

Research shows that people who feel happy also tend to feel gratitude deeply. Recent studies indicate that there is a very strong link between the two—the more grateful you are, the happier you will feel. That’s interesting. The Bible has taught this link between gratitude and joy for thousands of years. It’s good to know that science is catching up with God’s providence!

“I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.” (2 Timothy 1:3-5)

Paul’s letters usually begin with an expression of his gratitude for the faith of the recipients of his letters. In this case, he is writing to a young church leader named Timothy, and Paul’s gratitude spills over, not just for Timothy, but also for the strong faith of Timothy’s mother and grandmother. These women were early converts to the Christian faith in their locale and their faith became grew up strong enough to take root in the life of young Timothy. Eventually Timothy becomes a co-worker with Paul, even becoming an evangelist in his own right, but none of his work would have been possible had Lois and Eunice not first believed and shared their faith.

Think back in your life—who “planted” faith in you? Who nurtured that faith, pruned it when necessary, helped to challenge you to grow as a follower of Christ? Who acted as Lois and Eunice in your life?

May is the month we celebrate mothers—our biological mothers, those who “mothered us” along the way, and the mothers of our faith. May is also the month of graduations. Most of us are old enough to be celebrating the graduations of our children, grandchildren, even great grandchildren. Yet, we are supposed to be growing in faith and service as we age. What milestones are you celebrating? What new challenges are you meeting in faith and service?

Even as we are celebrating the mothers who have shaped our lives, Paul urges Timothy and us to renew our growth and education in faith. He writes “...**I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you...**” (2 Timothy 1:6) We are to keep on growing, keep on “graduating” to deeper faith and new avenues of service.

This renewing of faith and service just brings us back around to gratitude again. The more we grow in faith, the more we learn through serving Christ, the deeper our gratitude becomes for all that God is doing.

This month reflect on your gratitude and your growth, and find your happiness in God!

“I am grateful to God...when I remember you constantly in my prayers”,

Janell