

## **Mother's Faith and Influence**

In 1865 William Ross Wallace wrote, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation that officially recognized Mother's Day for the first time. Mothers are very important and deserve this honor. Her love and influence is priceless. I hope each of you have fond memories of your mothers.

Most mothers share the same thoughts and say the same things. They think: "My kids are the best." They think: "Whose kids are these anyway, they are driving me crazy." They will say, "If I have to repeat myself ONE MORE TIME..." They say, "I'm watching you..." They say, "NO" at least 15 times a day. Best of all, Moms say, "I LOVE YOU."

**The Apostle Paul wrote a note to Timothy to encourage him in his walk of faith.**

**2 Timothy 1:1-8 (NIV)** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. 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. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

**2 Timothy 3:1 (NIV)** But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.

**2 Timothy 3:14 (NIV)** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,

**Paul was watching Timothy's faith, trial and future.**

He had adopted Timothy as a spiritual son. So, he wanted to encourage his faith and continued service in the things God had called Timothy to do. It was important for Timothy to remember his spiritual heritage. He reminded him of the genuine faith of his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. Timothy had been greatly influenced by their sincere faith.

**Godly Mothers are spiritual leaders and examples.**

There are several principles that my Mom demonstrated that had an impact on my life.

First and foremost among these principles was her deep love for the Word of God. Anyone who came into my parents house would find a Bible that Mom was reading and had marked. She had a Bible by her recliner and bed. She had a Bible in each rest room. She had a Bible by the dinning table. Every Bible was marked up with scriptures that were meaningful and helped build faith. Inside of every Bible, Mom had notes of favorite scriptures or phrases to boost her faith. The most prized possessions I have is my Mother's and Dad's Bibles. In the front of my Mother's Bible is a note that reads: "*Think big, dream big, and believe big.*" Another note has a heading: "*Keep your heart pure.*"

Second, was her diligent prayer life! I don't know how many times I heard my Mom say, "*I am praying for you.*" Many a night, my mother would come to my room, and kneel down beside my bed, and pray with me. She would call my name out to the Father. She would talk

about the things that were troubling me. It provided an awesome encouragement for my faith and a hedge of protection.

### **Mother's faith and Influence**

Along with my Mom, I was also blessed to have two godly Grandmothers, Ollie and Nora. One of my Grandmothers was my Sunday School teacher and was influential in my learning the Books of the Bible. I received my first real Bible from her after learning to spell all of the books of the Bible. She was strong in faith and was a great influence for me to read and learn the Scriptures. My other grandmother was an equally strong influence. Many times, she would kneel down and pull me over and hug me and pray. She was a great spiritual influence in my life. I remember many times of being in service with her and watching the power of God's Spirit fall on her. She was strong in the Holy Ghost, prayer and faith.

### **I observed many godly principles in my mother and grandmothers lives.**

Their Christian character was like a great anchor in our family. Steadfast women of faith have influenced countless children to become godly adults. The impact of a believing mother is immeasurable.

My brother-in-laws mother, Meme had 13 children. She was a woman of great faith. She was diagnosed with tuberculosis and was told she would have a short time to live. Her pastor came and prayed for her and she decided to put her trust in God. She got out of bed and was immediately healed and lived to the age of 95. One summer some of her boys came in and told her the pig had died. The family was depending on that meat to feed their family. Meme went out and laid hands on the pig and commanded it to come back to life. The pig rose as she commanded and later the family was able to kill the pig for their food. I remember watching Meme walk to church with a cane. She would struggle to get up the church steps, but when she was praising God in service she would get happy and dance around the church.

**According to a survey by Ladies Home Journal, 85 percent of women say that motherhood is the best thing that ever happened to them.** They were asked, "What is the greatest part of being a Mother?" Twenty-one percent say it's watching their kids grow. A category called "Everything" came in second (18%), Followed by kids' "unconditional love" (14%) But, 70% of all mothers consider motherhood incredibly stressful.

The mother's calling is not an easy one. It is difficult at times to be an effective parent. It is difficult living a life in God's favor and grace.

### **Timothy was blessed by having two women that positively influenced his faith and life for God.**

These women were Timothy's examples and mentors of faith. A godly mother is like that. Timothy was facing difficult times in his young life. His faith was tested and his ministry was being challenged. He was also watching the challenges and difficulties that the Apostle Paul was going through. Those sufferings were causing Timothy to question his faith.

### **Paul reminded Timothy of the example that his Mom and Grandmother had on his life.**

He was told to fan into flame the gift of God and to remember the faith that was implanted in him by his grandmother and mother. I am sure that Lois and Eunice had their faith tested and tried. When you look at early church history, you will see how difficult life was. Those women had a genuine faith.

They lived their faith before Timothy. This is exactly what God wants from mothers today.

Most Moms are still the significant caregivers. They have an awesome responsibility to nurture their children. Even when your children are grown, Moms have a great influence and responsibility. Each Mom is a gift from God.

Sometimes being a parent is overwhelming. Throughout life, parents often carry a burden in their heart for their children. God never intended that parenthood be taken upon yourself alone. He is our strong ally. That is why we need to develop a strong faith.

**Ruth Bell Graham said, “As a mother, my job is to take care of the possible and trust God with the impossible.”**

Godly mothers are models who trust and who can be trusted.

**Not only are godly Mothers spiritual mentors and great examples, they are also optimists. A godly mother hangs on to an optimistic and faith-filled attitude.**

Much of the way a child deals with the struggles and situations in life comes from the training and example they observed in their parents. Norene’s mom was a very quiet woman of faith and deep trust in God. We watched her go through the loss of her beloved husband and live in faith. I never heard her complain or doubt. She was never a loud or in your face kind of person, but her faith was strong. When she contracted lung cancer, her faith and trust in God never wavered. She faced the difficulties of her life with strong faith and deep trust in God. I can still see her in my mind with her hand raised looking toward heaven when she passed into her eternal reward.

When Paul saw that Timothy was wavering, he reminded him of the faith that was in his mother and grandmother.

**Third, Moms are mainstays.**

In John 19:25–27 and Acts 1:12–14, Mary demonstrated one outstanding attribute—she was a mainstay of the faith. What do I mean? She was at the foot of the cross when the world had turned its back on Jesus. In the Upper Room when the world thought Jesus was dead, Mary was firm in her reliance and trust in God.

**A mainstay is the supporting line extending from the main mast of a ship.** It is the chief support of the mast. It is crucial to the ship’s ability to set sail. It may not look strong, but it keeps the ship going in the right direction.

**When Timothy was in trouble, Paul was able to bring him back to stability, because Timothy had a Mom and Grandmother that had strong faith. This is a beautiful picture of all godly mothers.**

**Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)** And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Faith in God makes mothers a source of continual strength for their children. Many of you in this room would not have made it without your Mom. She was the one who taught you to pray. She was the one who stood faithful. She was your cheerleader. She told you to keep on trying. She kept on praying. She believed that with God’s help you would make it. The most unselfish substance in the world is the love of a mother for her child.

Some of you did not have a godly Mom. She was not an example for you. It is time for you to change the heritage of your family. Break the cycle. With God’s help you can do it. Many of you have had some spiritual mothers that prayed for you and helped you to grow in faith in the Lord.

**Timothy had two godly women that influenced his life.** Both of them were spiritual

mentors and great examples. They were optimistic and had strong faith that was an example for his life. Lois was a godly grandmother and Eunice was a godly Mom that was a mainstay for Timothy's life. Every mother who partners with God can be an inspiration to her children.

Some of you mothers are facing great trial and testing. You may be struggling with sickness, loss, or weakness. Your children are going through times of great difficulty. The weight of those things is heavy on your heart.

We want to take the time today to present you and your needs to God. We know that your faith in God is strong and we know that your faith is not in vain. We want to lift you up to God in prayer. God is able to help and encourage you today.