of the root meanings for the word “power” in the New Testament is “wealth and resources arising from numbers.” How is that different from our 21<sup>st</sup> century individualistic notion of power? How is that individualistic notion played out in our society?

### **III. Using Power—God’s Way**

10. \*The speaker recommends three principles to help persons overcome fear and use power—God’s way. Break up into smaller groups and discuss these principles and how they might apply to your life:
  - a) **Have a balanced perspective of yourself—know your strengths and weaknesses.** How important is this principle, when faced with insecurities arising from the loss of a job, competitive co-workers, or an unappreciative boss? How much is your sense of self-worth tied into your job or what you do? Given our unstable economy, how does your relationship with God help you overcome the fear of losing your job, getting a poor evaluation, or surviving and thriving through unemployment?
  - b) **Get rid of the “little green men”—**those voices from your past or society that tell you you’re not good enough. Identify who your little green men are and confess them to God. If you are comfortable doing so, confess at least one to the group. Then after the confessions are made, pray for each other that God will rid you of these detractors.
  - c) **Learn how to empower others—**that’s the pathway to true power. We don’t own power; God is the rightful owner. Rather, we are stewards of it, which means power must be shared. How might we use this biblical understanding of shared power to counteract the human tendency toward greed, selfishness and control? Give practical and personal examples.

**Quiet Reflection:** Each person should spend time in quiet reflection, using Howard Thurman's meditations as your own prayer to God:

*The concern I lay bare before God today is my need for courage:*

*need courage to be honest:*

*honest in my use of words;*

*honest in accepting responsibility;*

*honest in dealing with myself;*

*honest in dealing with others;*

*honest in my relations with God.*

*I need courage to face the problems of my own life*

*the problems of personal values:*

*they are confused; they are often unreal;*

*they are too exacting for comfort.*

*I need courage to face the problems of my work.*

*Sometimes it seems I am working at cross-purposes with my own desires and ambitions*

*Sometimes I am arrogant instead of simply taking pride in doing my work well.*

*Sometimes I'm doing what I'm doing just to prove a point that is not worth proving after all.*

*Here in the quietness I lay before God my need for courage, for the strength to be honest, for the guidance to deal effectively with the problems of my own life.*

*May this time together today help us to find the courage we need to live our lives with integrity and a renewed sense of meaning and purpose.*

*\*Reference to "the speaker" means Marion Skeete. For a copy of the video message that accompanies this discovery guide, please visit our website and click on Videos & Guides: [www.legacy-makers.org](http://www.legacy-makers.org)*