

Godly Mothers

II Timothy 1:5

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Introduction: The second Sunday of May is designated as Mother's Day. On this day, we honor & show our love & respect for our mothers. In parts of this country, people will wear either a red or a white flower, indicating whether or not their mother is still alive. It used to be the busiest phone day in the year, as sons & daughters made special effort to call Mom (not some much now with cell phones). The Bible has much to say about mother-hood. What do you think of when you hear the term: "a God-fearing" mother? Note with me this morning three characteristics of a godly mother: her unfeigned faith, her unfailing love, & her unfaltering holiness. As a mother, ask yourself if these things accurately describe your life. May the same be asked of each of us as well.

I. A godly mother is characterized by an unfeigned faith > II Timothy 1:5

A. The definition of an unfeigned faith:

1. The indication of this word – "*unfeigned*"
 - a. "*Un*" – means "not"
 - b. "*Feigned*" – means "pretending to be what one is not"
 - c. "*Unfeigned*" – therefore means, "without pretense or insincerity; genuine; not hypocritical [This word is also used of love in Romans 12:9 & of wisdom in James 3:13-18.]
2. The illustration of this word –
 - a. To "*feign*" was to act behind the mask or a disguise; used of actors in a play.
 - b. The Greek word from which we get our English word "hypocrite" – a pretender (cf. Rom. 12:9, "*dissimulation*").
 - c. Faith "*unfeigned*" is genuine, from the heart, not mere lip-service. (Sunday-mask?)

B. The description of an unfeigned faith:

1. Who?
 - a. Grandmother Lois > "If we had more grandmother Lois's, we would have more Timothys" (Evangelist Leon Foote).
 - b. Mother Eunice > cf. Acts 16:1, "*...a certain woman which was a Jewess, & believed; but his father was a Greek*" (Though she had an unbelieving husband, Eunice still provided the proper spiritual training for her son. How many mothers still do so today?)
 - c. Son Timothy > his faith was a result of his godly heritage. See II Timothy 3:15. (The greatest legacy or heritage we could leave behind in this world is believing sons, daughters, grandchildren. Compare III John :4.)

C. The demonstration of an unfeigned faith:

1. One with unfeigned faith studies the Word > II Timothy 2:15.
2. One with unfeigned faith shuns the world ("*iniquity*") > II Timothy 2:16-19.
3. One with unfeigned faith seeks the work > II Timothy 2:20-21 ("*sanctified*" > pure; "*meet*" > proper; & "*prepared*" > prepared). Who not only professes, but possesses & practices faith.

II. A godly mother is characterized by an unfailing love > I Thessalonians 2:5-8 (cf. I Peter 1:22)

A. Note the context:

1. Paul writes to defend himself of charges leveled against him (see verses 3, 5-6).
2. "When the Thessalonians accepted the Gospel they were indeed like children, who were in need of the tender, loving care which the missionaries provided" (Hiebert).

B. Note the **comparison**:

1. As a mother (“*nurse cherisheth her children*” – nursing mother) cherishes her own children (“*cherisheth*” was a term used of birds covering their young to warm & protect them; it also speaks of imparting life – as a mother does her nursing infant, as well as closeness – the baby is in her arms, close to her heart). [Consider other reasons for this “nursing” illustration.]
2. “*Affectionately desirous*” – a term of endearment, “it denotes the warm affection & tender yearning that the missionaries felt for their spiritual “babes” at Thessalonica” (Hiebert).

C. Note the **consideration** (for us):

1. An unselfish love – “The nursing mother cares for & protects here offspring, without seeking profit of honor for herself, but is intent upon bestowing...no thought of selfish gain” (Hiebert).
2. An unfailing love – love for the unlovely, the undeserving, & the ungrateful is God’s love for us, pictured in Luke 15 with the prodigal son (Illustrate: Neal as a rebellious, run-a-way teen). [Consider the saying, “That child has a face that only a mother could love!”]

III. A godly mother is characterized by an **unfaltering holiness** > I Timothy 2:15

A. Consider an **analysis** of this passage – “*saved in childbearing*” (3 interpretations by Ryrie)

1. Brought safely (delivered) through child-birth?? (Overcomes the curse?)
2. Deliverance from the effects of Eve’s role in the fall of man – “...even though a woman bears the stigma of being the initial instrument who led the race into sin, it is women through child-bearing who may be preserved or freed from that stigma by raising a generation of godly children??
3. Saved (delivered) through the birth of a child – Jesus Christ (literally, “*the childbearing*”); “Just as Eve was saved through faith in the ‘seed’ to come, so all women may experience full salvation through this same channel (Christ’s birth)” (Kent). See Genesis 3:15.

B. Consider an **application** of the principles stated here: “*faith, charity, & holiness with sobriety*”

1. The **appearance** of holiness (:9, “*modest apparel*”)
 - a. “*Shamefacedness*” – modesty, that which is decent & orderly; avoidance of extremes
 - b. “*Sobriety*” – self-control; self-restraint; having a sound mind & good sense [cf. I Peter 3:3]
2. The **actions** of holiness (:10, “*good works*”)
 - a. Good works are the proper result of holiness (cf. Ephesians 2:10).
 - b. Compare the actions of a woman with an unsaved husband in I Peter 3:1, 5-6.
3. The **attitude** of holiness (:11-14, “*subjection*” – “to rank under” – cf. order & authority)
 - a. This speaks of her attitude of submission. “Submission is recognizing God’s order in the home & the church, & joyfully obeying it” (Wiersbe). See I Cor. 14:40.
 - b. Compare the admonition of Paul in Ephesians 5:22-24 (& cf. I Peter 3:2,4).

Summary: The phrase “*if they continue*” does not mean, “in order to be saved” – but rather, because they are saved. Their saved condition is indicated by their sanctified conduct (“*faith, charity, holiness*”). These are evidences of salvation, true of both women & men.

Conclusion: Mothers, could you be accurately characterized by these three attributes? Do you possess an unfeigned faith? That is, is your faith sincere, without hypocrisy, showing itself as you study the Word, shun the world, & seek the work? Do you portray an unfailing love, showing love even toward those who are unlovely, undeserving, or ungrateful? And do you pursue an unfaltering holiness, in your appearance, by your actions, & with your attitude?

We pause this day to honor all mothers. We acknowledge their love & sacrifice & devotion in raising their children. May we also be able to give words of praise & admiration for godly mothers here today or those mothers represented by their children that are here. Might God continue to raise up mothers who are characterized by an unfeigned faith, an unfailing love, & an unfaltering holiness!