

# Acts 16

Sunday 5/8/2005

I want you to turn to Acts 16. I want to talk on the theme of Mother's Day today, and I just want to challenge the moms and admonish the mothers. From our church to you, we want to show you how special you are. We have a couple of little special things for you, and we are going to talk about that a little bit later on. But I want to talk about Mother's Day today and how important mothers are in the Word of God.

Now, I was going to preach on Noah's wife today, but I thought I would just pass that for a while and move on to something else. Our text today will be in the book of Acts, Acts 16. You are going to find this out next week, but the book of Acts is the foundation book for church history in the Bible. That is why it is so important. The book of Acts really defines the book. We are studying coming through the Bible on Thursday night, and last Thursday was so key to begin to see how this stuff all goes together.

I have been talking about finding the definitive verse in the Bible, the definitive passage. If there is any book in the Bible that defines the New Testament, it is the book of Acts. That is why it is so crucial. That is why it is so absolutely important. If you are ever going to learn the Bible, you are going to have to learn the book of Acts because the book of Acts is the foundation of church history.

You are going to find that the book of Acts is really a book of models. There are all kinds of models in the book of Acts. The book of Acts sets the stage and defines things for you that you are going to follow all the way down through the history of the church, and really, the history as you go all the way down through the history of man. You are going to find that there are good models and there are bad models, and we will get into this in great depth next week.

You are going to find that in the book of Acts you have the model missionary. You have a man who is a perfect model of what a missionary should be. You will find in the book of Acts the model Christian. You will find a man who is the perfect example of a human man that is what a Christian should be. You will find the model evangelist, a man who typifies what evangelism is. When we talk about evangelists today, it has nothing to do with a modern-day evangelist as the Bible defines evangelist. But we will talk about that next week. We find the model pastor and also we find the model mother.

It is an incredible book to study, and I know that most of the times when you begin to talk about moms on Mother's Day, you always go back to Proverbs 31 and talk about the virtuous woman who is more precious than rubies and all of that. I understand that, and that is all true. But I want to show you today from a New Testament perspective the model mother of the New Testament and talk about why, and go back and look at some things that we need to look at.

Now I want to begin reading in Acts chapter 16, verses 1 through 5. It says this:

*Acts 16:1-5*

*Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*

*Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.*

*Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*

*And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.*

*And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.*

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. We thank You for all that You do for us now, Lord, and everything. We want to give You the honor and praise and the glory today. We thank You for those that have come today. We thank You for this special day that really represents one of the great studies in the Word of God, and that is motherhood and how important mothers are in the Word of God and in our lives. Lord, I want this to be a day for them today. We thank You for moms who love God and love the Word of God, and for moms who love their kids in a world that, Lord, is so far from the truth of the Word of God today. We pray, Father, that You will bless our time, challenge our hearts, and let this day be just the beginning of a special day for our moms. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

## I. The Foundation of Timothy's Ministry: Unfeigned Faith

As the book of Acts unfolds, and we are in Acts chapter 16 here, next week we are going to see how the book of Acts kind of unfolds itself. But as the book of Acts unfolds, you find different men popping up. In Acts chapter 16, you find the first mention of a man named Timothy. With his development, we see what becomes a model for us as the model pastor. The model pastor in the New Testament is Timothy; it is not Paul, it is Timothy.

Of course, Paul calls him his son in the faith, and I am sure that Paul won many young men to Christ. He was an evangelist; he is the model evangelist. He was an evangelist, and as an evangelist, he was starting churches. It is very obvious in the New Testament that he wins some young men to Christ; he names some of them. But it is Timothy that most of the time is spent with. You are going to find that in the books of 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy, and also the book of Acts, all the material begins to formulate really about young Timothy.

When Paul writes 1 and 2 Timothy, those are great books that really instruct any young man how to be a pastor. Paul puts the emphasis on the things that a pastor needs to put the emphasis on. He talks about his own personal relationship with God, the most important things to guard against in being a pastor. Those two books really form for us the bedrock of what I take when I want to teach a young man to be a pastor or help him grow to the place where he really sees pastoral responsibility. They are great books.

We get to see through Timothy's life how God develops in all areas. All my life, since I have been in the ministry, I have taken young men and young ladies and I have helped them develop their skills to become what God wants them to do. I have taken single young men, helped them develop to the place where they could pastor a church. I have taken young ladies, single young ladies, and helped them develop to the point where they could be used of God greatly and understand their role in the church as leaders and all of that.

I have taken moms and dads, and I have taken dads and showed them how to be the spiritual leaders of their home. I have taken moms and showed them how to be the godly mother that they need to be, and how moms and dads should work together and how they can work together. Much of that material is found in the books of 1 and 2 Timothy. The truth of the matter is, there is no different than pastoring a church than pastoring your family. That is why the Bible teaches over and over again if a man does not have his family under control, he has no business pastoring a church or being in any place of leadership in a church. So we see that all of these areas come back to 1 and 2 Timothy.

We see his development. We see almost year by year as he comes through here, and we see him when he gets to a point in his life Paul takes him under his wing. Then we begin to see all of the things that take place when Paul begins to train him. Paul trains him in a unique way. He does not send him off to Bible college; he does not send him off to seminary. Paul trains him the best way any young man or young lady should be trained. He gives him hands-on, on-the-job training while he is ministering to him and teaching the Word of God one-on-one. This is the greatest way in the world to train anybody for the ministry.

Through these books, we as pastors begin to see where to put the investment in a young man or a young lady: the things to look for, the things that need to really be focused on. These books, along with 1 Timothy, along with some of the other books that collectively go along with, are called the pastoral epistles. They are called the pastoral epistles because they are the books that really teach about pastoring, and they deal with learning the ministry and how to minister. Much of that deals with Paul's relationship to Timothy and all the things that he taught him.

Most of the writers that you are going to read about Paul and Timothy, and especially about Timothy, most of the writers, if not all of them, are going to put the emphasis on what Paul did for him. I am not taking away from that. Paul was a tremendous influence in his life. Paul is a model for me what I am supposed to do in a young man's life, a young lady's life, to help them get to the place where they really can be everything that God wants them to be. He is a great model for that, and there are some great things that we can learn.

But I want you to understand a complete study, maybe a better way to say it is a definitive study of young Timothy, where we are one of the greatest truths in all of the Bible: that the work for the ministry started long before Paul ever showed up. I know the story here that we are going to look at this morning about Timothy's mother and what goes on there. I know that Timothy is a young man. But I want to say to you that the study of Timothy as a young man and his mother, and the relationship that they had, and the things we need to look at, it makes no difference here today if you have a son or you have a daughter or you have both. The principles apply either

way. It just so happens our story here is about a young man, but it could as easily be about a young lady. So I do not want you to discount it and say, "Well, go ahead and apply to me because I have a daughter." No, it applies either way.

It is really not until you get to 2 Timothy, and I want to turn there now for a moment, it is not until we get to 2 Timothy chapter 1, verses 1 through 5, that we see who the real servant is and who the real secret is behind his being a great servant. It is an incredible concept. So let us go over to 2 Timothy chapter 1, verses 1 through 5. He is writing this to Timothy now, and this is the opening part of this book, and he is telling you he is writing it to Timothy. But watch this.

*2 Timothy 1:1-5*

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,*

*To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;*

*Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;*

*When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*

Now there are a couple of things I want to make note of in this passage before we go back to Acts chapter 16. This is a very telling passage here. First of all, you find the word "unfeigned faith." Unfeigned faith. When you feign something, you pretend. David in the Old Testament feigned being mad, was scrabbling out the gate back in the Old Testament because he was afraid. So he feigned that he was mad. When the enemies came to see him, they saw him with a spill of all his beer and acting like an idiot. They said, "We are not going to kill him. He is already lost his mind." He feigned it.

The thing that we find today in many of God's people's lives is a feigned faith. They are saved on their way to heaven, but their faith is not real. Real faith will always produce the right results. We find here the thing that I want you to see here, that it starts out here in verse 1. It starts out down here by the time you get to verse 5. It says that this unfeigned faith that Timothy had first was in the grandmother and then was in the mother. That is the second thing I want you to see: that we have got two generations of godly mothers here. We have got a grandmother who obviously was a godly grandmother who produced a daughter who was a godly daughter who produced a son who becomes for us the model pastor and has a great insight into his life in really what the ministry is all about.

So we see that first of all, that it was a real faith. It was not feigned. It was not fake. It was real. We are going to talk about the depth. We are going to go behind the scenes in the book and we are going to look at that unfeigned faith, and I am going to show you what is behind it. It is more

than just a term here. We see how there was a legacy in that family of loving God, the grandmother and the mother.

Then we see in verse 6 that he says, "the gift of God that is within you." The gift of God that is within you. What an incredible thing that is, because that is not talking about salvation. Now I understand salvation is the gift of God. Sure, no question about that. But they are not talking about salvation here. We are talking about, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." Timothy had a gift that God had given him that Paul wanted him to stir up. Of course, where did he get that gift? That gift obviously is the gift that he gets from his mother and his grandmother of unfeigned faith, of being a servant with a servant's attitude.

I will tell you something, the greatest gift any mother can give her children, whether they are male or they are female, the greatest gift that a mother can give them is the gift of unfeigned faith. The gift of them understanding that "my mom, I see a servant's attitude. In mom, I see a heart that is for other people." In my mom, I see... and you transfer that, you transfer that and give that as a gift to your child just like you would give them a new bike, buy them a new set of clothes, or whatever the case. That is the gift that was in him that came from his mother and grandmother that Paul is saying, "Stir that gift up." Timothy becomes one of the greatest model pastors, and the key to a good pastor is a servant's attitude of heart. Of course, that is exactly what Timothy has, and he did not get that from Paul; he got that from his mother. She taught him not to be ashamed of a life serving God.

That is an attitude. That is not something you just do. That is something that you do not get by coming to church. You get that by seeing the example of godliness in your mom and dad's life, and it comes to the point where they understand that. Let me tell you, and I say this to parents all the time, the greatest gift you can give your child, the greatest gift you can give your child, husband and wife, is a warm, loving, safe, kind, verbally expressing your love for each other, open affection, relationships that talks about loving each other, loving the Word of God, and through the course of years building that security and that safeness in their little lives, that that gift that they get from that no one can ever take away. There is nothing that the world could offer because the world does not have security. The world does not have anything that is good.

The problem is why most young people get out in the world is because they never see from mom and dad the true unfeigned faith that establishes them in a safe, secure world in their home, that they look at the world, look at their home, and say, "There is no way I am going to go with that and leave the security of what I have right here." That is what Timothy's mother produced.

## II. The Role of Godly Mothers in the Church

There are some great things here. I know the Bible says a lot about godly women in the New Testament local church, and there are things that are for us. It talks about in 1 Timothy chapter 5, you do not have to turn to these, but it talks about 1 Timothy chapter 5, verses 1, 2, and 3. It talks about that women are in all the stages of spiritual growth, and we came through that and we

looked at elders, and it is the only office in the church that is held by men and women. It talks about the elder men and then it talks about the elder women.

"Elder" in the sense of responsibility. "Elder" in the sense of the Bible says "teacher of good things," teaching other younger women. The woman's role in the church as a mother is to look at the church and the younger women in it as her family. Older women taking the responsibility of younger mothers who maybe do not understand how to raise their kids, do not understand how to deal with somebody in discipline. Instead of the pastor always being the one that has to sit out and do it, it is the older mothers who have been around for a while, who have raised their kids. Their kids are godly kids. Their kids love the Word of God. Their kids love church. Their kids are always in church. Their kids are always where they need to be as far as doing what is right. Them being the example to younger mothers and helping them. Helping them come to the point where they really understand by example.

One of the goals that I have over the years to come is to take the women that have raised their kids and are raising your kids. That is why right now I put such a premium on helping you establish good relationships with your children that you are growing up. If we never get another person saved in our life in our church, we will grow just by the birth rate. Trust me. That is a good thing. But you need to know how to raise them. You need to know the things to do. My job is to, in time, right now we are in the basic stages of that, but my job is to take women who have raised their kids and to show them as good examples and to help them help you. That is the way the New Testament functions.

The Bible talks about in 1 Peter chapter 3, verses 1 through 4, that the godly women, they do not worry about adorning the outward appearance. Now that does not mean that you cannot. It just means that the emphasis has to be on the adorning of the hidden man of the heart. A lot of people take that verse and say a woman should not wear makeup, a woman should not wear jewelry, a woman should not wear this or that. Of course, that is ridiculous. The point that he is trying to make there is that do not fix the outside up more than you fix the inside. Of course, in the same passage, he talks about men. Then he talks about women. It is a thing where the godly woman adorns herself with the spiritual things that pleases the hidden man of her heart, which is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He talks about in 1 Timothy 5 the elder men. He says, "You look at them as fathers." He says, "The elder women, you look at them as mothers." Of course, that is the way. The older men, and not necessarily just older in years but older in experience, have got themselves together. The older men and the older women look at the younger Christians coming in as fathers and mothers. They look at them through the eyes of a father and mother spiritually. That is why Paul makes the reference that he was Timothy's spiritual father. A lot of people make it the point because he won him to Christ. Well, in my life, I have been a spiritual father to lots of people I have not won to Christ. So it goes beyond that. It goes to the point where older men and women, we are talking about women today but I am including men in it too, but older women who have the reputation and experience of being a godly woman and a godly mother helping the younger ones in the church grow and learn. Of course, there are many examples of that. We see Mary and Martha. We have talked about her many, many times, and of course, the godly woman that is Timothy's

mother, she is definitely a Mary, not a Martha. But I could spend time all day with that, and I want to get those out of the way so you at least understand it and see it.

### III. Timothy's Mother: An Old Testament Example

I think the greatest thing said about mothers that probably impacted Timothy's mother is not found in the New Testament; it is found in the Old Testament. I want you to turn back with me now to Acts chapter 16. I will tell you why I want to base on this, because I want to take it from Timothy's mother's perspective. I want to help you from that concept because it is easy for us to go to 1 Timothy, 1 Peter, and look at all those verses in the New Testament. Timothy's mother did not have a New Testament. She did not have it. She was not reading along the book of Acts here and saying, "Okay, here is what I have got to do." All she had was an Old Testament. She did not have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. She did not have Romans. She did not have Acts. She did not have anything in the New Testament. All she had to raise her child and to do the things that she needed to do to train up a young man the way that it needed to be, and a young lady too, was the Old Testament.

Now we have got the added bonus of having the New Testament, and I think that is really great and incredible. But Acts chapter 16 gives us some great insight into Timothy's mother. Today on Mother's Day, I want to share those things with you, and I want to give you, really, I am going to give you three gifts today. Two of them are in the Bible. I want to give you two of the greatest concepts in all of the Bible on raising your kids. I want you to take it home if you are a young mother, and I want you to ponder those things in your heart, and I want you to build your child around these two principles and these two concepts.

Now let us look at Acts chapter 16 again, verse 1. It says in verse 1, "a certain disciple that was named Timothy, the son of a certain woman." Do you ever notice how great women in the Bible are not often very well or not very often named? Their names are not even given. Sometimes it is, but for the most part, it is not. You go back there and talk about the Shunammite woman who lost her son. You never get her name. In some cases, you get their name, but not very often. It is one of those things that when you look at it, you find that many of the great women in the Bible are not even named.

I will tell you why that is. Behind everything in the Bible, there is a principle and a reason. I am going to tell you right now why that is, because as far as I am concerned, the great unsung heroes of training young men and young ladies for the ministry are moms. I know us dads, we are all the male macho types that like to take the credit for it, but the bottom line is this: there is a reason why Eve is called the mother of all living. There is a reason why God set it up the way that He did. Guys, let us face it, we can say all that we want to say about how great we are and how much impact we have. The truth of the matter is, if it was not for our mothers, we would not even be here. So we have got to keep it in perspective.

The first thing I see down here in verse 1 is "there is a certain disciple, the son of a certain woman." Names Timothy, but does not name her. I know it names her over in 2 Timothy, but right here, the first time you find it, she is unnamed. Many times when you go back and you look

at things in the Old Testament, you will find that they are not named. I think of Moses' mother. Here is a great woman in the Old Testament; she is not even named. So you begin to see it as you come through, and that is one of the things that, as far as I am concerned, at the judgment seat of Christ, the mothers are going to take it hands down. The godly mothers. The ones that have understood what I am talking about here today, because nobody on the face of this planet, by God's design, has a more crucial job and task than sending your kid on the right path than a mom.

I know what is taught, and I agree with it, but I am going to show you a case here. Here is a woman that did not have the help of her husband, and yet she accomplished what she tried to accomplish. I know that in a perfect world, it is a mom and dad; I understand all that. I know what the Bible teaches, but I am showing you here a story that shows you the impact by an extreme case, the impact that a mom has on her children's life, and it is quite an incredible thing. I have never met a real... I have read the biographies of some of the greatest preachers that ever lived, and I love biographies, and I have read some biographies of some great men of God down through the time in my life, and I have never read one of them that did not take and give the credit for where he was at in the ministry, what God did in his life, back to his praying mother. It is an incredible thing.

#### IV. Timothy's Mother's Circumstances and Wisdom

In approaching this thing from a Bible standpoint, she had a great advantage. I want to look at some things here because it says down here in verse 1 again, it says, "Then came he to Derbe and Lystra, and behold, a certain disciple was there named Timothy, the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess and believed, but his father was a Greek." You know what the indication is? The indication that his mother is saved and his father is not. She is a Jew, and then the Bible says, comma, "and believed," and then it simply says, "but his father was a Greek." The indication is, if we read it the way that it is written here, that his father must not have been saved. That is an incredible thing because it brings up two great concepts.

The first thing I want you to see is the fact that this boy was brought up in a multicultural aspect of life. He was not just sheltered into one little culture. His mother was a Jew; that is one culture. His father was a Greek; that is another culture. The number one problem children have today when they grow up is they cannot transcend into other cultures, and the reason why they cannot is because their moms and dads kept them like hothouse plants all their life, and then suddenly they step out into the real world and bang, they are hit right in the face with something they never had to deal with.

For years and years and years, I have always taught, and I have always believed, and we have practiced with my kids: I do not want to isolate my kids from the world, but rather I want to insulate my kids from the world. Because the truth of the matter is, try as you will, you will never isolate your kids from the world. You never will. Somebody will always get to them; the devil sees that. Somebody will always get to your kid, and you can lock them up in a steel room till they are 20 years old, but sooner or later you have got to let them out, and the moment you let them out, there is going to be somebody out there that is going to offer them a better deal. You

cannot isolate them. You have to insulate them, and when you insulate them, that is something that I cannot do. It is not the job of the church. It is not the job of Christian Day School. It is not the job of Christian school in particular. It is the job of a mom and dad to insulate, not isolate, their children, and that is the key. That is the key.

You are going to find here that the indication is that she is a Jew and he is a Gentile. He is a Greek. So when he grew up, he grew up being familiar with different cultures, different customs. He was not so stuck in his own way that he could not really understand an example of what it is to be out in the world. If his father was unsaved, and the indication is that he was, then he is brought up in a place where he has a saved mom and an unsaved dad.

Let me show you this because the second great concept here is the fact that how she viewed her circumstances. Now, let us take for argument's sake, and some of you may disagree with the fact that he was not saved, and it is fine. The Bible gives that indication. It does not come out and say it, but it is a pretty strong indication. But let us take that for a moment: saved woman, unsaved man. What she does is she saw her circumstances, and she made that child part of the solution, not part of the problem. In other words, it is all how you approach. I know I have heard every sad story in the world: "Well, you know, I have got an unsaved husband, and I am a saved woman trying..." I know in every circumstance there is a difference, but I am showing you a model here. I am showing you a model. I am showing you something that actually worked, and it is a model.

She took that child and she used the circumstances around it and made that child part of the solution and not part of the problem. You see, in approaching it from a Bible standpoint, she had a great advantage. The problem of an unsaved husband now becomes the teaching example to lay the right foundation in young Timothy's life. She can come to two ways. She can say, "Oh, Timothy, your drunken bum husband, Dad, he is a lousy husband, he is a lousy dad, he will not let us go to church, he is always giving this about that when I put something in the offering." She could take that approach, or she could take the approach that she enlisted that child as her prayer partner, taught him the difference between where Dad was and where Mom and he is, and yet at the same time, never damaged that kid's relationship with his father.

She kept it in a biblical context where she worked that thing to the point where she made the child her partner, and in doing so, she was teaching him the basic foundations of ministry because ministry is one of responding, not reacting. Ministry is one of attitude of heart, of seeing things as they are, not as we perceive them. She had the ability and the foresight when she looked at this thing to bring Timothy into the equation, and building on this foundation, Timothy throughout his life grew up understanding a difference between somebody that is lost and somebody that is saved, and yet how to love them and understand at the same time you are dealing with two different cultures, two different mindsets, and understanding how to balance that out in his life.

Now I say all that based on verse 2. I want to read verse 1 and I want to read verse 2 again.

*Acts 16:1-2*

*Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess and believed; but his father was a Greek:*

*Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.*

Now it says "which was well reported." When we read that and do not pay attention, we put the word "who" in there; we think it means that Timothy was well reported. That is not what it says. If it would have meant Timothy, it would have said "who." It says "which." That is, in a person, that is a thing. The "which" that was well reported among the brethren was the fact that it was not just Timothy the young man; it was the circumstances that Timothy was in, and it was well reported how he balanced it out with his mother, of a saved woman and an unsaved dad.

He grew up in the church. The church saw it. They saw a young man in a situation that was not the best situation, and yet they watched him grow because Mom had the insight, the spiritual insight and foresight, to make that child part of the solution. Instead of making the circumstance the problem, she saw the circumstances she was in, and she did what most of us cannot do: she saw God in it instead of seeing herself in it. She never felt sorry for herself. She understood that this was the lot in life, this was the way she found herself, and God... there was a way out of this. There is always a way out, folks; you are just doing the right thing based on the biblical principle.

So when it comes down to verse 2, it does not say "who was well reported"; it says "which was well reported." What? The fact that his mother was a Jew and believed, that his father was a Greek. So she brings him up dealing in that kind of circumstance, and then God, who has been behind the scenes the whole time, brings a man into his life at the right time and begins to take him from that point where his mother could not take him anymore and finishes him for the work of the ministry, perfecting him.

Now I need to say something about that because I know that this is a model, and over my years in the ministry, which spans some 30-some years now, I have seen a lot of young men and young ladies that did not have godly mom and dads. I have seen a lot of young men and young ladies that mom and dad did not care about anything about God or the church, and yet I have still seen those young men and young ladies grow up to be everything you could ever want to be for a child of God. Now I have an answer for that, and the answer is in the Bible, but we do not have time to do it today. I am saying there are models of both, and there are reasons for both. This one here is for every saved mom and dad under the sound of my voice or whoever hears this tape wherever it goes. It is showing you a model of how a godly mother should be.

This godly mother did what she did, as far as I am concerned, based on the concept of two stories in the Bible, because all she had was an Old Testament. I know she had the book of Proverbs, and she could read all about the virtuous woman and all of that. But I want to tell you something, I see some things in her life, a line of solid Bible principles weaving her way through her life and her mother's life and right down into young Timothy's life. I know she had Proverbs chapter 31; I know all of that. But I see two great things here that she understands that we need to understand that she can only have gotten from two places in the Old Testament.

## V. Two Foundational Principles for Mothers

Moms, here comes the first gifts I want to give you today: two of the greatest principles you will ever have on raising your children. We have got a host of you in here that are trying to raise them and raise them right. Let me give you something that will set the stage, set the mindset for where you need to go. You do not have to turn back to it; you can just listen to me so you do not miss any of this.

The first great example of a mother in the Old Testament, as far as I am concerned, is found in 1 Samuel chapter 1 through 4, and it is Hannah. Hannah has a son, Samuel. When I look at that, you know the story back there. This is the end of the book of Judges. In fact, Samuel is the last judge of Israel. 1 Samuel bridges Judges to 1 Samuel. Of course, we know that the book of Judges is a time when there is no king in Israel, and every man is doing what is right in his own eyes. The time period here really is exactly what we have today because historically Israel needed a strong man to be a strong leader who walked with God. If there was ever a time that this whole world needed a strong man or woman who will walk with God and will lead God's people, it is today. The priesthood back here during this time is totally corrupt, much as the body of Christ is corrupt today.

Then we have Hannah. Oh, what an outline in Hannah's life! You can break Hannah's life down into a four-point outline:

1. Hannah's Sorrow (1 Samuel 1:11)
2. Hannah's Supplication (1 Samuel 1:11-19)
3. Hannah's Surrender (1 Samuel 1:20-28)
4. Hannah's Song of Victory (1 Samuel 2:1-11)

When Hannah gets that little boy, she names him Samuel, and the word Samuel means "I have asked him of the Lord." We talk about baby dedication. Most baby dedications in most churches are for show: "Bring your child down, bring all the new babies down, we will pray over them, and you go out and raise them any way you want to." Let me tell you something, if you wait till that baby is born to bring them down and dedicate him to the Lord, I have doubts if you know anything about raising them, period. That child ought to have been dedicated long before it was ever born. You want to start reading the Word of God to that child long before it is ever born. Of course, I do not have time to get into the spiritual ramifications of that, but we will get into it another time.

In all of this, I see Hannah making one of the great statements in 1 Samuel chapter 1, verses 27 and 28, which is your first gift today, which sets the mindset for where you ought to be as a mom. She says:

*1 Samuel 1:27-28*

*For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him:*

*Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there.*

You know what? In all this story of her life, I never find a place where Hannah ever loses sight of that principle. She recognized that that child was given to her by God, that she had nothing to do with it. She was barren, and she prayed and she wept, and she laid out her sorrow and her supplication, and God made her with child. When she got that child, she understood God gave me that child. Then her attitude became, "I am going to lend that child back to God. God, I will clothe it. God, I will raise it. God, I will feed it. God, I will take care of it. But in my heart, God, because of my relationship with You, I am going to lend that boy back to You, and as long as he lives, I am giving him to You, and I am going to invest in my life to train that young man or that young lady to be what he needs to be or what she needs to be because I am lending him to the Lord."

I see that great concept in Timothy's life. I see it in his mother that his mother was involved in church. She was a Mary. She understood the relationship with God. She understood what was important in God. She was not interested in getting a gigantic house and getting all the things the world has. There is nothing wrong with having those things as long as it does not take the place of blocking your lending your child to the Lord. She learned that principle, and you see that principle.

I will tell you another great principle that you find there, and you find this one in Exodus chapter 1 and 2. This is your second gift today, before I give you the third one. She learned another great principle that you find there, and you find this one in Exodus chapter 1 and 2 with the mother of Moses. You know the story. Moses was born, and he was a proper child. He was a great little guy. Yet Pharaoh was threatened, so he has all the male babies killed. Moses' mother, wanting to save that baby and not wanting to kill it, you know what she did? She went down there, you know the story, she made a little ark and she put that baby in the ark, and she put it in the river.

I have heard people claim that, "Well, she should have... she did not obey the government." Sure she did. Pharaoh said, "Kill all the babies." She just put the baby in the river. He does not even put it under a boat. She takes that little boy and she brings that little boy and she puts him down in that boat, and she goes back and then she stands aside and then she watches what happens to it. You know what happens? Pharaoh's daughter comes down, picks up that little baby and says, "What a cute little guy this is!" and takes it up there. She goes home thanking God to the fact that now at least her son is not going to be killed because she has took it into Pharaoh's house. She does not know what is going to happen, but it is not going to wind up...

And then the phone rings. She walks over and picks up the phone, and guess who it is? It is Pharaoh's daughter saying, "Hey, I hear you do babysitting. I hear you help raise kids." Now she goes down, she raises her own child, and Pharaoh, the world, picks up the tab. We learned another great principle that Timothy's mother had that you need to learn. It is your second. The first one is, when you have that child, you lend him to the Lord. He is not yours. God gave him to you. You give him back.

Then the second great principle is this: if you want to keep it, you have got to give it away. If you want to keep it, you have got to give it away. You have got to give it away if you want to keep it. You have got to understand that when you have a child and you are a Christian mom and dad,

you lend that child to the Lord as long as you live. You structure everything in your life that that child becomes what God wants it to be because you understand some things about God and the Bible and what God has done.

## VI. A Mother's Day Gift and Recognition

Let me just say this to you, I have done something today that I want to give you, and I have got to explain this, and everybody that needs to get whatever you have got to get to get this thing rolling, go do it. But let me just say this to you, I did something for your moms that I really wanted to do because I knew I was going to talk about this principle of lending your child to the Lord, and I was going to talk to you about if you want to keep it, you want to give it away.

I love your children. I think they are the greatest kids in the world, and I just wanted to do something today because first of all, it is Mother's Day, and I wanted to give you, if any mother were worth their salt, the number one thing in life for kids. So I wanted to make sure that I gave you something that was special for that, but also something that after you heard this message, every time you saw this picture, that you would remember two things:

5. You lend them to the Lord.
6. If you want to keep it, you have got to give it away.

Now, here is what I have done secretly, and boy, I will tell you what, this was a hard thing to do, but I got it done. Secretly, I got pictures of all your kids for you today, professionally quality pictures. I know today we have some people that are here that you came, and let me just say this to you, I know we have got a couple of people here. Mike, your mom is here? Where is your mom at, Mike? Okay. As soon as the church is over, I will take a picture. I still got everything set up. I am going to cover this thing from one end to the other. If you want one of you and Mike, if you want one of you for Mike, if you want one of Mike for you, if you want one of me and you, I do not care. I am going to do whatever needs to be done today. I want to cover all the bases.

If you are in our church and you do not have a kid in here, and you are a mother but your kids go someplace else, well, obviously I cannot go to Tacoma, Washington, to take pictures of your kids. But here is what I will do, and I could not tell you before now, so I am all set up, ready to go. When we are done, if you want one of you for your husband, or you want one of you and your husband for you, whatever, I am here today. Everybody can have whatever you want today. I am here, so I do not want to leave anybody out, and that is not my purpose. You understand.

Now, some of you mothers have little babies, and I did not shoot your babies because you really want a picture of me holding your baby or anybody else holding your baby, so I did not do the baby. But I will do the babies afterwards this morning and have everything for you next week. If you are not here next week, Mike, you can take it to your mom, and everybody can get their stuff. If you are here and you do not have any kids in our church, and you just want you and your husband as a picture for today on Mother's Day, then I will take that. I do not care. Everybody gets what they want today, but you just have got to help me. You have got to understand that I just could not do everything because of the circumstances of pulling it all together.

Here is what we are going to do, and I need Phil. Phil, get that stuff out there now. Clear that out there for me now. Here is what we are going to do. I am going to come down through here and I am going to call the children up with the mother, and children, I want you to introduce your mom. My wife is over here. The first one we have is Amy. You are here with your young one. You should bring your mother up now. Betsy, are you Amy's mother? Betsy, get up here. John, you get to stand up so everybody can see how lovely you are. John Christerson, you are limping. Let us see what is the matter. No, no, do not show me that. Do not show you that. Old age, old age. Introduce your mother, everybody. Now show them the one. Then you have got to show everybody out there. Is not that beautiful? Look at that picture. Is not that darling? You are welcome. Nobody gets to see that out there. That is beautiful. Every single guy in this place is going to want a copy of that, and they are twenty dollars a piece.

Then we have Barb, Christy, Brian, and Olivia. Get your mother and bring her up here. Come on, come on, come on. Turn around. Come on, Brian. Oh, that is really nice too. Too bad it is upside down, but it is all right. When he shoots your mother, everybody. And that one, Phil, Phil, stand up back there in the back. Then we have Nancy Metcalf. Nancy, bring your mom up here and introduce your mama to everybody. This is their picture. All right, I am loving this.

Then we have Kelly. Bring your mom up and introduce your mother. There is their picture. Then we have Jason and Christine Williams. Christine, this is Christine. This is your mom. Come bring your mother up. Yeah, you can stand back up there so everybody sees who Chris Fender is. Would you wake Chris up back there? I know he had a late night last night. Then I want to recognize the fathers who take the time to come on Monday. You know, you are your mother. She... I know you have got to leave. You are working for UPS now. Oh, and I just want you to... one thing on your way home today: "What can brown do for you?" Oh, look at this one. Is not that wonderful? I am loving this.

Okay, then Andrea, bring your mother up. Introduce your mother. This is Dan Hell. Look at that. Now that is... that is... Then we have Amanda. Bring your mother up. Introduce your mother to the world. Look at that. That is a nice one. I like that. Oh, there is why I could not find that one. That is all right. I made another one. I did not know where it was, but I made another one. Good job.

Now we have Jennifer. Bring your mother up. Oh, bring your mother over here. Introduce your mother. Sony Ross. That one. Good job. Then we have Brandon and Katie. Bring your mother up. Come up too. Come on, you are part of the family. My mom cannot sign it. Look at this. Is that... Is not four aces, I do not know what is. Kristen, where is your mom? Bring your mother up here. Oh, so nice to have her here with us today. Introduce your mother, everybody. Look at that. Then we have Tara. Bring your mother up. Now we had to do a little secret agent stuff on this one, but we did it. Tara, you turn around. Introduce your mama. This one has got all three of her boys, all the kids on it. Come on, give us a little here, Mama. Come on. Anybody got any clean air? So, dollar a piece. The lady right here. You like that? You just want to make your day special today.

Then we have Jason's mom Williams. Bring your mom up. Honey, if you would like one of these afterwards, you tell me, and I will get you one too. Whatever you want, or I will take you for your... your whatever. I will do whatever I want to do. Oh, this is what. Introduce your mom. That is my mom, Darley. The one. Look at that one. Is not that nice? I have never seen two more photogenic kids than your those two kids. Okay, then we have... Oh, yeah. Valerie, bring your mom up. No, yes. I still do not believe that is your mother. I think it is your sister. Introduce your mother to everybody again. Look at that. You are welcome. You are welcome.

Lonelle, bring your mama up. So my mom is on his shaper, and this is Lonelle's beautiful picture. Matt, bring your mother up. Matt, introduce your mom here. Look at Matt. Excuse me. Oh, Kelly and Jamie, you want to introduce your mother? This is Miss Barbie. Look at that. Okay, now, now we are going to have the little ones. This is really fun. I am going to call the parents up, and then the parents can come up here because your kids are going to see you. Let us go. Be ready.

Okay, we have Tara Bradford. Come on up here, honey. We got it. Oh, yeah, you are a mother. Come on here. Bring it over to Mama. Hold him up. Bring it over, Mama. Show everybody, or I will hold them up while you are kissing her. Everybody has got a few. Oh, yeah. Then we have Cheryl Hepworth. Come on. I know you are not their biological mother, but you are the best mother he ever had. Come on up here. Oh, look at the man. Show you. Look at this. This is a man about town. I love you. I love you. I know you do. You are my buddy.

Then we have Valerie again. Oh, Tono, wait. Oh, wait. Do not I get it? Come on, come on, Tony. Do not bend it. Then we have Jack. Come on up here. Okay. Oh, he does not. Oh, there is a Jack. Million-dollar smile. I love it. Then we have Christina Woodruff. We have got a little Emilite next. Well, I am not your mother, but thank you. Oh, remember the big bruise she had on her head? Look at that. Took it out the day she took this picture. She had a bruise. Remember? Somebody remember seeing the big thing? Looked like she was child abuse. That is my goal. Whale. Somebody says, "How do you raise your kids?" Whale blubber. What do you mean whale blubber? When they are bad, whale on them till they blubber, and you will be just fine. She had... and I took old Adobe Photoshop, boy, and I fixed it up. You are welcome. Oh, we love you.

Okay, and then we have Shelly. Come on, Shelly. We have got one for you. Wait a minute. When your mama comes up here, just a second here. Come on up front here. No, do not give it to me. Give it to your mama right there. Thank you. Show everybody out here so everybody gets to see this one. Then we have Jamie Kenny Cut. Come on, Maddie. Come on, Maddie. Come on, Maddie. Yes, here they are doing five to ten for M. Robert. Got their little prison suits on. Then we have Nicky Bracken. Come on, Nicky. Do not wait. Do not wait. Do not come with. Mama has got to come up here. Come. Do not come yet. Make her come over here. Okay. Show everybody. Oh, what? I am sorry. What? Did I forget anybody? What? I forgot who? Oh, I did. Oh, I am sorry. I did forget somebody. Ah, man, I hate when it happens like this. How are we going to do this? Sandy, I forgot your kids. Sandy, all the girls. Come up for Sandy. All the girls. All the daughters. This is time for the men to take the children. All the daughters. I forgot Sandy. I am so sorry. Where is this one at? We have got it. Where is Mom? Nope. Sandy. That is true. First time in our relationship, I have live deal. Oh, not really.

Okay. Moving right along with that. Let me tell you something. The Bible says double honor to whom honor is due. Let me explain what that means. That means that there are certain people who are examples in the church that it is okay to honor them. I am talking to you. It is okay to honor them while they are still here in a church. It does not take away from the honor they get at the judgment seat of Christ. See, most things that Christians want to do, you do not really want to make a big deal about it because you do not want to take away from them the judgment seat of Christ. But the Bible says double honor.

So today, I need to say this, and I mean it with all my heart, Sandy. I do not know, and most of you do not know Sandy Stor. She has had a very tough time medically. She has had two forms of cancer. She survived multiple other medical problems. She survived. Yet today, I do not know of anybody with a more servant's heart than this woman. I have known her for a year and a half, maybe a little over that. All that time, we spent a lot of time together because we are in Bible studies, and we are teaching them and all that. I have never heard her say a bad thing about anybody. I have never asked her to do anything that she did not willingly do. She is anybody in our church that has the heart of a servant gets hurt.

The best thing about it is she has given that gift to these three daughters right here. They all love God. They are all in church. They all have servant's hearts. This is not a yearly thing we are going to do, but it complemented what I was trying to say because the Bible says there are examples. She is an example. I do not know of anybody who would say or could say on any possibility, "She does not deserve to be recognized for the godly relationship she has with God, her servant's attitude, and how she has transferred that to her three daughters who have all three, by the way, found men who have the same servant attitude of heart." I am so thrilled today. Honey, can come in now. We have a little something for you special on Mother's Day.

As soon as we are done here in just a second, I would like to have all of the family come up here. I want to get a picture of their special day with everybody in it together. You are holding your roses, put you in the middle. Anybody else that wants their pictures, I am going to be set up back here. We will get them done. I will have them for you this week. If you know, like I said, I know that some of you do not have kids that come to our church, and you are not with your kids today. But if you are here with your husband and you would like to have a really nice quality picture, you and him, I will take it. I want to be happy. I want it. I want everybody to have something today. Understand that given the circumstances, the way you had to do this, it would have been kind of stupid for me to come and say, "Hey, I want to take a picture of you and your husband. You have something for Mother's Day." It would not. So I had to do it how I had to do it. So let me help you. I will do whatever and whatever I can do, I will do for you.

Hey, thank you for being here today. We love you. We appreciate it. I hope you have the most wonderful Mother's Day that you could ever have in your life. I hope that the pictures are a joy to your heart. But keep in mind why I gave you those pictures: those kids you are looking at right there, you have got to lend them back to the Lord. If you want to keep them, you have got to give them away. I will help you anytime, anywhere, any place to do whatever it needs to be done to help your family be what you need to be. You know that.

So let us pray this morning and then we will be dismissed. As soon as you are milling around a little bit and shake hands with everybody, I will get the families up here and we will start taking the pictures. Let us pray. Father, we thank You for...