

HOW MOTHERS CAN HAVE THEIR CHILDREN—AND OTHERS—RISE UP AND CALL THEM BLESSED

INTRO

Of the “Virtuous Woman,” the Bible says: “Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and **call her blessed**; her husband also, and he praiseth her” (Prov 31:25-28).

Who rises up and call their mothers blessed?

George Washington did—and he only had her for 11 years. While alive, however, she wrote out her “mottos to live by” regarding religion and morality. Washington viewed this as one of his most valued treasures and wrote of her words: “Mother was consulted by me many times in afterlife.”

Abraham Lincoln also called his mother blessed—and like Washington—lost his mother when he was just a boy. Lincoln was only 9 when his mother died, but when asked why he was so honest, he said he could still clearly hear the tones of his mother’s voice as she read to him the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20.

Yet another famous President, **Theodore Roosevelt**, wrote these words of his mother: “The mother’s task is never easy—no task worth doing is easy—but in doing it, and when she has done it, there shall come to her the highest and holiest joy known to mankind; and having done it, she shall have the reward prophesied in Scripture; for her husband and her children, yes, and all people who realize that her work lies at the very foundation of all national happiness and greatness, shall rise up and call her blessed” (253) Roosevelt seems to be saying that it is one thing for a **child** to call his or her mother blessed; but quite another thing when **a nation** calls her blessed because of the impact she had in the upbringing of a national leader.

This morning I want to look at a Biblical example of one man giving tribute to another man’s mother for the job she did in raising her son. The man is Paul; the son raised is Timothy, and the mother being praised is Timothy’s mother, Eunice. (II Timothy 1:1-5). Notice again verse 3—“I thank God,” Paul says—and then he tells us **why** he thanks God in verse 5: “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice...” Title of message this morning—“How Mothers can have their children—and others—rise up and call them blessed!”

Why did Paul thank God for Timothy’s mother? We see here in Chapter 1 that it was because of her faith, but in chapter 3 we see in more detail exactly **what** it was that Timothy was taught by his mother. Notice II Timothy 3:12. Paul is warning Timothy about suffering persecution and that evil men will become yet eviler, but there is a way to overcome both—by continuing in the things Timothy had learned and was convinced of (verse 14).

1. Who Timothy learned from—and when “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;” (v 14). Who did Timothy learn from?

A. Paul as an adult

Impossible to read the book of 1st or 2nd Timothy without realizing that Paul was Timothy’s spiritual mentor.

I Tim 1:2 “Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith”

II Tim 1:13—“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me”

II Tim 2:2—“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

II Tim 2:7—“Consider what I say...”

Timothy didn’t just learn from Paul, however. From the Greek we know that “whom thou hast learned them” is not singular—referring to just one person—but **plural**—as in having learned from **more** than one person.

Easy to see from the context that Timothy also learned from—

B. His mother as a child

Notice verse 15 “And that from **a child** thou hast known the holy Scriptures....” In order for Timothy to **know** something from his childhood, he obviously had to be **taught** it when he was a child! Why do I say it was **his mother** and not his father who taught him? Because Acts 16:1 tells us that Timothy’s mother was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek. It was a Jewish parent’s duty to instruct their children in the OT Law beginning at age 5, but the Greeks had no such custom. We really don’t know much about Timothy’s father, but we noted in Chapter 1 that both his mother and grandmother were women of faith.

It is also interesting to consider that the word “child” comes from the Greek word *brephos* and is also used in I Pet 2:2 “As newborn **babes** desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby...” Timothy, then, as an *infant*, was taught the holy scriptures by his mother—and possibly his grandmother Lois. Eunice, it seems, did not wait until Timothy was five-years-old to begin teaching him!

2. What Timothy learned—and how

Timothy learned from Paul as an adult—and from his mother as a child. What did he learn? And how did he learn it?

A. From Paul, Timothy learned how to be a Pastor

I Tim 3:15 “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

I Tim 4:6 “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”

B. How did Paul teach Timothy?

By what he **said**—and by what he **did**.

Notice **II Tim 3:10**—“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,” Doctrine is teaching—and Paul’s *purpose* was probably taught as well—but the rest of the things Paul refers to are things Timothy would have **observed** in Paul and not necessarily been formally taught.

Much more could be said regarding what Paul taught Timothy, but this is Mother’s Day—not Pastor Preparation Day! So, what did Timothy learn from his **mother**?

C. From his mother, Timothy learned the holy Scriptures

Verse 15—“And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures...” Since the NT was not written yet, Timothy was taught the OT. Had the NT been written, I have no doubt Timothy’s mother would have taught him that, too! **How** did she teach? The same way Paul taught—by words and by example! Here we are told she taught him the Scriptures; in chapter 1 we saw that she had an unfeigned faith—meaning she was sincere and not hypocritical. Her walk and her talk matched.

Let’s pause here for a moment and consider this: Moms...**what** are you teaching your children? Whether you think about it or not, you are always “teaching” because they are always *watching*. They learn what is important in life by seeing what is important to you! Is it your computer...or your phone...or the TV? What place does the **Bible** have in your life? Is it important to you—and are you teaching it to **them**?

I’m thankful for my Mom and the influence she had in my life. My Dad drove truck and worked long days; my Mom did not work outside the home when I was growing up so she was always there. She taught me the importance of working hard because she worked hard. My Mom did not tolerate a “potty mouth.” I don’t know that I ever heard her swear and she most certainly did not let us kids swear. I do not remember how old

I was—nor do I remember if it was *liquid* soap or a *bar* of soap—but I do remember the word I said—and not liking the taste of soap in my mouth!

More importantly than even that, my Mom was a stickler for *honesty*. It was not the best policy—it was the *only* policy. Many of you have heard me share this once before, but I believe it is a fitting time to share it again. I absolutely love home-made bread and my Mom made the best—bar none. One of my favorite things to do was take one of those warm loaves sitting there on a cooling rack—calling my name, of course—and flip it over, then proceed to make a little hole in the bottom and pull out some of that warm, soft, fresh bread.

If I remember right, at first it was kind of funny and we joked about “the mouse in the house.” However, it didn’t stay funny for long because when you cut a loaf a bread, the idea is to get a slice of bread with crust—not all crust and *no* bread! At any rate, it was even less funny when my Mom cornered me coming out of our upstairs bathroom and questioned me about being “the mouse in the house.” I didn’t dare lie—and I do not recall what the consequences were—but I’m fairly certain that I never destroyed another loaf of bread from that day forward!

Again, I ask—what are you teaching your children? Do you teach them the importance of being honest, of working hard, of not swearing? More importantly, are you teaching them *the Bible*? How *do* you teach little ones the Bible? Teach them songs, teach them verses, read to them from a children’s Bible, and pray with them. I remember my oldest son’s first Bible verse—I John 4:19: “We love him because He first loved us.”

Little Graham was closing his eyes and bowing his head for prayer before meals well before he was 2 years old. Last time Karen was here with her granddaughter, I mentioned that Jesus is coming back. Karen apologized for her grand-daughter whispering during church, but it didn’t bother me in the least. In fact, my heart was blessed when I found out she was asking her Grandma what door Jesus would come through when He did come back!

3. Why does it matter if you teach your children the Bible?

A. It will make them wise: “which are able to make thee *wise*” (v 15)

I wonder if we put enough emphasis on wisdom. Of the virtuous woman the Bible says “She openeth her mouth with *wisdom*...” We want our children to do well in school—to get good grades and to be smart—but is it not better to be *wise* than smart? Being smart means you have the ability to retain facts and make good *grades*; being wise means you have the ability to use experience and knowledge to make good *decisions*.

Throughout the course of your child’s life, which will be more of a benefit—good *grades*...or good *decisions*? I think you’d agree that teaching your children the ability to make good decisions will be more of a blessing to both them—and you—than good grades ever would be!

God’s Word—and the fear of the Lord—is the source of wisdom and that is why you need to teach it to your children. Notice the following verses:

Proverbs 2:6 “For the Lord giveth *wisdom*: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”

Proverbs 4:7 “*Wisdom* is the principal thing; therefore get *wisdom*: and with all thy getting get understanding.”

Proverbs 8:11 “For *wisdom* is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.”

Proverbs 9:10 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of *wisdom*: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”

Proverbs 16:16 “How much better is it to get *wisdom* than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!”

Why does it matter if you teach your children the Bible? Because it will make them **wise**—but not just for the sake of being wise. Notice the rest of the verse 15:

B. It will make them wise unto salvation

God, through Paul, tells Timothy—and us—that the Scriptures make thee wise *unto salvation*. Salvation from what? What does it mean to be saved—and what is it that we are saved from?

i) The meaning of salvation

In Hawaii right now, an evacuation order is in place for people that could be impacted by flowing lava and toxic gasses. Why? So lives will be spared; so people will be “saved” from physical death.

When the Bible refers to being “saved,” however, it most often means to be saved from the eternal consequences of sin. It means to be forgiven, to be declared righteous, to be granted access to a perfect heaven with a perfectly holy God. Notice the following:

I Timothy 1:15 “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to **save** sinners; of whom I am chief.”

I Timothy 2:3-6 “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will [desires to] have all men to be **saved**, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

II Timothy 1:9 “Who hath **saved** us, and called us with an holy calling, *not according to our works*, but according to his own purpose and grace,”

ii) The method of salvation: “through **faith** which is in Christ Jesus.” Salvation—escaping the future penalty for our sins—comes through putting our faith in Jesus Christ and Him alone. Notice the verses we already looked at:

I Timothy 1:15 shows us that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

I Timothy 2:3-6 shows us that there is only one mediator—one go-between—between God and man—and His name is Jesus. These verses also show us that Jesus died as a ransom—He paid the penalty we deserved.

II Timothy 1:9 show us that salvation is “not according to our works”

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast.”

Haven’t said this for a while: ‘If we could work our way to heaven, there would be bragging in heaven. If there is bragging in heaven, heaven ceases to be heaven!’

Moms—are you teaching your children about **salvation**—about how to go to heaven after they die? The biggest blessing of being taught honesty by my Mom was not that I stopped destroying bread, but that I honestly answered this question while at a Bible Camp. The question—“If you were to die tonight, are you **sure** that you would go to heaven?” Is that not the most important question? Jesus stated it was!

Matthew 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Some mothers want their children to be smart so they can get good jobs and make lots of money. Jesus said they can make lots of money—they can become rich—they can gain the whole world—but lose their own soul.

Some mothers want their children to be talented so they can achieve fame and be praised by the crowds. Jesus said they can become famous—and gain the praise of the world—but still lose their own soul.

Some mothers have higher, less selfish goals. They want their children to make advances in medicine or technology that will help alleviate pain and suffering for others. That is a good goal but even if it is achieved, it still does not get them into heaven—they can still lose their soul.

So how does one **save** his soul? We can't—but Jesus can—and wants to! Notice the last verse on your sheet: **John 5:39-40** "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not **come to me**, that ye might have life."

Jesus said "Search the Scriptures"—look in the Bible—"for in them ye think"—and rightly so—that "ye have eternal life: and they—the Scriptures—testify/point to me." And then we have what I believe are the saddest words in all the Bible: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." "I am the way, the truth, and the life—I want you to come to me—but you will not come..."

Moms, are you teaching your children how to be saved. If not, why not? Is it because you yourself are not saved—or is it because you've allowed other things to crowd out what is the most important thing?

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

God's Word is not just to be heard with our **ears**—it is to be obeyed in our **hearts**. God in His grace convinces us of the truth of His Word—but also confronts us with the need to make a decision about what He is speaking to us about.

1. Are you **saved**? That is the heart-beat and desire of Jesus—and should be something you want to be certain of.
2. Have you **slipped** in what you are teaching your children? Ask God to forgive you and ask Him for both strength and wisdom to start teaching them the Bible.
3. Are you hanging onto—or hiding—a sin that God keeps bringing to your attention and you keep trying to ignore? Do you think He will forget? Do you think He will bless you when you willingly disobey what He wants you to do?