

## **Bible e-Study** Women of the New Testament #10

### **Timothy's mother and grandmother.**

*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. 2 Timothy 1:5*

**NUGGET** – So today we end the New Testament series with Eunice and Lois, Timothy's grand-mother and mother respectively. They are women of faith so St Paul tells us. And their faith was a faith that *lived*. It overflowed from them to Timothy. These women are examples for us and they reflect the experience of many of us who, by God's grace were raised by Christian parents in Christian homes.

The words of Paul give us an insight to communicating our faith – that it can be a living legacy. What these women did in passing on their faith through their own family, teaches us something of what we are doing here. We are preparing the next generation of believers as we pass faith in Christ on through our own families. And they teach us that passing on the faith is intentional not accidental.

In this nugget sentence we see three generations of believers mentioned. But what's more is, that we are receiving the benefits still today of what they did some two thousand years ago. In Eunice and Lois passing on the living faith to Timothy, they prepared him for his role in going out and teaching that faith under Paul's instruction. And what Paul instructed Timothy, because he had been taught the faith from his mother and grandmother, *that* teaching has been passed on to us, down the generations.

The point is, we do not know the effect we will have on future generations when we lovingly teach faith in Christ to our families. What will be their impact down the years? It's sort of like the movie '*It's a Wonderful Life*'. Without George Bailey there to rescue his brother from the frozen lake, then his brother would not have been able to save the lives of hundreds on board the ship.

So also with our families. We have Eunice and Lois's example to live by in teaching a living faith to others in our family. And in the teaching, we pass on the trust in God that gives us the sure and certain hope of being reunited with them in Christ.

### **APPLICATION –**

1. Lois, Timothy's grandmother is someone who teaches us that grandparents are not simply to sit on the sidelines and watch. How have you intentionally involved your parents in teaching your children a living faith? What examples of faithful living can you tell your children and grandchildren about from your own parents and grandparents?
2. Consider writing a letter to your grandchildren or great-grandchildren who may have yet to be born. Tell them in plain language how having a living faith has given you such things as comfort, deep joy, spiritual peace or however comes naturally for you to express it.

**PRAY** – Give God thanks for our faithful families. Even if your own family has not done all they could have, you can choose to pass on the faith God has created in you.

*Going Deeper together. We meet in the **Fellowship Hall** during the Education Hour for discussion and prayer with all those who're able to come. If you're not able to make it Sunday, please feel free to e-mail me with your comments or questions so that we can have the benefit of sharing them together.*

## GOING DEEPER

Sometimes the idea of passing on the faith in our families raises some fears and concerns. In our day and age there is pressure to not ‘influence’ a child and to ‘let them choose’ for themselves. But this argument is a false one. We certainly influence our children through *any* choices we make. And we also don’t let our children choose to learn for themselves to not ‘play in traffic’.

Then there is the situation where there is a non-believer in the family. Most of us have that situation to some degree. However, even if a non-believer is in the home that does not, by itself preclude us in the faith from passing that faith on. After all Timothy’s father does not appear to have been a believer. (Read [Acts 16:1-3](#))

Even though Timothy’s father was not a believer, Eunice and Lois according to today’s nugget verse, taught Timothy a living faith in Jesus. And Paul himself, because of Timothy’s upbringing, had Timothy circumcised so that Timothy’s preaching and teaching would not be suspect among the Jews. What specific lessons can we draw from what Paul had done to prepare Timothy for his ministry among the Jews?

And having an unbeliever for a spouse, as Eunice did, is not itself a cause for separation or division in the household. Indeed a believer has a unique opportunity for evangelism by the way they live and act among the unbelievers in the house. Then there is also what Paul wrote in [1 Corinthians 7:12-20](#) to consider in this matter.

There are some issues to work through in this passage, but take note as we said that unbelief is no reason for divorce or leaving a spouse. But it is a reason for staying! Paul indicates that by staying together the possibility of sanctification – holy living – exists for the unbelieving spouse to learn from the believer. In what ways could this come about? What influence does [Ephesians 5:28-33](#) have on this topic?

Finally, as we mentioned in the nugget, intentionally passing on the faith, in our families, is a desired thing for us to learn from Lois and Eunice. While it’s important that we organize ourselves for formal instruction through church and catechism and Sunday School, it’s just as important that home life also be a place where the basics of the faith are taught. And Luther’s Small Catechism can be a help in being intentional at home.

Luther wrote the Small Catechism so that people could have a common tool by which to learn the basics of the faith. Look at beginning of each of the sections of the catechism and you find there words to the effect, “*As the head of the family should teach it in a simply way to his household.*” What is talked about in the home matters.

Remember that faith is ‘caught’ as much as it is ‘taught’. Our living example of faithful living goes a long way to teaching the faith, but it is not the whole story. The Story of Christ must be spoken in order for your family to understand why you live the way you do. What, in Christ’s story, influences the choices you make? How can you verbally tie together, for your family, how it is that Christ’s story influences the choices you make? God’s Peace, PR.