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Breathe On The Embers

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Breathe On The Embers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xj0pL6vL-Ao>*fan into flame the gift of God.*

2 TIMOTHY 1:6-7

Before 1900, when fireplaces were the primary source of heat in many small Montana homes, bellows were a standard tool beside the hearth. They rested alongside the metal poker, tongs, and brush used to tend the fire through long winter nights.

Even today I still keep a poker, tongs, a brush, and a small shovel for cleaning out the ashes that gather in the stove. But lately, on these cold and quiet evenings, I've found myself thinking about those old-fashioned bellows—and how useful they would be.

The word bellows comes from an Old English term meaning “bag” or “belly,” referring to the leather pouch that held air. With a simple squeeze, a burst of breath would flow through the nozzle and into the coals, coaxing a tired ember back into flame.

When the fire burned low during a harsh winter, the bellows could make all the difference. A few steady breaths of air—and suddenly the embers glowed brighter, the wood caught fire again, and warmth filled the room.

In 2 Timothy 1:6-7, the apostle Paul uses a similar image when he encourages Timothy to “fan into flame the gift of God.”

Paul knew something important about faith: if it is neglected, it can grow quiet and dim like a fire left unattended. But when stirred—through prayer, God’s Word, and obedience—the flame rises again.

Just as a fire needs fresh wood, our faith needs nourishment. If we stop feeding it with God’s Word, the flame can slowly die down until only embers remain.

Fear is one of the greatest enemies of that fire. It sneaks in quietly, whispering doubts and discouragement. There are countless kinds of fear, but aside from the healthy fear that keeps us from harm and the reverent fear of the Lord, most fear works against us. It tries to smother the flame that God placed inside our hearts.

That’s why Paul reminds Timothy—and us—of this truth: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

I’m reminded of the song “Breathe On It” by Tauren Wells: “Lord, I’m desperate for a holy change. Tired of a stagnant faith. I need You, I need You, I need You. Lord, I know there’s more to who You are. I don’t want a closed-off heart. I need You, I need You, I need You.”

Sometimes our spiritual fire doesn’t need a lecture or more effort—it simply needs the breath of God.

Just like those bellows beside the hearth, the Holy Spirit breathes fresh life into dying embers.

Maybe your faith feels like glowing coals—still there, but not burning the way it once did. Don’t lose heart. The smallest ember can become a roaring fire when the right breath touches it. Ask the Lord to breathe on the fire within you. Feed it with His Word. Trust His power over your fears. And watch as the flame rises again.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, when the fire in our hearts begins to fade, breathe on the embers. Stir the gifts You have placed within us and awaken our passion for You again. Remove the fears that try to smother our faith, and replace them with Your power, Your love, and Your peace. Fan our small sparks into a steady flame so that our lives may shine brightly for You. Amen.

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