



Life Principles Notes™

Parenting With a Promise

Part 2: A Mother's Greatest Gift

Summary:

Mothers are givers by their very nature—they offer themselves freely to their husband, children, and to many others. Yet, it's important to consider the principal contribution a godly mother makes to her child's life.

When Paul wrote to Timothy, he remarked, "I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well" (1 Timothy 1:5). Timothy's mother

and grandmother passed on their belief in God in a way that profoundly influenced Timothy's life and ministry.

That's the greatest gift a mother—or any parent—can give their child. Teaching them to love God and serve Him will not only transform their lives, it will change them for eternity.

Key Passage: [2 Timothy 1:1-7](#)

Supporting Scripture: *Deuteronomy 6:1-7; Acts 16:1-2.*

Scriptural Principles:

1 Is your faith worth passing on?

How would you characterize your faith? Is it weak and easily challenged, or is it a strong, persevering confidence in God's love and provision? These are important questions for every parent to ask because whether or not you realize it, the depth of your faith will impact your children's lives. You'll either teach your children to trust God or to reject Him by the way you live. Your children need a faithful, godly example they can cling to as they face a world that outright rejects the Lord and will influence them to follow suit. You cannot allow that to happen. It's your responsibility as a parent to pass on your faith and teach your children to live in a godly manner.

2 Teach them biblical principles.

If you want your children to survive in this world, you must first teach them principles from the Word of God and build a godly foundation for their belief system. This is absolutely essential. When your children know the truth, they'll be able to recognize ungodly deception and resist it. Although you cannot always be with them to protect them, you can be confident that God's Word will always safeguard them. They will know when they're being lied to or when others try to lead them astray.

3 Model the pattern.

You must also practice what you preach. Your children must see a living example of the principles you're teaching them for those principles to become part of their lifestyle. You cannot ignore the Bible and raise godly children—that merely proves you to be a hypocrite. Rather, the way you live will demonstrate volumes to your children—not just the principles to follow, but how a faithful believer lives them out. You will provide them with a pattern of what it's like to trust and obey God, and they'll be able grow up knowing how to relate to Him because they've seen you do it first.

4 Be persistent.

The principles and patterns you teach your children will only have a profound influence if you're consistent with them. Repetition is extremely important when instructing your children because it's the means by which God's truth becomes an integral part of their lives. The best way to teach your children how to live is by facing your problems together as a family. When they see you repeatedly demonstrating faith in God for your needs, that will be reinforced as the proper response to adversity in their lives as well. How you train your children isn't only about what they do today, but about how their present choices will affect them in the future.

5 Participate.

Just as you cannot ignore the Bible and raise godly children, you cannot send your children to church without going there yourself. Although pastors and Sunday school teachers can be excellent influences in a child's life, they simply cannot take your place. You're responsible for your children, and if you want them to love church—the people of God—then you must model that love to them. You must participate in the activities that grow your children's faith. If you're absent from their lives, they'll think that God is, too.

6 Praise them.

Children need encouragement. While growing up, I didn't make very good grades, but my mother never criticized me. Rather, she would ask, "Charles, did you do the best you could?" When I said yes, she would respond, "Then let's talk to God and ask Him to help you." Of course, there will be times when it's appropriate to discipline your children more sternly, however, understand that praise will always go a lot further than condemnation. Lay the facts before your children and teach them to deal with issues in a godly manner.

7 Pray for them.

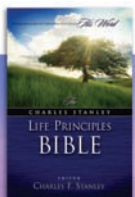
The most powerful thing you can do for your children is to pray for them. This doesn't mean only interceding for them when you're by yourself; rather, your children need to hear you calling out their names to God and making specific requests for them. God etches those prayers onto their hearts and helps you grow closer to your children in a way you've never imagined. Perhaps you feel as if you can't pray with your children because you're living in a manner that doesn't honor God. Don't let your sins get in the way of praying with your children—repent of your wrongdoing and obey God immediately. Your children need to learn that in good times and bad, talking to God is always the right course of action and that praying will strengthen their personal relationship with Him.

8 Plan.

Understand that the time for raising your children to be godly is right now. You cannot go back and undo the past, but you can certainly influence the future. It will take planning—you've got to set aside the time and make passing on your faith a priority. It's not going to happen by chance. If you want to protect your children and build a strong foundation of faith in their lives, you must do it deliberately.

Conclusion:

How do you want your children to relate to God? What character do you hope they'll exhibit when they're grown? Are you helping them be all that God created them to be, or are you hindering them by living a faithless life?



Benefit from the truths that have shaped Dr. Stanley's life and ministry with the *Life Principles Bible*. Visit the *Bookstore* at www.intouch.org.

You have an amazing opportunity to shape your children's lives in a way that will honor God. Teach them biblical principles, model the pattern, be persistent, participate, praise them, pray for them, and plan for their success. Don't surrender them to an ungodly society by sending them out without a Christ-centered foundation.

Passing on your faith will alter the course of your children's lives. Your influence will either be the greatest gift or worst curse they ever receive. ✝

Contact us:
1-800-789-1473

Customer Care
7:30 a.m.–7:00 p.m. | M-F EDT