
Honor One Another

Mother's Day

Luke 4:16-30

5/12/2019

Main Idea: The greatest privilege and sweetest responsibility of motherhood is to model sincere faith in God and a love for His Word to children.

Lesson Objective: Invest your life into others so they will know God.

Introduction

As your class time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

One time a little boy was called up front to solve a math problem. The teacher asked him, "You have a pie with 6 pieces. There are 5 in your family: your brother, your sister, your mother and father and you. Each one gets one piece of the pie. Now you only have one piece left. We don't want to cause any disagreements so it is decided to divide that last piece of pie evenly among your family. Tell me with a fraction how it will be divided up." The little boy said, "1/4th." The teacher said, "No, it would be 1/5th because there are 5 in your family and it will be divided evenly." The little boy said, "No, teacher, it will be 1/4th. This happens all of the time in my family and my mother divides up the piece of pie but she never gives any to herself." WE should be like that mother. Who comes first? WE should be like that mother.

God has called parents to be the primary disciplers of their children, raising them to love and honor God (Deut. 6:4-9). Moms play a unique and privileged role in that process. Regardless of how well or how poorly your mom modeled faith for you, and regardless of how well you've modeled faith in the past, the greatest privilege and sweetest responsibility you have going forward is to model sincere faith in God and a love for His Word to other people.

Name one important life lesson your mom taught you.

Do you notice some of the traits and habits of your mom in your? How do you think your mom's example has affected you?

What is the role of moms in the spiritual formation of their children? What is the role of the church in the spiritual formation of children?

Sincere Faith

2 Timothy 1:5

³ 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. [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#).

Paul began this letter, as he had nearly done in all of his letters, by giving thanks to God. His thanksgiving expressed gratitude for God's amazing grace in his life and in the lives of the believers. He affirmed a continuity with the true faith of his Jewish ancestors. This means that he had not left the teachings and writings of the Holy Scriptures (the Old Testament) and turned to worship and serve another god. Jesus had revealed Himself to Paul as the Messiah, and now his faith had been made real by faith in Christ. This faithful submission to Jesus as the Messiah allowed him to serve the God of Abraham (cf. Acts 23:1; 24:14; 26:6). Paul did not look back on his early life as a time of a bad conscience but as one of the terrible ignorance of unbelief with regard to Jesus (cf. 1 Tim. 1:13).¹

What follows is a pattern of words about remembrance. (1) Paul remembers Timothy in his prayers. Two expressions describe his perseverance in prayer for Timothy. (a) He does so “**constantly**.” Paul uses words in this word group elsewhere also to describe that which is incessant (prayers in Rom. 1:9; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13; 5:17; anguish over his unbelieving “brothers” in Rom. 9:2–3).

¹ George W. Knight, [The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#), New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 367.

(b) He prays “**night and day.**” It does not mean that Timothy is never out of his thoughts, but that during his frequent prayers around the clock, he never failed to mention the young pastor.

(2) Next, Paul remembers Timothy’s tears (v. 4). We do not know to which occasion he referred. It may have been when Paul left Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3), since we do not know of any further meeting between the two. The important thing is what it says about their relationship. Clearly Timothy is not the only one who is sad, for Paul longs to see Timothy so that he himself may be “**filled with joy.**”

(3) Paul then recalls Timothy’s “**sincere faith**”. Comparing this passage with Acts 16:1–3, we gather that the opinions of his acquaintances differed as to the kind of home in which Timothy grew up. It is clear that his mother was Jewish, which meant that Timothy was Jewish also. Her marriage to a Gentile meant a break in her relationship to her religion. Thus, on the one hand Timothy was “technically an apostate Jew because he was uncircumcised”, and on the other hand was viewed by Gentiles as virtually Jewish. In order to clarify his status and to protect his own acceptance in the synagogue, Paul had Timothy circumcised. Yet it was already clear to Paul when he met him that Timothy had an authentic Jewish faith, thanks to the piety of his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois.²

The faith Paul referred to was belief in the God of the Old Testament, who had revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus. Many moms place “faith” in their kids’ abilities, the strength of their own love for their children, and the lifestyle they afford their children to have. None of those qualities are what would enable

² Walter L. Liefeld, [1 and 2 Timothy, Titus](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 222–223.

Eunice's son Timothy to live out God's calling on his life. Rather, sincere faith in Jesus Christ would be the immovable foundation of Timothy's life in any and every circumstance. Sincerity of faith indicates one that is genuine and not hypocritical. Eunice's marriage to Timothy's father clearly did not preclude sincerity of faith. Our backgrounds, experiences, and past sins, whatever they are, do not determine our spiritual effectiveness. Whatever is behind us, what our children must see now and in the future, is our sincerity in relationship to the Lord.

How did Paul describe the faith of Timothy, his mother, and grandmother?

In your own words, what does it mean to have a sincere faith?

Describe the elements of faith that you consider essential for the next generation of Christians to understand.

Why is authenticity such a crucial part of leaving a legacy of faith in the lives of our children?

Considering that we all sin, what does sincerity of faith require of us as parents in those situations where our children see us fail?

Based in Scripture

2 Timothy 3:14-15

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 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. [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#)

True faith cannot be inherited from the parents; it must be individually claimed. Each person must entrust himself personally to Jesus Christ. Paul had watched Timothy and worked beside him for years. In Timothy, Paul recognized a genuine faith, one adhering to the teachings of Christ and the apostles, which in turn produced righteous behavior. Proper belief and proper actions are components of sincere faith. Each of us is susceptible to this dangerous trap of deception unless we obey Scripture vigilantly. Following Christ is more than a one-time decision or an occasional church service or kind act. True Christianity involves continual dependence and obedience to Christ the king. Paul told Timothy to continue in what he had learned and had become convinced of. Our faith is proved by its endurance.

Two elements are necessary for faithful living. First, we must possess knowledge of the truth. Truth enlightens a person about what is right and wrong, what constitutes purpose and happiness. We cannot trust or love what we do not know. The second element is conviction or belief. We express our belief system in the daily decisions we make and the behaviors in which we engage.

No one acts contrary to belief (though we may act contrary to our professions of belief).

Paul also wanted Timothy to consider those from whom he had learned truth, and how from such a young age he had known the sacred writings. Once again Paul was thinking of Timothy's mother and grandmother. We are learning that Lois and Eunice had trained Timothy in reading and memorizing Old Testament texts. These people served as examples to Timothy about the truth of God, the need for endurance, and the reward of faithfulness. Each person had staked his or her life on the revelation of the Scriptures which, according to Paul, were able to make one wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Timothy was taught the Old Testament and had learned the need for forgiveness, the provision of God, and the necessity of faith. He had also been disciplined by Paul, learning about Christ and the church. In each case, Timothy had not only been given knowledge; he had been witness to godly lives. This had proved a good foundation as he developed into faith in Christ. The genuine faith Paul had noted a genuine faith in Timothy's mother and grandmother, and he was convinced that it now lives in him.

The power of the Bible to affect change and demand obedience resides in the fact that all Scripture is God-breathed. The Bible originates with God. Claims of origins carry great significance because authority lives in the Creator. This is why people invest such Herculean efforts to try to disprove God as the earth's Creator and to question the authenticity of the Bible. Admitting to God's authorship is an acceptance of his authority over every aspect of life. By stating that Scriptures are God-breathed, Paul established the Bible's claim as God's authoritative Word over all people.

The Scriptures were written by men “as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). The picture is that of a sailboat being moved along by the wind. Indeed, men wrote the Bible, but the words and substance of what they wrote came from God. This makes the Bible useful. Paul listed four main uses of Scripture, all of which intertwine with one another.

Teaching involves instruction. Since Timothy was feeling the attacks of false teachers, Paul encouraged the young pastor to continue in teaching correct doctrine and correct living. The Scriptures must be known so people will grasp their need for salvation and so the confessing community will adhere to its instructions on proper Christian conduct.

Reproof and **correction** are the disciplinary authority of Scripture. Because the Bible is God’s Word and because it reveals truth, it exercises authority over those who deviate from its standard. “**Reproof**” points out sin and confronts disobedience. “**Correction**” recognizes that a person has strayed from the truth. Graciously, lovingly, yet firmly, we should try to guide the errant individual back into obedience. Many times the Old Testament relates Israel’s disobedience to God, how the people suffered God’s chastisement for their rebellion, and how God corrected their sinful habits. The New Testament continues with stories and instructions, warnings regarding disobedience, disciplinary actions for those who fail to heed God’s revelation, and teachings on proper conduct.

Training in righteousness is the counterpoint to correction. The Scriptures give us positive guidance for maturing in faith and acceptable conduct. The goal of all this instruction, discipline, and training is not to keep us busy. God intends that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. We study the Bible, we rely upon God’s Spirit, his revelation, and the

community of the faithful to keep us on track—obedient and maturing in faith. Continuing in this commitment will enable us to do whatever God calls us to do. Timothy could withstand the attacks of false teachers, the abandonment of professing believers, and the persecution that surrounded him because God had equipped him for the task. God never calls us to do something without first enabling us through his Spirit and the power of his truth to accomplish the task. We neglect the Scriptures at our own peril. Through them we gain the ability to serve God and others. The Scriptures not only point the way; through the mysterious union of God’s Word and faith, they give us the ability to serve.

Timothy’s mother and grandmother modeled a life of faith in Christ and commitment to the gospel, nurtured the gifts God had given Timothy, and challenged Timothy to live up to his calling. As the spiritual leaders in our homes, it is our responsibility to affirm the value of our family members so they can embrace who God made them to be. Every person is created with unique gifts, talents, and callings, and it is our responsibility to support and encourage one another to discover those gifts and purposes.

Since the faith of Lois and Eunice was “sincere,” and since Timothy had learned the Holy Scriptures since childhood, what can you infer about Lois and Eunice’s relationship with the Word of God?

Can you pass along sincere faith to your children without demonstrating a genuine love for the Word of God? Explain.

Take a few moments to think back through the communities of faith you’ve been a part of. In those experiences, how was faith passed down to a new generation?

Why is it important to affirm the spiritual gifts and calling of your loved ones? What impact does this have on their lives and their faith?

Exhort One Another³

Hebrews 3:12-13

12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#)

The writer of Hebrews challenged the faith community to guard their relationship with Jesus Christ. He sought to warn them of an **unbelieving heart** which can spring up in the most unexpected places. As we read about Israel, we would never think that those who had personally witnessed the ten plagues on Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea and the awesome year of events at Mt. Sinai would have ever turned away from God with sinful, unbelieving, hard hearts. The sad reality is that they did. The book of Hebrews repeatedly urges its Christian readers not to walk down the same unbelieving path. They are “**brothers**” now. He wants them to remain brothers.

As repentance turns toward the living God, unbelief turns away from him. Unbelief is a basic sin (John 16:8–9). It is always expressed in self-willed distrust of others. Such a person is unyielding to another’s wishes or judgments. All that matters is one’s own opinion. This not only damages relations with God, but also relations with others, which will degenerate into this same self-centered independence. That is why the alternative to this kind of heart is

³ This section was taken from James Girdwood and Peter Verkruyse, [Hebrews](#), The College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1997), Heb 3:12–13.

interdependence (3:13). Christians are not designed to live by themselves. Since the designation of God as “**the living God**” was introduced to the scene at Sinai, it has an ominous overtone (Deut 5:26). “It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31). It was the expression used in oath statements in court (Matt 26:63). To live for him takes away this fear and lets us serve him gladly (9:14; 12:22; 1 John 4:18). It is a good designation, for God is full of life and all life comes from him (John 5:21; 10:10).

Daily we must **exhort one another**. The present tense indicates repetition. If encouragement is only once a month, it will not help carry burdens. If encouragement is only once a week in the general assembly of believers, it will not meet the daily needs of living. The beginning church spent time together daily (Acts 2:46). Besides daily food (Matt 6:11; Acts 6:1; Titus 3:14; James 2:15) there were daily struggles of cross-bearing (Luke 9:23; 1 Cor 15:31; 2 Cor 11:28) and need for daily renewal (2 Cor 4:16) when daily facing the unregenerate world (1 Thess 4:12; 2 Pet 2:8). The work of evangelism was done daily (Acts 2:47; 5:42; 16:5; 17:17; 19:9). One of the great weaknesses of the church today may be this general lack of *daily interdependence* with its accompanying openness in joy and sorrow, in sins and victories.

The statement, “**As long as it is called Today,**” means that the invitation will not always exist. One day the end will come when Jesus returns to bring the long-awaited salvation (9:28). Tomorrow may be too late. Since the statement is from the Psalms, the time called “Today” existed in the time of the Psalm writer. Thus the invitation to enter his rest was open previous to the Christian era. Israel’s failure did not close heaven forever to wayward mankind.

Muscles become stiff from lack of use, coldness, disease or age. Hearts become hard in the same ways. Here it is attributed to **sin’s deceitfulness**, or

this could say Satan's deceitfulness, for his work is behind all sin. He is the father of lies. Much of his approach is bluffing and empty deception (John 8:44). He wants us to believe that he is far more knowledgeable and powerful than he is. He will flee if resisted (James 4:7).

On the other hand, part of the danger of sin is that we treat it so lightly that we do not take adequate precautions to prevent its terrible work. Wealth also is deceitful, promising what it does not deliver and raising false hopes of its power to satisfy (Matt 13:22). Moses saw through this deception of sin, and he chose to leave all the privileges of the palace of Egypt to escape from it (11:24–26). Adam and Eve did not see through it and they brought huge evil on the world instead of the improvement they anticipated (Gen 3). As faith comes by hearing the message of God and obeying it, so hardening comes by hearing and not obeying (Rom 10:17; John 15:22–25).

What is the role of every Christian mother in helping her children develop soft and pliable hearts toward God?

How have you seen your view of God and Scripture passed down to your own children or others within the next generation? How can we encourage our families and friends to love and serve God more fully?

What aspects of your daily life might need to change in order for you to lead your family to love the Lord in all areas of life?