

Harris Creek Baptist Church
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A Message for Mothers

2 Timothy 1:5-7

“I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

One thing I learned in doing years of young adult ministry is that extraordinary kids come from extraordinary parents. And so, prior to pastoring at Watermark, for a long time - over a decade - I led a young adult ministry called The Porch. I do not know if you know this. I feel like I talk about it all the time, but people will ask. So, young adults - not youth. Sometimes people are like “I know you're in youth ministry.” Never done youth ministry. I love youth ministers, just not my strong suit. But young adults or 20-30s, people out of college. So, they would gather there, and I really would have a front row seat for the results of parenting. Because this is when they have left the nest. This is when they are out of college. They are in the real world and that is who I got to minister with.

And I would meet these extraordinary adults and just hear about what it was like growing up in their home. So, one day there was a particular young man who really popped. OK? He wanted to do full-time vocational ministry. Just really gifted, understood the Bible, knew the Bible backwards and forwards as well as any young adult I had ever met. And it was just clear that God's hand was on him.

He was a college athlete. He did track there at Texas A&M. (Whoop from the crowd.) Thank you, thank you. Yeah, the two percent that are here at the 11 AM service. Whoop! Yeah, he was an athlete there. And I think when I hung out with him, if I am honest when I met this gifted young man, I wondered about his dad. I was like, “Man, I bet he had a great dad.” I bet his dad took him camping; and on the way to school taught him the Bible; probably did sword drills with Bible verses; and probably coached his baseball team. And his dad just poured into him because he was just a strong young man. Really, really gifted!

And as I got to know him, his story is that his parents divorced when he was 12 and he was raised by his Mama. And that his mom had poured into him all the things of faith that I got to see, and personally benefited from. Who God had used to make him who he was, was his mom. And really, what young adult ministry taught me is a lot of young men and women that were just extraordinary were the product of their Mamas. And I know that sometimes it can feel like

carpools, and cleaning, and doing dishes. It can feel like you are an Uber driver from one place to the next. I know that it can be exhausting sleepless nights and sick kids. That it can be overwhelming, but you are making disciples. That in those moments, those long seasons of faithfulness, disciples are made.

And so, I want to talk about, with you, this morning the legacy of Mama. The legacy of a mother. But I know that there are people here that dread this day. I know that. That when it became late April, you started thinking about this day approaching. And it is not happy memories that you have. Maybe you had a bad mom. That your example of a mother, she was not there. Maybe she puts pressure on you that a mom should not put pressure on someone. Maybe you find yourself in a season of singleness where you would like to be married and you would like to have kids. You would love to be celebrated on this day, but there are no prospects, and you feel forgotten. Maybe you lost your mom. I know that some of you here today, that when this day comes you long for that relationship with your mom who you miss dearly. Maybe you are in a season of infertility, you would love to be a mom but that's not where God has you right now and you are in a season of waiting. You are wondering if He cares for you and this day brings back all those emotions. Or maybe you lost a child, maybe outside of the womb or in utero. Or maybe this day serves as the painful reminder of a choice that you made in the past to have an abortion. And you are here this morning, and you do not want to be. And you really hoped that I would not be talking to moms on Mother's Day because it is just uncomfortable for you. Hey, I am glad you are here! Welcome home! God has a purpose in you being here and would you hang in there with me. I have a message for you too.

As I am talking about the legacy of moms today, there is really not anything that I am going to say that does not apply to any follower of Jesus Christ in the call to make disciples. If you are here, and you are a follower of Jesus Christ the call from the Scriptures on your life is that you would be and make disciples of Jesus. And so, we are going to learn something from the Scripture today. I am going to be in 2 Timothy if you want to turn there. And what I do not want to do, because I have seen other pastors do it, is give this cheesy Mother's Day message. Where I say, "Hey your work matters. Go on, get out there, and keep going!" And you are like, "how do you know, you've never been a mom" and you are right I have not been. I do not want to do that. I do not want to put more shame on your shoulders.

The enemy works in a mother's life in a really unique way. Where you can absolutely be crushing it - doing all the things that you are supposed to do - and he comes alongside you and says, "Hey, you're not doing enough. You are not good enough. You are not like that mom." And he starts the comparison game because he loves to distract you by comparing your lives to the highlight reels of other people. Please, please - I beg of you, I am telling you - art of war stuff right now - that is his tactic do not let him win. When you see that, when you feel that, when you since that know this is what Satan does. Please do not let him win.

What I want to do is encourage you from the example of a mother in the Scriptures. As we move through this passage, in 2 Timothy 1, we are going to look at: how to live out your faith and receive grace; what it means to let them go and let them grow; and then really an admonishment and encouragement to give the gift that keeps on giving. It is a message for mom. Which is really

a parenting message. Which is really, in any season of life, it is a discipleship message. You have to, if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, be about making disciples. Everything that I say to moms today will apply to any follower of Jesus Christ.

I am going to be teaching about Timothy. Timothy is a key character in the scriptures. Timothy is Paul's right-hand guy. The apostle Paul wrote about 80% of the New Testament. The greatest missionary that ever lived, the greatest church planter that ever was. So much of what we read in the New Testament, and learn about Jesus, is the Holy Spirit illuminating those realities through the apostle Paul. And the apostle Paul's favorite guy, his number one apprentice, his partner in ministry was a man named Timothy. Paul writes more about Timothy than anyone else, other than Jesus. We know a lot about Timothy because of Paul's affections for him. Timothy was known as selfless.

This is what Paul writes in Philippians 2 - **I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him who will show genuine concern for your welfare. For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. I hope therefore to send him as soon as I see how things go with me.**

If Paul could not go somewhere, he would send him Timothy. Timothy was known as an encourager. That is what 1 Thessalonians 3:2 says. And he was put in the prison, this is what Hebrews 13 tells us. But he never wavered in the faith. Timothy continued in the faithful works of God. And did you know, here is a trivia question for you, who was the first mega church pastor? It was Timothy. Timothy was the pastor of the largest church in the 1st century - the Church of Ephesus. Paul entrusted that to him. But it happened against all odds on his life. A really impossible outcome in that day and time and I am going to tell you about that. We are going to learn more about Timothy as we move through the Scripture today.

This is what he says in 2 Timothy 1:5-7a. This is Paul's second letter that he sent to his partner in crime, Timothy. **"I'm reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline. So, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord."**

He says, there was a sincere faith that your grandmother Lois had. And then she passed it onto your mother Eunice. And then your mother Eunice passed it on to you. And you can picture an Olympic torch passing on the flame of an Olympic torch. One runner taking that torch and passing it onto another; Lois to Eunice, and then Eunice running and passing it on to Timothy and they put the spark of faith in his heart. That is what we are seeing in the Scripture. The admonishment to fan into flames that which your mother started.

1) Live Out your Faith, and Receive Grace

Discipleship message - mommas live out your faith and receive grace. Timothy becomes the greatest leader in Christianity, one of the greatest leaders in Christianity. And the seed that is planted in him is put there, by the Holy Spirit, through his mother. But I want you know his mom did not just take him to church. She did not just drag him along with her to church. She surrounded him with the Word of God. Then we see this, it is so great the details that the Scripture gives us. Because in 2 Timothy 3:13 this is what it says, **“while evil doers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”**

Every now and then you will meet somebody, and you will say, “Hey how did you become a Christian?” and they say, “I've always been a Christian.” False! No one has always been a Christian. At some point in your journey, if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit did that at some point in your journey. Now maybe earlier than you can remember, we do not know. But this would be the closest text that we have that says, **“since infancy you were surrounded by the Word of God”**. That she, your mother, was pouring this into you - surrounding you with the Scriptures - even while you were a baby.

When we had our first child, we got this changing table. I think we got it at a garage sale or on Craigs List or something. But we kept it through all the kids. And you know it was one of the most prayed over pieces of furniture we had. Because you are so helpless when they are at that stage and their squirming, you are trying to change their diapers and so you just pray a lot. Right? And Monica would take these Bible verses and she framed them over that changing table. So, I do not know if they were encouragement for us or for them. But there they were as we tried to change diapers - these eternal truths over us. And in the center of those eternal truths was the Gospel. And so, when the kids were infants, we would read these Scriptures to them in the hopes that the Holy Spirit would plant something in them that would hold them to the path of following Jesus.

What I want you to know friends is faith is caught more than it is taught. Faith is caught more than it is taught. Sometimes children will do what you say, but they will most always follow your example. It is interesting because through the years people will come up to me like, “Yeah church - it's not really my thing.” “Organized religion, don't really get it.” “The institution, not really about that - but I think it's good for the kids.” “I take the kids.” And I just want you to know, that is one of the worst things you could do. It is one of the worst things that you could do. It is one of the greatest evils in our country today, this shallow counterfeit Christianity. Where you are trying to bargain with God, or it is some kind of karma. You think well I am going to do whatever I want throughout the week, but maybe if I just show up into that building for an hour on Sunday, He'll see me as ok. That is not the Gospel! It is eastern philosophy, its heresy, and it is of Satan. It is inconsistent with what the Bible teaches and everything we know about God.

He desires a relationship with you. And the greatest thing that you can do for your children, is show them that you have a relationship with the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Not just to say “this is what the Bible says” but to actually live it out. To actually live out the Word of God -

to do what it says. You cannot go to them and say, “hey you know it's really important that you share your faith” but never share your faith. They will know - kids are smart. They are like oh it is not important - he says it is important, but it is not important. That is the reality of what happens. So, faith comes into the home, and it spreads. Once in the home it spreads.

It is like COVID-19. Right? When someone has it you will hear them say, if they have a household, they will say “we have COVID.” “It has hit our family.” And what they are saying is – “I tested positive, she’s got the sniffles, he’s got a cough, they’re running fever, and we’ve got the O2 sensors going, and we are doing all of these things - but I think everyone in our family's got it.” Because when it comes in the home, it spreads. It is contagious. Once it is brought in the house and you are in close proximity with each other it spreads. In the same way when faith comes in the home and it begins to live out, and you prioritize the things of God, and you surround others in your home with the Scripture, it spreads like a great virus. It is contagious.

But there is something else amazing happening here and I do not know if you know. Eunice had a past. Eunice was not Sunday School Susie. She was not faithfully walking with Jesus, she got mixed up into things. Like, she went to college and got in a sorority. Then she met this guy who was not following Jesus and they had a night together. Then Timothy happened. Here is what it says - Acts 16, **“Paul came to Derbe and then the Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer”** So, she's Jewish by ethnicity, but she is a follower of Jesus Christ. **“but whose father was a Greek. The believers in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of Timothy. Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek”**.

Everybody knew what had happened. Ok? Everybody knew that Eunice got pregnant by this guy who was not a Jew. And we think “what's the big deal about that?” In this culture, it would have been an enormous deal. Eunice is not allowed to worship with them. She is not allowed to come near them. And then Timothy, this love child, he is what is called the *mamzer*, seen as illegitimate. He cannot even marry a Jewish girl. This is the culture that they live in. Timothy would never amount to anything because of the choices that his momma made. But God! He finds a home with Jesus, in the Christian Church.

Now this is a picture of the church today, right? People come in here looking for hope, rejected by the world. And we say, “Welcome home! We're glad you're here!” You had an abortion? Welcome home, we are glad you are here. Receive God's grace. You feel rejected, you do not like the season that you are in? Everyone is turned their back on you. Come here, welcome home - you have a place here. And God has a purpose - He's going to take your past and make it your platform. He is going to take your mess and make it your message. This is what He does over and over and over and over and over throughout the Scripture. It is what He did with the apostle Paul. It is what He did with Timothy's momma, and it is what He did with Timothy. The pastor of the largest church to the known world when this letter is written. Ok?

It says that he was not circumcised. So, in order to do ministry with Paul – since everybody knew he was not circumcised - so to do ministry he had to get circumcised. You guys ... y'all think we

have a high bar of membership here. You are like, “Oh, you make me get a life group. I'm going to have to serve.” They did not have anesthesia! Ok? Like this is a flint rock, it is a sharp rock. With a grown man. I am not going to put charts and graphs up on the screen, but I am just telling you this is a high bar to follow Jesus! And Timothy is like “I’m in!” Whatever is going to help me make Christ famous, I am in. If you want to sign up for adult circumcision, we do have...no, I am kidding. I am kidding! We are not rolling like that.

The truth is that extraordinary kids, earn extraordinary grace. That sometimes God breaks all the rules and just does extraordinary things by His grace. And I think far too often, we take way too much credit when they turn out great and far too much blame when they do not. There is this part that is not up to you. Maybe your greatest strategy is a whole lot of prayer; and turning them over to God; and saying “Lord, please!” Because I want you to know, there is no perfect moms. And some of you mothers you have got to give yourself a break. You are doing the best you can, and you are walking. And it is not through those catalyst moments, right? It is through long obedience of faithfulness. Long obedience in the same direction and grace will cover a multitude of parenting mistakes. It really will! Remember that you did not have perfect parents, you are not a perfect parent, and it is never too late - it is not too late.

If you are here and you are about making disciples, it is the same reality for you. Live out your faith and trust God in your misses. Live out your faith and trust God in your misses. Because there is this responsibility, this aspect of this, that is on them. Let me read it to you, verse six: **“For this reason I remind you”** The “you” there is Timothy. The reason is because of what your grandmother passed on to your mother who passed on to you. **“For this reason, I want to remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”** Your mom taught you to know God, now you need to grow in the faith. Fan the flame! She placed the spark there, now give it some oxygen so that it turns into a blaze in your heart. So, you would not be just another lukewarm Christian, but that you would live out your faith,

2) Let Them Go, and Let Them Grow

You placed the spark. You surrounded them with the Scriptures. Now what they do with that is up to them and up to God. Right? One of the greatest things that you can do for your kids, is just then move to that strategy of prayer. Like, “Lord, I need you to move here. I need you to do something.” The reality is you cannot save anyone. Salvation is a sovereign act of the spirit. So, you plead with God to move in the hearts of people. That is a message for everybody! All of us can think about lost people in our lives, particularly in our families, and say let us double down in prayer for them. That God would move in their hearts.

I know Proverbs 22:6 says, **“Start children off on the way that they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.”** I want you to know something - that is a principle not a promise. Ok? This is not one of the promises of God, this is from the book of wisdom. It is a principle. Generally speaking, as you show kids the way that they are to go - they will continue in that path. But not always. That is the extraordinary grace that is parenting. And one of the greatest things that you can do for your child is to give them the opportunities to fail. Hold them loosely, openhanded, to let them go and to let them grow. Not to swoop in, not to

hover over them, not to remove obstacles always. Not to intervene in their conflict and make things ok. Sometimes things need to not be ok, and they have got to sit in that.

In years of young adult ministry, I have seen just about every kind of abuse you could possibly imagine. Any kind of situation I have counseled through. You would be hard pressed to come up with something that I have not seen or sat with, often at the hands of a family member - sometimes at the hands of parents. And as I think through them, two of the greatest victims come to mind. The second most wounded person I have ever seen in my entire life - I remember when and where we met - just right at the front of the stage years and years ago. And I was trying to figure out what happened. What happened to you, why are you so hurt? And he could not even say the word. And to put a word on it, it was abandonment. His parents had turned their backs on him. Had rejected him as a child and he was on his own. And they did not love him, but he could not say they deserted me; they left me. He would just stumble over the idea. The second most wounded person I had ever seen. A we might say that kind of makes sense because that is a really hard thing.

But the most wounded person I had ever met, it was a very difficult situation. I remember one time I found him under a bridge holding a gun to his head. I took it from him and had to call his parents and tell him "Hey, I have his gun." And I remember partnering with his counselor and his psychologist - trying to help him get well. And I remember this conversation with his counselor where I said "It just doesn't make sense to me. It seems like he has a great relationship with his parents. They talk every day, all the time. They seem like really loving people. I don't understand." And I remember the counselor saying, "Well that's just it. What he struggles with is enmeshment." I had never heard that word. I was like, "What is enmeshment?" And it means that his life and his parent's lives are too closely intertwined. He is never learned independence. Any problem that he has come across in life, they have swooped in and cared for him then. The most wounded person I have ever experienced in ministry. And so sometimes the most loving thing you can do is let them go and let them grow. Right?

We all know in parenting how important boundaries are. So, when they are younger, you have to give them boundaries to their phone; boundaries to YouTube; boundaries to TV shows. Right? You have to teach them boundaries because these are gateways to all kinds of evil. But as they grow older, you have to teach them boundaries from you. That is a hard truth. It is a hard truth. But, as they get married you say, "How often would you like to see us?" "What should that relationship look like?" "I want you to know we won't just show up unannounced if that's not what you want." "Let's talk through this because we want to set you up for the most success that we possibly can." "How can we ensure that that you see your in-laws a healthy amount of time?" "Let us talk through holidays for a minute. What are you going to do at Christmas?" "What would it look like for us to free you up to start your new family?" Because this is what the Scripture says in Genesis 2 and Jesus repeats it in the Gospel. **"For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."** This is known as the leave and cleave verse. That you leave and you cleave, and you have a new family. Sometimes in this first century that meant a move off. That meant a goodbye. I am not saying that is what it needs to be here, I would not want that. Personally, I would not want that,

right? We want to maintain healthy relationships! But what you want to be thinking about as the parenting stages change is what does it look like for me to free them up, to fan the flame of the faith that I have surrounded them with.

When you are younger, when your kids are younger rather, you are the driver. You take them where they are going. You swerve to miss the potholes. You slowdown in the speed bumps. You are the driver when they are younger. As they grow older, you become a road sign. A road sign is this unemotional thing that says, "Hey, I just want to remind you that you need to slow down to 40 mph before you take this curve. I just want to remind you, that this is an intersection that you yield." I am not emotional; I am just reminding you of the truth that I surrounded you with when you were younger. When they are younger, you are the driver when they are older, you are a road sign. Let the spirit work. Right? That is a message for discipleship. Show them where to go and trust the Holy Spirit, because the spirit is doing something in their lives.

Verse 7, **"For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord."**

3) Give the Gift That Keeps on Giving

Think about what that Scripture says. This spirit God gave us, He gave it to us, continues to give us power, love, and self-discipline. God gave this gift that continues to give love, power, self-discipline, courage. The spirit does not give us a spirit of timidity - one that is timid - but of power, love, and self-discipline. So, the gift that keeps on giving is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the gift that keeps on giving. But here is the problem, you cannot give the Holy Spirit. You do not have that power! You can't say, "Hey come here! Come here, come here - you got the spirit now." You cannot do that, right? But what you can do is share the Gospel. So, if you are here and you have trusted in the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, then the greatest thing that you can do is take that baton, take that torch, and pass it on to other people. That central to your business; to your work; to your message; to the places you go; to your existence is the Gospel.

This is not preacher talk guys. One day, listen, I am going to say this with all confidence. One day you are going to absolutely know that what I am saying right now is correct if you do not believe it right now. The most important thing about you, and the greatest stewardship of your life, is continuing to further this message of the Gospel. I imagine there is some of you that are not always in church and here is why I say that. Because did you know that Mother's Day is the third most attended Sunday in our country for church? Did you guys know that? It is different here at Harris Creek, we kind of follow a college calendar. But I imagine there is a lot of you that are guests here today. That you are visiting, maybe for graduation, you are not usually with us. Mother's Day is the third most attended Sunday in the country. Why? Because you said, "Mom what do you want for Mother's Day?" And mom says, "I want us to go to church. I want us to all be together." Right? That is what they want. Like "Hey, Mom what do you want? It's your day, what do you want?" "I want us to all go to church together." Some of you laugh because you heard that yesterday or this morning. What do you want? I want us to all be together. We are going to sit in the row - I am not even going to put you in kids' ministry today. You are going to

sit right beside me. It is my day; I will do what I want. Right, right? Yes, way to go - we are glad you are here!

So, I imagine just like Christmas and Easter, it is an opportunity for me to share the Gospel. Let me do that for a second. The Gospel is just a word that means good news. And the good news, THE GOOD NEWS, is that you can live with God forever. And it has nothing to do with what you do or what you have done, and everything to do with what He's done on your behalf. That every soul that you know right now, any person that you come in contact with, every single breathing being that has ever been and will ever-be will be in one of two destinations one day. Heaven forever with God or separated from Him eternally in Hell. That is the truth. Every single person.

Now listen, you might think well good people go to heaven and bad people go to hell. That is a bad theology! It is false. It is not what the Scripture teaches. What the Scripture teaches is there is no one good, not even one. How good enough do you have to be to go to heaven? You will never be good enough to get into heaven. The only person that can go to heaven is someone who has been forgiven. Let me explain. In hell, there is only one item to do - there is only one agenda item. One To Do List with one thing on it - suffer for your sins forever. Let me say it in a different way. Pay for your sins forever. That is the only thing there is to do in hell - pay for your sins forever. You think I do not want to do that; I do not want to pay for my sins forever. Here is the good news, the Gospel, Jesus paid for your sins. He laid down the payment, you can pick it up, you can accept it, you can say "Oh I don't want to pay for my sins. If He covered the bill, I'll accept His payment." When you see that crucifix - the bleeding Jesus, the crown of thorns, the nails in His hands and feet on those two pieces of wood; you need to see a payment. That was a payment. What He did there, was He paid for your sins.

And you have the ability to trust, and you can look at that and say, "That was for me. God, I sinned against you. I will never be good enough to be in Your presence. But You sent Your Son Jesus Christ to pay for my sins. I accept that payment and now I'm going to be with You forever." Because He's paid for your sins – past, present, and future. That is what happened on the cross! That is the good news! That is the Gospel! I want you to know. (Audience begins to clap) Yes, praise Him! Praise Him! I want you to know that.

I am going to talk to Dad's for a second. Do you know what the second least attended Sunday is in our country? The second least attended Sunday, in our country, is Father's Day. Now why? "Mom, what do you want for Mother's Day?" "I want to go to church. I want us to all be together." "Ok, you got it mom. We are going to go. We will drive in, fly in to be with you." "Dad, what do you want for Father's Day?" "I want to play golf. I want to watch the game. I want to go hunting. I want to just sit here in my Lazy Boy and watch my show." And on those days, you give to the respective parent whatever they want. Mother's Days is the most attended Sunday. Father's Day is one of the least attended Sundays. Mother's Day is one of the most attended, Father's Day is one of the least.

Dads, I think one of the greatest gifts that I can give to moms today is just to say step up. Can you step up your game? Let us not add to that statistic. Let the Gospel be central to everything

that we are doing. Because this deal that I want to strike is like, “Hey I go, and I work, and you have got this. Right? You handle this.” I know I am saying that out loud and you are going to use that against me later. I know, I know. I can feel those eyes. Here is the deal, we can do better.

Norman Rockwell was just brilliant. In one of his works of art called *Sunday Morning* - let me show it to you - this is a painting called *Sunday Morning*. This is from decades ago, but there is the mom dressed for Sunday morning and in front of her is a daughter and behind her is another daughter and they are focused on the door. They are focused on getting to church. But behind them, pulling up the caboose, is the son. And if you look at the son's head, it is slightly tilted inward staring at the father (who is sitting in a chair in pajamas, reading his newspaper). As though to say, when do I get to do that? Why do I have to go to this place where I am bored for an hour, and I daydream? When can I get to stay at home with my Sunday paper and a cigarette in my Lazy Boy recliner and do nothing? I cannot wait until I have that freedom!

It is contagious like COVID. Ok? I want you to know it is one of the greatest evils in our country. In fact, if you zoom in on this, you will see how brilliant Norman Rockwell is. Dad does not just have bed head, ok (his hair has a faint resemblance of the horns often used to depict the devil). He is saying what this man is doing is satanic. It is a work of the devil. Do you understand? As he puts those two horns in his head. So, I think we have to step up our game man. Not just us in our home, but us as a country.

So, I know this is probably awkward for some of you and I have to tell you I really do not care. It is kind of what I do for a living, make people uncomfortable. So, here is what you can do after this. At lunch, men here are the assignment. You turn to them and just say “Hey, how can I do better in partnering with you?” It is just that simple question. Then sit on your hands and do not say another word. Listen, absorb everything they say. This is not the time to say, “wait, wait - hold on I did that not.” Do not do that. Just sit there, sit on your hands, listen, lean in. Then, whenever they are done talking - 20 minutes later...I am just kidding, just kidding – say, “I will do that. I will try harder to do that.” Ok? The assignment, to be clear, is how can I do better in helping you? Just ask that question, “How can I do better at partnering with you?”

Single friends, here is what I want you to know. Single friends, you do not need to wait until you are married to start making disciples. You thought I was going to say babies. (audience laughs) You need to wait until you are married to start making babies, but not disciples. This is something that you can do right now as you begin to invest in lives around you. Some of my favorite moms were never married. Some of the most amazing moms I know, never had biological children of their own. We talk about Mother Teresa, who was a mother to the lepers in Calcutta. We talk about Amy Carmichael, who started the mission in India to lost people and was a mother to many through an orphanage that she began there. We could talk about Katie Davis, who at 20 years old adopted 13 children. 13 children from Uganda at 20 years old!

And you think - well yeah, those are some legends of the faith. That is what books are made of. Right here, at Harris Creek, there are two sisters who are fostering children with the help of their life group. Investing in the lives of others. Unmarried sisters, caring for children and parents. That is happening here, and they are not the only ones! That is amazing! So, if you are here and

you have margin, you can foster, or maybe you do not have margin and God will just have to miraculously show up. Sometimes that is what He does. As you stop by that booth (foster care booth) on your way out, say “Can I just get information?” Maybe it is not fostering, maybe you just give to the ministry your discretionary time. And you serve there. The message is about making disciples. Whether you are male or female, married or single, regardless of your season of life - that is the call of the Scripture on your life.

Moms we love you. We celebrate you today and your work does matter. The menial tasks, that are exhausting, are paying an eternal reward and I have seen it. I have benefited from it. In summary: Live Out Your Faith and Receive Grace; Let them Go and Let them Grow; and Give the Gift of the Gospel.

In the same way that I have heard extraordinary kids come from extraordinary parents and extraordinary kids are often given extraordinary grace, I have heard that the greatest test of a leader is what happens when they leave. So, as you consider that young adult ministry, what God did over a decade plus serving there, is He grew it. This is not a flex; I am just telling you this for context – ok? He grew it up to be the largest ministry of its kind in the world. 18 campuses, 50,000 people are watching weekly messages. And so, when God began to call us to Waco - and in between we pastored a church in Dallas - but as God began to call us to Waco, I have to start thinking through successors. Who can I hand this ministry to? Right? And as I started thinking through people, the obvious choice was that young man who was poured into by his mom. I am so thankful for his mom and her faithfulness.

And you guys know David if you are here at Harris Creek. He is taught here recently. And he is actually taught on this passage, the very passage that I am in today. And this is what he said - watch this: (video of David preaching plays) “I love the story of Timothy, because it's my story. I was raised in a home where I did not have a godly father around. There was not an example of someone to teach me how to be a godly man, love a woman, do any of those things. But I did have a Eunice. I did have a godly mother who raised me and three other kids on her own, almost exclusively. And she brought us up and as I think back on the reasons, I am so thankful for her – there is no trophy kid here. But I am so thankful for my mom and how God used her to really be a source of protection in my life. To teach and train, to fill in the gaps that a father should fill.”

At the beginning of that video, he said “I love Timothy’s story because Timothy’s story is my story.” And I would tell you I love David’s story because David's story is similar to my story. I had a dad, an amazing dad. He died in 2020 due to COVID-19. I learned a lot of things from my dad. I learned work ethic from my dad. I learned morality from my dad. He would always tell me to always do a person right, never lie, always tell the truth. But I did not learn the Scriptures from my dad. My mom was the spiritual leader of my family.

And I would be hard pressed, no matter how early I got up - sometimes I had basketball tournaments and I would get up early in the morning - there was this front living room on the front of our house, and I would walk by it and all the lights in the house would be off, except for that one. In that room there would be a lamp on by the dining room table and mom with her Bible open. I do not know what time she would wake up and start reading the Word, but that is

what she was always doing when, and I got up. And I have to tell you I was not interested in that book. There was nothing about it that interested me. But I was interested in the fact that she was interested in it. There was something strong in her life, that I knew was foundational, because of what she was doing in that morning.

I left the path. I wondered and I sold my wild oats. I partied and I did what I wanted to do. It was like the Lord placed a talon in my heart to pull me back into relationship with Him. She would lead with such humility and respect towards my father. I remember we would sit at the table, and she would always have these devotionals. She would turn it to a page, and she would flip it around and hand it to him and say, "Why don't you just read this for a second?" She would do that with such grace, power, love, and self-discipline.

My dad taught me a lot of things. Very thankful for many of the things that he taught. But I am in ministry because of my mom. And I am telling you - your work matters. Now I have the amazing opportunity to benefit from Monica's mom and so many of the moms that I have met here that are investing in the lives of children. Sometimes those children are two, sometimes they are 22, sometimes they are 42. You are praying for them. That the spirit of God would move in their hearts - being a road sign. If you take this curve faster than 40, you are going to flip over. Do not do it.

I am grateful for you moms!

Let me pray for us. Father, we love you. We thank you for the family unit. It is a gift from You to exemplify to us who You are. None of us, not one of us, has had an example of a perfect family unit. So, in the gaps, would your grace fill them. I know that for some of us the gaps are bigger than others. Would your grace and your mercy fill them? I imagine, God, that there are people in this room today who find themselves in a place of worship on Sunday morning that do not know You. Would your Holy Spirit overwhelm their hearts and turn them, so that they would have a relationship with You? That they would not just think "oh that's good news" they would think, "that's good news for me." I thank you for the moms here. I thank you for the sleepless nights. I thank you for the exhausting days. I thank you for their perseverance. Would you just lift their spirits, give them hope? For those that are here with a cynical heart towards this day, would you rush in with healing? Help them and heal them. So that they would not resent this day. Rather that they would see it as steps that they would take towards a healed and healthy heart. We love you God! We worship you now. Amen