

## Sunday Morning Message Series

### *The Faith of Mom and Grandma* (Preached on Mother's Day)

Preached on May 14, 2023 (Originally preached on May 8, 2011 "The Bible and Mom," and May 12, 2019)

Text – 2 Timothy 1:1 – 5; 2 Timothy 3:14 - 17

Congregational Reading – 2 Timothy 1:1 - 5

### Humorous Mother's Day Illustration

A four-year-old and a six-year-old presented their Mom with a house plant. They had used their own money and she was thrilled. The older of them said with a sad face, "There was a bouquet that we wanted to give you at the flower shop. It was real pretty, but it was too expensive. It had a ribbon on it that said, 'Rest In Peace,' and we thought it would be just perfect since you are always asking for a little peace so that you can rest."

### Read the Texts Again

#### Introduction

This morning, we will examine the lives of two great mothers in the Bible, Lois and Eunice; and we will discover that these ladies not only possessed a real (unfeigned faith) themselves, but also communicated their faith to their son (and grandson) Timothy.

#### Illustration

When Robert Ingersoll, the notorious skeptic, was in his heyday, two college students went to hear him lecture. As they walked down the street after the lecture, one said to the other, "Well, I guess he knocked the props out from under Christianity, didn't he?" The other said, "No, I don't think he did. Ingersoll did not explain my mother's life, and until he can explain my mother's life I will stand by my mother's God." (James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited, Tyndale, 1972, p. 381)

Background on Timothy – Read Acts 16:1 – 5

Facts about Timothy:

- 1 His father was a Greek – because of this, Paul circumcised Timothy, so that his ministry would be more effective to the Jews.
- 2 His mother and grandmother were Jewish and possessed great faith in God; and they taught Timothy the Old Testament Scripture as a young child.
- 3 The family was from Lystra, which is part of Galatia – the place where the Apostle was stoned.
- 4 He is referred to as Paul's "son in the faith," which means that Paul may have led him to Christ; or it could be just a reference to the mentoring and modeling relationship that Paul had with Timothy.
- 5 Paul asked Timothy to accompany him during his second missionary journey. He may have only been a teenager at this time, because when Paul writes to him

- much later (perhaps 15 years later) he refers to his youth. (“Let no man despise thy youth”)
- 6 Timothy was “well spoken of” by the believers at Lystra, meaning he had a good reputation.
  - 7 He ministered with Paul at Berea, Athens, and Corinth; and he accompanied Paul on his fateful trip to Jerusalem; and then also he accompanied him to Rome.
  - 8 Paul often sent Timothy as his representative to various churches.
  - 9 He eventually became the pastor of the church at Ephesus.
  - 10 According to the Book of Hebrews, he was imprisoned and released.

## Transition

But this message really isn’t about Timothy. It is about his mother and grandmother. Though we really don’t have a lot of Scripture that specifically deals with these two great women in the Bible, if we really stop to think about what we know, there are certain assumptions that we can make regarding these two ladies and their roles as mother and grandmother to young Timothy.

Perhaps as we go through these three assumptions, you moms (and future mothers) can examine your own relationship with your children to see if these three assumptions we are making about Lois and Eunice are characteristic of your role as mother.

### I Assumption Number One – They Were Great Examples of Faith

In other words, I believe that when Timothy was growing up, he witnessed a godly example in both his mother and his grandmother. I am convinced that these ladies not only modeled the letter of the Bible, but they also demonstrated the love of the Bible in their lives.

#### Illustration

I wish every one of us had inscribed on the walls of our home the words of Dorothy Law Nolte’s work, “Children Learn What They Live,” and then kept this constantly before us in our daily activities.

If a child lives with criticism, He learns to condemn. If a child lives with hostility, He learns to fight. If a child lives with ridicule, He learns to be shy. If a child lives with shame, He learns to feel guilty. If a child lives with tolerance, He learns to be patient. If a child lives with encouragement, He learns confidence. If a child lives with praise, He learns to appreciate. If a child lives with fairness, He learns justice. If a child lives with security, He learns to have faith. If a child lives with approval, He learns to like himself. If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, He learns to find love in the world. (From A sermon called The Divine Family, author unknown.)

### II Assumption Number Two – They Exhorted Young Timothy in the Doctrines of their Faith

In addition to example, there needs to be exhortation and correction; but exhortation and correction without example and compassion will produce a rebel.

The text says that Timothy learned the Scriptures as a child. Who did he learn it from? Dad? –

not likely. He was a Gentile. Mom and Grandmom must have took the time to teach young Timothy.

*"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."*  
(Proverbs 22:6)

#### Illustration

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan had 4 sons and they were all preachers. Someone once came into the drawing room when all the family was there. They thought they would see what Howard, one of the sons, was made of so they asked him this question: "Howard, who is the greatest preacher in your family?" Howard had a great admiration for his father, and he looked straight across at him and then without a moment's hesitation he answered, "Mother." (A. Edersheim, Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Eerdmans, p. 139.)

Exhortation and Correction Require:

- 1 Time
- 2 Toil
- 3 Tenacity
- 4 Tender Compassion and Patience

#### Illustration - Poem

##### A Mother's Influence

I took a piece of plastic clay, And idly fashioned it one day; And as my fingers pressed it still It moved and yielded at my will.

I came again when days were past, The form I gave it still it bore, And as my fingers pressed it still, I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay, And gently formed it day by day, And molded with my power and art, A young child's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when days were gone; It was a man I looked upon, He still that early impress bore, And I could change it never more.

### III Assumption Number Three – They Entreated God on Behalf of Timothy

#### Illustration

I cannot tell how much I owe to the prayers of my good mother. I remember her once praying, "Now Lord, if my children go on in sin it will not be from ignorance that they perish, and my soul must bear swift witness against them at the day of judgment if they lay not hold on Christ and claim Him as their personal Savior." (Charles Spurgeon)

#### Illustration

Lorne Sanny of The Navigators once wrote of his mother: "My mother gave birth to me in a

frontier house on a Midwestern prairie. On the kitchen counter she placed a list of the ingredients necessary for my formula. At the top of the list was 'prayer,' and that remained at the top of her list for me throughout her life...I have her to thank for firmly establishing my spiritual roots." (Today in the Word, January, 1990, p. 23).

## Conclusion

"No man is poor who has had a godly mother." (Abraham Lincoln).

Timothy was a great man of faith. He had the benefit of receiving the mentorship and training of the Apostle Paul, one of the greatest Christians and preachers that ever lived. But long before Paul had met him, he was influenced greatly by his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice.

## Illustration - Susannah Wesley

Susannah Wesley died July 23, 1742. Ten of Susannah Wesley's nineteen children died before they were two years old and one of her daughters was deformed. Yet Susannah wrote in her diary that all her sufferings served to "promote my spiritual and eternal good. Glory be to Thee, O Lord."

Susannah's father refused to obey an English law of 1662 forcing all clergymen to obey the Book of Common Prayer. Five thousand of these Christians, called "Nonconformists", died in English prisons for their faith.

Susannah's husband tried to remain with the Church of England. For this, his barns were burned and his own disgruntled congregation had him arrested and thrown to prison. During this time Susannah endured terrible poverty. A thief slashed the udders of the family cow so she had to find milk for her family elsewhere. Susannah declared, "Religion is nothing else than doing the will of God and not our own."

She home-schooled her children six hours a day. One day their roof was burned by irate parishioners. All the family escaped unharmed except for six-year-old John who jumped from a window as the roof fell in. He became John Wesley the preacher, the founder of the Methodists, and was later barred from most of the churches in England.

Another son, Charles Wesley, is remembered for the hundreds of hymns that have brought pleasure to churches for many years. Remember that it was the courageous, tenacious faith of this Bible-believing woman that gave Christendom two of the most important figures of the 18th century.

## Susannah Wesley's Rules for Raising Children:

1. Subdue self-will in a child and thus work together with God to save his soul.
2. Teach him to pray as soon as he can speak.
3. Give him nothing he cries for and only what is good for him if he asks for it politely.
4. To prevent lying, punish no fault which is freely confessed, but never allow a rebellious, sinful act to go unnoticed.
5. Commend and reward good behavior.
6. Strictly observe all promises you have made to your child.