"A Woman of Influence"

(Acts 16:1; II Timothy 1:5; 3:14-15)

5-12-2024

Introduction:

*Let the Mother/Grandmother of Timothy encourage you to be a woman of influence!

What is a woman of influence?

I. A Woman of influence:
Sets the Right Example for her children to follow (Acts 16:1; II Tim.1:5)
(Her Life is worth copying)

A. She sets the right example by being faithful to her faith (Acts 16:1)

1. Eunice faithfully overcame a religious obstacle
(She was Jewish, yet believed on Christ)

2. Eunice faithfully overcame a domestic obstacle
(An unbelieving husband)

B. **She sets the right example by being full of real faith (II Tim.1:5)**

What is a genuine faith?

1. A genuine faith is sincere in its personal trust

2. A genuine faith is real in its private results

3. A genuine faith is unhypocritical in its public display

II. A Woman of influence:
Teaches her children the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14-15)
(Her Lips flow with God's Word)

A. She teaches her children God's Word early (when they are very young)

B. She teaches her children God's Word continually (throughout all the time they are growing up)

Conclusion: Titus 2:4

The key to Godly influence:	Be what you ought to be	(Have faith)
	Say what you ought to say	(Share faith)

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Introduction:

SEE: II Tim. 1:5

“When I call to remembrance” – “The occasion for this reminder is not indicated, but something had happened at Rome under Paul’s eyes which strongly reminded him of Timothy’s faith” (Hiebert, p. 32).

What is evident here is that Timothy caught on to a belief system that he saw in his mom and grandmother. What they had was so real, so attractive, so evident, that it influenced Timothy’s faith. Paul evidently led Lois and Eunice to saving faith in Christ as Messiah, and therefore he could also claim a bit of responsibility for Timothy’s faith. Hence, he identified Timothy as a “dearly beloved son” in the faith (II Tim. 1:2).

Due to the influence of a Godly mother and grandmother, Timothy would become saved, would become a mighty preacher, and would be so influential himself that two books of God’s Holy Word would be named after him!

“What Matters”

One hundred years from now,
It will not matter
What kind of car I drove,
What kind of house I lived in,
How much I had in my bank account,
Nor what my clothes looked like.

But the world may be a little
Better because
I was important in the life
Of a child.

Author unknown

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I. A woman of influence:
Sets the Right Example for her children to follow (Acts 16:1; II Tim.1:5)
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SEE: Acts 16:1
"Timotheus" – Eunice named her son *Timotheus* which means valuable to God, honored by God. She so named him because he was of great worth to her; he no doubt meant a lot to her. Timothy's life was of tremendous value to Eunice as is the life of any child who is the object of love by his/her mother.

A. She sets the right example by being faithful to her faith (Acts 16:1)

Eunice evidently believed the Old Testament Scriptures prior to meeting Paul, but became a believer in Christ when Paul preached in her city of Lystra during his first missionary journey (Acts 14).

1. Eunice faithfully overcame a religious obstacle
(She was Jewish, yet believed on Christ)

Eunice believed God's Word, she trusted God's promise, she entrusted her life and destiny to the Lord Jesus; and she did so being Jewish.

For a Jew in that day, as in ours, to profess faith in Jesus as Messiah was no small matter. Especially in the cities Eunice was from. It was in her country that Paul (on his first missionary journey) was stoned to death (Acts 14:1-19).

2. Eunice faithfully overcame a domestic obstacle
(An unbelieving husband)

"But his father was a Greek" – The word "but" shows a contrast. Not only was Timothy's dad a Gentile, but he was evidently an unbelieving Gentile. It is emphasized that Timothy's mother believed, but nothing is said of Timothy's father believing. He obviously did not.

Eunice is an example of a woman who would be faithful to imparting God's truth to her son even without the support of a husband.

A mother of influence sets the right example even if it means doing it all alone without the support of a believing husband.

B. She sets the right example by being <u>full of real faith</u> (II Tim.1:5)

SEE: II Tim. 1:5

The one virtue that stood out to Paul about Eunice was her deep sincerity. He saw her as one who not merely professed faith, but undeniably possessed faith. Her faith was real.

"Unfeigned" – "A faith arising out of an inner reality of conviction and knowing no sham or pretense" (Hiebert, p. 32).

"Unfeigned faith" – *(anupokritou pisteos)* – unhypocritical faith, genuine, from the heart, not mere Sunday morning lip service.

Timothy's mom had a faith which didn't limit itself to her religious activity when in public.

Eunice, perhaps a second generation believe (who followed in the faith of her mother Lois), had a belief that was sincere, real, unpretentious, unhypocritical, etc.

"At Grandma's Knee"

"Perhaps God can use a grandmother to help mold a future minister. No greater meaning to life could be found than for a devout grandmother to pray for, encourage, and challenge grandchildren to keep the faith. She can begin by reading Bible stories and challenging grandchildren to read the Bible and memorize verses. Then she can encourage them to get involved in church summer activities or to attend Christian camps (maybe with her help). Grandparents need to be more than examples; they must encourage and teach whenever possible."

Life Application Bible Commentary, p. 159

Don't hide your light while at home; it is there that it must shine the brightest. Those closest to us are often the ones to see our dark side.

The example of sincerity on the part of a parent is vital to a child's life. Reason: "More is <u>caught</u> than taught" (Bob Jones III).

A child/teen can sense a hypocrite a mile away.

1Ti 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

All of us are an example to someone. All of us have influence either for good or bad.

"<u>Be thou</u> an example" (present, middle, imperative - *ginou* from *ginomai*) - <u>Become</u> thou. Regardless of your past, start setting a good example.

Perhaps you have been a failure in your past; this word points to a new beginning.

The present tense implies a continual (lifelong) example.

The middle voice implies choice and determination (an act of the will) that you will decide to be exemplary.

The imperative mood implies that it is an obligation not an option for you to be the right example.

"Example" - *tupos* from which we translate "type."

Tupos primarily denoted "a blow" (from a root tup--, seen also in tupto, "to strike"), hence,
(a) an impression, the mark of a "blow," <John 20:25>;
(b) the "impress" of a seal, the stamp made by a die, a figure, image, <Acts 7:43>;
(c) a "form" or mold, <Rom. 6:17> (see RV);
(d) the sense or substance of a letter, <Acts 23:25>;
(e) "an ensample," pattern, <Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5>, "pattern"; in an ethical sense, <1 Cor. 10:6; Phil. 3:17; 1 Thes. 1:7; 2 Thes. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12>,
(from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)
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Moms & Dads, we need to be . . .

--a mold worth duplicating.
--a pattern worth copying
--a model worth imitating

"Of the believers" - God is not calling upon us to model the world (TV examples), but what a believer should be.

--He has unique standards for His children.

--He is not calling upon the lost to be an example (they cannot be).

Example . . .

1) Example plays an important part in the formation of character; and its influence is felt more than that of precept.

> "Children possess an imitative disposition. They look up to their parents as the pattern or model of their character, and conclude what they do is right and worthy of their imitation." (Rev. S. Phillips, 1858, The Christian Home, cited in Teaching and Learning America's Christian History, the Principle Approach, by Rosalie J. Slater).

2) Example may be good or bad (it is never neutral).

3) Example is teaching by action
Thus, the child is a living commentary upon his/her home and his/her parents. The child is the moral reproduction of the parent (whatever you sow will be reaped).

4) Example instructs a child before he/she can learn to speak and understand words (Phillips)

(Children from birth are like "walking camcorders" recording everything they see visually and audibly in your life and home)

Eunice had an exemplary faith:

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II. A woman of influence: Teaches her children the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14-15) *(Her Lips flow with God's Word)*

With the prospect of future apostasy (v. 1-13) on the horizon, Paul in this context gives Timothy some solid encouragement to remain faithful.

The discipleship (*mathetes)* training Timothy acquired as a boy would serve as a strong deterrent to his giving in to apostasy.

A. She teaches her children God's Word early (when they are very young)

"From a child" = lit. from a babe.

"Jewish children were taught to memorize passages from the Old Testament as soon as they could speak" (Hiebert, p. 97).

"Jewish families began their moral and religious training when children reached age five. The original teaching was given by mothers until about age ten, when fathers were expected to take over. The role of the family was essential in Jewish tradition and developed from God's own instruction (see Deut. 6:1-25).
"God-designed parental roles cannot be easily replaced or eliminated. At home and in church, we should realize that teaching small children is both an opportunity and a responsibility. Jesus wanted little children to come to him (Mt. 19:13-15). Like Timothy's mother and grandmother, Eunice and Lois, do your part in leading children to Christ." Life Applic. Bible Comm., p. 217

Many animals mature to adulthood in two years or less, but a child requires 18 years! Why the difference? Children, unlike animals, have a spiritual nature which requires the inculcation of moral truth. God intends for Christian parents not to just "raise" their children by feeding, clothing, and protecting them, but to "train the soul" of the child so as to produce an inner character that agrees with God's standards.

Prov. 22:6 - ***"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."*** This is an axiomatic, eternal principle and promise from God (NOTE: context describing causes and resultant effects)

"Train" = to begin, or initiate a young child in the right direction. To start out right.

Same word as when Solomon initiated/dedicated the newly-constructed Temple (I Ki. 8:63; II Chron. 7:5)

The word originally meant to *"rub the palate"* of a child with chewed dates to get it to acquire a taste for food; EX: midwives would rub palate with oil before child began to suck. The word means to make experienced or accustomed to what you want (as a horse gets accustomed to being directed by a rope in its mouth) (BDB, p. 335)

If we get our children accustomed to what is right, they won't depart!

"The way" = the proper road
"Old" = mature
"It" = the way (road) we trained them on

"Parents are commanded by God to initiate or start their child in a certain direction. He is not to be allowed to follow the path his nature would take him, but he is to be set on a new path. Dedication is not just a one-time initiation, but incorporates the entire training process. The result of the training is for this new way to become the child's own way of life. When this training transpires, the child will not leave the path even as he grows older and becomes an adult. . . Parents are not to wait for a child to choose his own way of life, but are to place him on the right path in early childhood. . . Parents must act as the external control over a child while he is developing his own internal controls. The parents' role is not to remain as the child's control for the rest of his life, but gradually to work themselves out of this job as early as possible." (Fugate, p. 65-66)

Children are most moldable when they are young
(Prov. 22:6 - *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it")*

Our children are like arrows (Ps. 127:4) -- they must be pointed and launched in the right direction.

Our children are like wet cement - they take the impression of whatever you do to them.

Our children are like unhardened clay - pliable to the way you shape them.

Our children are like a tender twig - that we want to bend toward a certain direction. The twig "is to be bent with caution, not broken in the efforts of a rude and hasty zeal"
(Eadie, p. 262).

Through the proper parental example, training, and discipline of our children, we should desire that God develop their character by building in them the following traits:

1) Spiritual desire
2) A sensitive conscience
3) Sincere motives
4) Self-discipline or self-control
5) Personal initiative
6) Personal responsibility

B. She teaches her children God's Word <u>continually</u> (throughout all the time they are growing up)

Although Eunice did not know Christ as Messiah until she heard Paul, her heart was ready because she knew the Old Testament Scriptures, and she taught the Old Testament Scriptures to Timothy, which prepared him for the hearing of the gospel.

"From a child" – i.e. from the starting point of youth <u>onward</u>. Ever since Timothy was a child, from that point on, he was taught the sacred writings of God, the Book of Books. That set-apart Word inspired by God was imparted to Timothy by a mom who loved him enough to take the time and effort to instill God's truth into his heart. Eunice never stopped!

Believing parents are obligated to teach their children God's Word.

Deut. 6:7 - 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

This teaching should include:

1. Formal teaching in a structured situation (family devotions)

2. Informal training through normal life situations

3. Exemplary training through your life as a model

A letter of Wisdom

Dear Pastor and Mrs. McCardel,

We enjoyed our evening with the group at the Jimenez home. Since then I have tried to recollect and reorganize my list of Scripture verses to use in the discipline of children. Here is a list of suggested Scriptures and applications, to which many more could be added.

1. If a child misbehaves when I am not in the room, and then I return and find out,
I must teach him that God sees him everywhere, all the time (Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good)." and that he is personally accountable to God. (Romans 14:12, So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God)."

2. If a child says foolish, idle things,
I must teach him that we Christians must give a strict account of our words (Matthew 12:36 ABut I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment)." Another appropriate memory verse is Psalm 141:3 (Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips)." Explain to the child that to "set a watch" in this verse means to place soldiers on guard duty. Learn to guard against foolish talk, for foolishness leads us into sin, and sin is our most deadly enemy.

3. If a child speaks foolishly mockingly, or lightly of the name of God or the Word of God or any holy truth, I must teach him to respect and reverence that which is holy. (Exodus 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain)." Another reference is the last phrase of Psalm 138:2 (for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name)."

4. If a child misbehaves in church,
I must teach him a phrase from First Timothy 3:15 (that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God). I emphasize to the children that the church is not a building, but rather the people, the body of believers, and we must set a good example for other people; because together, we believers are the house of God.

5. If a child disobeys, I must teach him Ephesians 6:1 (Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right)."

6. If a child obeys grudgingly,
I must teach him that everything we do should be as service to the Lord, and we should serve willingly and gladly. (Psalm 100:2 Serve the Lord with gladness...@). Another appropriate verse in this area is Ephesians 6:7 (With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men)." In this verse, good will means having a good willing attitude.

7. If one child asks another for help, and the second child is unwilling or has the attitude Why should I help you?,
I must teach the second child that it is a privilege to serve others, and we are supposed to serve each other. (Mark 10:45 For even the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many)." Explain that to minister means to serve.

8. If a child complains,
I must teach him Philippians 2:14 - Do all things without murmuring and disputings. Here murmurings means complaining and disputing means arguing.

9. If a child is unkind or unforgiving toward another child,
I must teach him Ephesians 4:32 (..and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you)."

10. If my children are arguing and bickering among themselves, I must teach them the last phrase of I Thessalonians 5:13, and be at peace among yourselves. Another verse stressing this idea is I Thessalonians 4:9, But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

11. If a child is making a lot of meaningless noise, I must teach him I Thessalonians 4:11 Aand that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you. The phrase Astudy to be quiet means Amake a diligent effort to be quiet. We Christians are not supposed to be loud-mouths. We should be quiet, thoughtful people. The rest of this verse stresses hard work and, in a sense, minding our own business. Some children, as some adults, are lazy.

12. If a child is lazy, the verse mentioned in #11 is very applicable, but a number of other passages should also be taught. Whatever task I give the child is his responsibility before God. All that we do must be for the glory of God; and a lazy, sloppy job is not glorifying to the Lord. Teach these verses: I Cor 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.@ Ecclesiastes 9:10 says AWhatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

13. Children must learn not to work only when they are being watched, but to keep working even when I leave the room. Ephesians 6:7 Anot with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. Eye-service - means working only when the boss is watching. We Christians must learn that our real boss is the Lord Himself and He is always watching.

14. Another scripture dealing with the problem of laziness is II Thessalonians 3:10-12. In this passage, the word "disorderly" means "lazy". Of course, this passage is referring to adults capable of working to support themselves. Nevertheless, the principle is clearly taught, "if any would not work, neither should he heat." I try to teach my children that we must all share the work load (laundry, dishes, general clean-up). Occasionally, when I see a child who has been consistently lazy, sloppy in his work, or sneaking away from his task, I will withhold a meal until the work is done. Frequently, I withhold extra special treats (dessert or snacks) from any who has not done their work.

15. If a child complains that his job is too hard (and the parent must provide assistance and instruction t make sure the assigned tasks are not really too hard), teach him Filipinos 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me. The child must learn to be faithful, trustworthy, and finish the work he is given to do. We are really working for the Lord, as "stewards", for the Master. First Corinthians 4:2 "moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

16. Many times a child will disobey, and then try to cover up for it by making me a gift, a pretty picture that he drew himself, or something like that. It is very important to teach the child that this is wrong because obedience is so very, very important. The story of Saul's disobedience in I Samuel is appropriate. Teach I Samuel 15:22, "and Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

17. Very often when I catch a child doing something wrong, that child will immediately blame someone else. "He told me to do it," is what I often hear. The best answer, is Proverbs 1:10, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." That means, if someone tries to talk you into doing wrong, just say "NO!" Then I must re-emphasize, as in #1, that each of us is personally accountable to God. No matter who tried to talk me into sinning, if I sin it is my own fault. Remember Romans 14:12 "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

18. On the other hand, if I catch a child trying to convince another child to do wrong, I must teach him that this is a very serious sin. Romans 14:13 says "Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." In other words, don't try to trip your brother. Trying to get someone else in trouble is very serious and will be punished that way.

19. If a child sneaks around and tries to hide something wrong that he has done, I must teach him the last phrase of Numbers 32:23, "be sure your sin will find you." God always sees to it that sin is found out. The younger the child is when he learns this principle, the better off he'll be.

20. If the children are bickering and arguing with harsh, angry words, I try to teach them that it is important to be the one who ends the quarrel. So often they try to tell me who started it. I say, "That doesn't matter nearly as much as who was willing to end it." In order to end a quarrel, one has to let the other guy win. Remember Proverbs 15:1, "a soft answer turned away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."

21. Sometimes a child may be overly concerned about his clothes or his physical appearance; or he may judge others by their physical appearance. He must learn that character counts a lot more than looks. First Samuel 16:7 says "...for man looked on the outward appearance, but the Lord looked on the heart." Girls especially will do well to memorize Proverbs 31:30, "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

22. Three are many basic areas this letter haven't touched. Honesty - many scriptures, such as Psalm 51;6 "thou desirest truth in the inward parts;.." Psalm 119:29 "Remove from me the way of lying;" Ephesians 4:25 says "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor." **Pride vs. Humility-** The passage in Proverbs 6:16-19 should be read aloud often enough to be familiar-Pride is also listed again as something God hates in Romans 1:30-32. It is also listed as a characteristic of God' enemies in II Timothy 3:2. **Stealing,** of course teach Exodus 20:15 "Thou shalt not steal," but Ephesians 4:28 should be taught right alongside it. "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needed." Now God expects his children not only to refrain from stealing the properly of others, but to work hard, so that we'll be able to be generous with what we've worked for ourselves.

23. Many other specifics could certainly be gleaned from the Bible and added to this list, but there is one basic underlying problem which we humans have. We are rebellious against God. Even after our salvation. We often continue to rebel against Him in little things. Rebellions basically means not submitting to the will of God. When raising children, one will often hear the objection, "But I don't want to." It is very important to teach the ideas that you can't always have what you want. I say, It doesn't matter what you want, it matters that you obey." This principle is found throughout the scriptures. Consider the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who prayed in the garden, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matthew 26:39). His attitude of submitting to the Father's will is emphasized in Filipinos 2:5-8, where the believer is told to have the same attitude. (Verse 5 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.") Ephesians 5:17 says "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." It is not enough just to understand God's will, we must do it. Ephesians 6:6 says "As the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." That is, do God's will with at cheerful attitude.

The question was put to me, **"What if your child doesn't want to memorize Scriptures?"** Well, I might respond, "What if he doesn't want to brush his teeth?" Wanting to do right has nothing to do with this. We must do right whether we want to or not, and children must be taught this. We must do God's will. God's will has been revealed to us in God's Word, the Bible. God's will for us includes memorizing God's Word. Psalm 119:11 says "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Once the Word of God is truly implanted in the heart, it will begin making changes in the life. Attitudes will change; sins will be overcome; and what seemed like drudgery before will become joyous service.

It is now June 7 , 1988. This letter has taken me a long time partly because I have truly been very busy and am now expecting baby #10; but also partly because it was such a difficult letter to write. I felt convicted each time I wrote because of my own lack of consistency. Many days I have failed to apply the very principles I believe. I am thankful that the Lord forgives, and look to Him for help in the great task He has given me. In the Saviour's love,

Judy Spencer

Conclusion: Titus 2:4