

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MOTHERS

2 Timothy 1:5

Mother's Day 2026

By Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

1. We all need encouragement. No matter how strong you are, you need encouragement. Every once in a while someone in the church will send me an encouraging card, email, or text message, and it gives me extra strength to carry the burdens of ministry. We all need encouragement.
2. This why Christians are commanded to encourage each other.
3. **1 Thessalonians 5:11** Therefore encourage one another and build each other up as you are already doing.
4. Every Christian is to carry out the ministry of encouragement.
5. When you encourage someone, you are imitating God. In Rm 15:5 He is called "the God of endurance and encouragement." Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Paraklete, which can mean "the Encourager."
6. Encouragement is one of the purposes of preaching.
7. **2 Timothy 4:2** Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and teaching.
8. A good preacher will correct, rebuke, and teach, but he will also encourage.
9. In fact, encouragement is one of the purposes of the church.
10. **Hebrews 10:25 (NLT)** And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.
11. Why does the Bible command Christians to encourage other? Because God knows how much we need it – especially mothers.
12. Mothers need an extra dose of encouragement for several reasons:
 - i. Their job is constant. They are on call 24/7.

- ii. Their job never ends. I'm forty-six years old, and my mom is still counseling me, correcting me, praying for me, encouraging me, worrying about me, etc.
- iii. Their job is difficult. They are training miniature outlaws to get along with others and be functional members of society.
- iv. Their job is high-pressure. If the child does anything wrong, if the child struggles in any way, if the child is not a perfect little angel and perfectly put together at all times, if the child is not keeping up with all the other kids, people look at the mother. I think this is why my wife said she often battles feeling like she is a failure and inadequate.
- v. Their job is important. Their mission is to lead their kids to follow Jesus.

13. So, on Mother's Day, I want to encourage the mothers in the church.

14. What is encouragement? The Greek word (*parakaleo*) has two meanings. It means to comfort and to exhort. Encouragement involves both – comfort the discouraged, and exhort or strongly urge people to do what God wants them to do. This morning I hope to do a little of both – to comfort and exhort.

II. TEXT

1. **2 Timothy 1:5** I recall your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and now, I am convinced, is in you also.
2. 2 Timothy was written by Paul. It was his last letter (of thirteen in the NT). It is called 2 Timothy because it is the second of two letters written to his close friend, a young pastor named Timothy.
3. Paul tells us where Timothy's faith came from. It first lived in his mother and grandmother, and they passed it down to him.
4. Timothy was from either Lystra or Derbe, two nearby cities in the Roman province of Galatia, in what is now the country of Turkey. Paul started a church there on his first missionary journey, and that's likely when Lois and Eunice became believers. Then, sometime after this, they led

Timothy to Christ. On Paul's second missionary journey he revisited Derbe and Lystra, and he met Timothy, and by this time not only was Timothy a Christian, but he was a young leader in the church, and the people in the church thought very highly and recommended him to Paul. So from that time on, Timothy became Paul's partner in ministry, preaching the gospel all around the Roman empire. Eventually Paul appointed Timothy to the pastor the church in Ephesus, and that's where he was when Paul wrote 1 and 2 Timothy.

5. But the point that Paul is making in this verse is that Timothy's faith was passed on to him from his mother and grandmother.
6. There are two encouragements for mothers in this verse.

III. TWO ENCOURAGEMENTS FOR MOTHERS

1. You can make a big difference in the world by raising godly kids.

- i. We don't know much about Timothy's mother. We know that her name was Eunice, which means "happily victorious." We know where she was from and how she came to Christ. We know that her mother was named Lois. That's about it. We don't know if she worked for a living, or what kind of work she did, or if she was good at it. We don't know if she had any special skills or talents. We don't know what she accomplished. We don't know if she led a women's Bible study, or if she was involved in ministry in church. We don't know much.
- ii. But we do know one thing about Eunice. We know that she made a huge difference in the world. How so? She led her son to Christ, and because of her influence he went on to change the world.
- iii. We may not know much about Eunice, but we know a lot about her son, Timothy. He was pastor, a preacher, a missionary, an evangelist, a close friend to the apostle Paul, and a reason for two of the books in the Bible. We know that many people were saved and disciplined because of him. We know that many churches were started because of him. We know he was a serious follower of Jesus, because at least on one occasion he was imprisoned for the

gospel (Heb 13:23). We know he was with Paul when Paul wrote Romans, 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon. We know that he was an awesome man of God and Paul loved him. Just look at how Paul described him:

1. In Rm 16:21 Paul described him as “Timothy, my coworker.”
 2. In 1 Cor 16:10 Paul wrote that Timothy was “doing the Lord’s work, just as I am.”
 3. In Phil 2:19 Paul wrote that he had no one else like Timothy who genuinely cared about the interests of others, and those of Christ.
 4. In Phil 2:22 Paul said that Timothy was a man of “proven character.”
 5. Paul was so fond of Timothy that he treated him like his own son. In 1 Cor 4:17 Paul described him as “my dearly loved and faithful child in the Lord.” In Phil 2:22 he wrote that Timothy served with him “like a son with a father.” In 1 Tim 2:1 he called Timothy “my true son in the faith.” And in 2 Tim 1:2 he called Timothy “my dearly loved son.”
- iv. And according to church tradition, Foxe’s Book of Martyrs says that Timothy died as a martyr. He was beaten to death with clubs after protesting against idolatrous festival.
 - v. In other words, we don’t know much about Eunice, but we know that she made a huge difference in the world because she led her son to Christ.
 - vi. Mothers, if all you do with your life is raise godly kids, you can make a huge difference in the world. If you only lead your children to Christ, you can touch countless lives them.
 - vii. Being a mother may not feel like you are doing much with your life, but you are doing a lot.
 - viii. Let me remind you of what the Bible teaches about children:
 1. Children are a blessing.

- a. **Psalm 127:3-5 (NLT)** Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands. How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates."
- b. Being a mother is hard, but the benefits far outweigh the costs. Children are such a blessing; such a gift. They fill your life with joy, and love, and meaning, and purpose.
- c. We live in crazy times. What was unthinkable to Jews and early Christians has become the norm today. In Bible-times people cherished children. They wanted as many as possible. The worst thing that could happen to a woman was to be unable to have a child. Today people think of children as a burden. They no longer value children. For years China mandated a one-child policy because they were afraid of overpopulation. They would only let people have one child, and now they are facing a serious under-population crisis. In America the government doesn't need to mandate a one-child policy because most people are voluntarily forfeiting the blessing of children. They are no longer having kids, or waiting as long as possible to have kids, or they only want one or two. The only reason we have avoided an under-population crisis is because of immigration.
- d. The Bible says that children are a blessing. A gift. A reward. And the more the better.
- e. I'm glad King David's mother didn't stop at one child; he was the youngest of eight. I'm glad Thomas Aquinas's mother didn't stop at one child; he was the

youngest of eight. I'm glad John Wesley's mother didn't stop at one; he was the fifteenth of nineteen children, and went on to start the Methodist denomination. I'm glad Henry Ford's mother didn't stop at one child; he was the youngest of six. Bach was the youngest of eight. Mozart was the youngest of seven. George Whitfield was the youngest of seven. George Washington was the fifth of ten. Thomas Edison was the youngest of seven. Donald Trump was the fourth of five children. I could go on and on. Children are a blessing, and the more you have the better.

2. If you are a mother, your primary purpose in life is to raise your kids to follow Jesus.
 - a. Your primary purpose in life is to raise soldiers for Jesus.
 - b. It's more important than your career; than your hobbies; than your ministry at church; than your ministry to other people; it's your primary purpose.
 - c. Why? Two reasons. First, because their eternity depends on it. Second, because they will go on to touch many lives. So if all you do is raise godly kids, you will make a huge difference in the world.
- ix. The world puts a lot of pressure on women today to do more than motherhood. "Don't just be a mother. You can do so much more. You will waste your potential. You will waste your talents. It's not enough to just be a mother. You won't be fulfilled. You won't be happy." Listen. You can do more than motherhood, but you can't do anything more significant than motherhood. If you are a mother, there's nothing that you can do that will have a greater impact on the world than to raise your child to follow Jesus.

- x. I have nothing against mothers who work outside the home. Many mothers have to work. Some choose to work, and that's fine. But I want to encourage the mothers who choose to stay home and devote themselves to being a full-time mother, because you don't get a paycheck for your job. In 1 Tim 3:1 Paul said that if anyone aspires to be a pastor, he desires a noble work. I believe with all my heart that God would say the same thing to full-time mother. If any woman chooses to be a full-mother, she has chosen a noble work.
- xi. Here's my recommendation to young women. If you want to make a big difference for Christ in this world, then have as many children as God will give you and do your absolute best to raise them to be soldiers for Christ.
- xii. The world needs preachers and missionaries. The world needs doctors and lawyers. The world needs engineers and architects. The world needs inventors and mechanics. But the world also needs mothers – mothers who love Jesus and who do their best to raise godly kids.
- xiii. That's the first encouragement: You can make a big difference in the world by raising godly kids.

2. You can disciple your kids despite big obstacles.

- i. As I said, we don't know much about Timothy's mother, Eunice. We just know that she raised Timothy to follow Christ. But there is something else we know about Eunice that I haven't told you yet. Did you notice that Paul mentioned the faith of Timothy's mother but not his father? Why? Was Timothy's father dead? No.
- ii. **Acts 16:1** Paul went on to Derbe and Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a believing Jewish woman, but his father was a Greek.
- iii. Timothy's father wasn't dead, he was an unbeliever. That's why Paul didn't mention his faith and his influence upon Timothy.

Maybe he eventually became a believer before he died, but by the end of Paul's life, he was still an unbeliever.

- iv. Why do I bring this up? This means that Eunice raised her son to follow Christ with the father's help. In fact, she raised her son to follow Christ with the father pulling Timothy in the opposite direction. That's pretty amazing when you consider the considerable spiritual influence that fathers have on their children. Research shows that fathers have more spiritual influence than mothers. Consider these statistics:
 - 1. If the father is the first person in the family to Christianity, there is a 93% chance that the rest of the family will follow. If the mother is the first to convert, the likelihood of the family following drops to 17%.
 - 2. If both parents attend church, 72% of children will remain faithful to God in adulthood. If only the father attends, 55% will remain faithful. If only the mother attends, 15% will remain faithful.
- v. Consider President **Obama's** words. He said this in 2008 in a Father's Day message at the Apostolic Church of God in Chicago. "We know the statistics – the children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely to drop out of schools and twenty times more likely to end up in prison. They are more likely to have behavioral problems, or run away from home, or become teenage parents themselves. And the foundations of our community are weaker because of it."
- vi. Fathers have a huge influence on a child's moral and spiritual life. This is why it is important for Christian fathers to take their role seriously.
- vii. But let's get back to Eunice and Timothy. Not only did Eunice raise Timothy to follow Christ, but she did so with an unbelieving father pulling Timothy in the opposite direction. That's pretty awesome.

- viii. But that's not the only obstacle that was making it hard to raise a godly son. At that time there was severe persecution against Christians. The Jews were hunting down Christians all over the Roman empire. So not only did Eunice have to convince her son to follow Jesus even though his father rejected Christ, but she had to convince her son to follow Jesus even though it might lead severe persecution.
- ix. My point is this: If Eunice can raise a godly son despite big obstacles, so can you. You can raise godly kids no matter the obstacles.
- x. This is not an easy time to raise godly kids. In fact, I would say this is a very difficult time to raise godly kids.
 - 1. We live in an age of wickedness. Most people are not living by the morals of Scripture. People celebrate sin and mock righteousness. They call evil good, and good evil.
 - 2. We live in an age of unbelief. Schools, Hollywood, and many in the media work together to convince young people that God doesn't exist. Atheists are considered to be the intellectuals while Christians are labeled ignorant and superstitious.
 - 3. We live in an age of affluence. Americans on average are richer than most people throughout all of history. The more money you have, the harder it is to feel your need for God.
 - 4. We live in an age of exposure. It used to be easier to protect your kids from evil influences; to shelter them – not in a crippling way, but in a necessary way. It's never been more difficult than today. Your children are being exposed to unbiblical ideas and philosophies on a constant basis through TV, movies, music, and social media, not to mention through worldly teachers, friends, and teammates.
- xi. This is not an easy time to raise godly kids. But you can do it. If Eunice could do it, then you can do it.

- xii. How did Eunice do it? How did she raise such a godly kid in such a tough environment? There are two things that we can learn from her example.
- xiii. **First, She taught him the word of God, and she started early.**
- xiv. **2 Timothy 3:15** and you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
- xv. From infancy Eunice started teaching Timothy the word of God. That's what you have to do to raise godly kids. You have to teach them God's word.
- xvi. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
- xvii. **Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
- xviii. How do you teach your kids the word of God? Let me give you four ways:
 1. Teach them the word at home during the week. I have Bible Time with my kids three times a week when we sit and read the Bible together.
 2. Bring them to church and Home Group so they can hear the word taught by someone other than you, and so that they can see others who are living it out other than you.
 3. Lead them to read it on their own. Lydia requires our kids to have a daily quiet time five days a week, and part of a quiet time is reading the Bible.
 4. Encourage them memorize it. My family enrolls our kids in Bible Drill in fourth grade through twelfth grade. They memorize about thirty verses every season.

- xix. Let me remind you of another truth about children. Earlier I mentioned that children are a blessing, and if you are a mother your primary purpose in life is to raise your kids to follow Jesus. Here's another truth. Your child's deepest need is the word of God. They will be the happiest if they have God's word.
- xx. Sports are good, but "the instruction of the Lord is perfect, renewing one's life." Academics are good, but "the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy, making the inexperienced wise." The arts are good, but "the precepts of the Lord are right, making the heart glad." It's good for your kids to make friends, but "the command of the Lord is radiant, making the eyes light up (Ps 19:7-8)."
- xxi. Your child can go to the NBA and still go to hell. Your child can become a world-class musician and still go to hell. Your child can become a brain surgeon and still go to hell. Your child can have a whole bunch of friends and still go to hell. But if they have the word of God, they have everything they need. Teach them the word.
- xxii. **Second, her faith was sincere.**
 - 1. **2 Timothy 1:5** I recall your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and now, I am convinced, is in you also.
 - 2. Eunice's faith was sincere. It was genuine. It was real. She wasn't fake. She wasn't a casual Christian. She was the real deal – so much so that Paul could see it. She was a serious Christian, a dedicated Christian, a committed Christian.
 - 3. You cannot give away something that you don't have. That's what communists and socialists do. They try to be generous by giving away someone else's money. That's not generosity, that's theft. You cannot give away your faith if you don't have it.
 - 4. If you want your kids to be fully-devoted Christ-followers, then you have to lead by example. Actions speak louder

than words. You need to be the kind of Christian that you want your kids to be.

5. What are the marks of a sincere faith? What are the marks of a true believer? What behaviors show someone that you are the real deal?
 - a. Church involvement. Sincere Christians love other believers and love the church. They are active and committed. They attend regularly – every Sunday, cold, hot, rain, or sunshine. Sundays are for God. They serve significantly. They give significant time and energy to the mission of the church. They give proportionately – ten percent of their income or more.
 - b. Bible engagement. Sincere Christians love the word of God. They read it daily. They study it deeply. They talk about it constantly. They memorize it. They read books about it. They listen to sermons about it. They wear out their Bibles. They mark up their Bibles. They cherish their Bibles.
 - c. Life alignment. Sincere Christians align their lives with the word of God. They are obedient to God’s word – in public and in private. They are not perfect, but they don’t live with unconfessed sin in their lives. They seek to obey God in every arena of life – their finances, their words, their attitude, their actions, their sexuality, etc.
 - d. Worship participation. Sincere Christians love the Lord and love to express their love in words and songs of praise. They take seriously God’s command in **Colossians 3:16**. “Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns,

and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”

- e. Great Commission commitment. Sincere Christians are passionate about evangelism and discipleship. A sincere faith is a contagious faith. Sincere Christians desperately want to see unbelievers saved and believers built up, and they take steps to make this happen.

xxiii. That’s a sincere faith, and that’s the kind of faith that spreads to the next generation.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. I was raised with a silver spoon in my life, but not because I was raised in a wealthy home. We were middle class. We weren’t poor, but we certainly weren’t rich – not financially. But I was rich in other ways. I was raised in a godly Christian home by parents who had a sincere faith. They brought me to church every Sunday, they led me to Christ, and they taught me how to live for Jesus.
2. Mothers, you may not be able to give your kids the nicest toys; you may not be able to take your kids to Disney; you may not be able to send your kids to the fanciest school; you may not have time or money to put your kids in all the extra-curricular programs. But if you will diligently teach them the word of God and display a sincere faith, then you will give your kids the best thing that a mother can give, and you will be the best kind of mother there is.