

The Power of a Mother's Faith Mother's Day

Texts: 2 Timothy 1:3-7; 3:14-17; Acts 16:1-5

2 Timothy 1:3-7

I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. ⁶ 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, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Acts 16:1-5

*Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, **the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.** ² He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and at Iconium. ³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.*

Introduction:

- Today is the Sunday that we traditionally set aside to honor our mothers and to give thanks to God for the influence they have had in our lives and on our souls.
- There really is no greater gift that God could give to each of us than the gift of a godly mother who passed along to us her faith in God and faithfulness to God.
- Such women find encouragement and example set forth for them in the lives of two godly women – a grandmother and a mother – who were the primary instruments God used to raise and shape one of the most important pastors in all of church history – the second pastor of the church at Ephesus, a man named Timothy.
- So important is Timothy to the cause of Christ in the first century – the early formative years of the Church – that Paul writes two letters that are addressed to him. Additionally, he is named and featured in six of Paul's other epistles.
- We know that Timothy grew up in the city of Lystra, in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). He was the son of a Jewish mother and a pagan dad. We know that he was a young man

(probably in his late teens or early twenties) when he first heard the gospel of Christ preached by Paul during the first missionary journey in Acts 14.

- We know a great deal about Timothy from the New Testament record, but there are three summary statements that will help motivate us to ask how God crafted these qualities into his life. Here is what we know:
 1. ***Timothy was saved*** – Soundly converted under Paul’s ministry, he probably heard the gospel from Paul during the first missionary journey (Acts 14).
 2. ***Timothy was sanctified*** – He experienced steady growth and showed a strong testimony after Paul’s departure. Acts 16 tells us that Timothy was “well spoken of” by the believers in two cities – Lystra and Derbe!
 3. ***Timothy was set apart*** – To spiritual service as Paul’s partner and as a minister of the gospel of God! This happened as Paul took Timothy with him and as God imparted a spiritual gift to Timothy at the time Paul ordained him to ministry (by the laying on of Paul’s hands).
- Without question, Timothy is an outstanding example of what a New Testament believer should be like, a person who desires to make a difference for Christ!
- ***BUT how did this happen? What was the secret to the shaping of Timothy’s life and soul?*** Obviously, God did it. And He used His Spirit, His Word, and His servant (Paul). However, God also used the unfailing, quiet testimony of two women whose faith in God and faithfulness to His Word produced a wonderful result in giving to the church one of her most effective servants – Timothy.
- The women God used in this were Timothy’s grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice. We wish to speak of them this morning.
- More precisely, we want to examine the powerful and effective faith that was theirs and to discover how God can develop and use that faith in our lives for His glory and His gospel! From the biblical record of their lives (Acts 16:1-5; 2 Tim. 1:3-5; 3:14-17) we can learn four important lessons about cultivating a powerful faith in our own lives and souls!

I. A Powerful Faith Is Personal in Its Nature (2 Tim. 1:3-5)

I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift

God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

II. A Powerful Faith Is Powerful in Its Expression (2 Tim. 1:5)

I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

III. A Powerful Faith Is Persevering in Its Context (Acts 16: 1-5)

*Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, **the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.** ² He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.*

A. Faith that Persevered in the Midst of a Pagan Culture

The son of a Jewish woman who was a believer

B. Faith that Persevered in the Midst of a Pagan Home

... but his father was Greek

IV. A Powerful Faith Is Permanent in Its Consequence (2 Tim. 1.5; 3:14-17)

... I am sure (am persuaded), dwells in you as well.

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned ¹⁵ **and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings**, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

- How did this happen? How did two women accomplish this? How did these two ladies living in a pagan culture and dwelling in a pagan home with unbelieving husbands raise a young man who would end up being one of the most important pastors in the New Testament?
- They taught him the Scriptures from his youth up (2 Tim 3.14-17). They read the Scriptures to him and they may have even taught him to read and write from the Scriptures!
- These Scriptures were able (capable) to make this young man wise unto salvation.
- They were also able to thoroughly prepare and equip him to be a man of God prepared for every good work God called him to do in service to the gospel.

Conclusion:

- Just like God did in Timothy's day through Lois and Eunice – God can do for you in your day!
- You may be married to a pagan or to a disobedient believer – don't despair! All is not lost. God can and will use your obedience and your faithfulness to raise up Godly children.
- It will require a powerful faith that is personal, passionate, and persevering in the midst of difficult and discouraging circumstances.
- If you will display this kind of faith, God will give you a Timothy.
- He did so for Lois and Eunice. He did so for another woman like them named Monica – Augustine's mother.
- And He will do it for you! Will you commit to this kind of faith?