

Eunice

The Woman Whose Son Became a Famous Evangelist

Scripture Reference: Acts 16:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; 2 Timothy 4:5

Name Meaning: Eunice implies "conquering well," and was a name expressive of a good or happy victory, and in its origin doubtless commemorated some such event. Nice or "nike" was a favorite ending of female names in the Macedonian age. Eunice lived up to her name for she conquered in the effort to bring up her son in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Family Connections: Eunice was the daughter of Lois whose name is of Greek origin. Scripture is silent as to the identity of her father. A Jew, Eunice married a Gentile, and as nothing is said of him it can be assumed that he was dead by the time Paul contacted the family. The commanding feature of the Scriptural record of Eunice and her mother is their religious influence upon Timothy who, from childhood days had known the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:14-15). These two godly women had trained him up in the way he should go (Proverbs 22:6). How gratified they must have been when Timothy set out to do the work of an evangelist! 2 Timothy 4:5). His name, Timothy, means "one who fears God," and must have been chosen by his Jewish mother, and not by his Gentile father who probably had little leaning Godward. Evidence seems to point to the contention that Lois, Eunice and Timothy were won to Christ by Paul on an earlier visit to Lystra where the family lived Acts 14:6-7). Although Lois and her daughter were women and well-versed in Old Testament Scriptures, and taught the child Timothy the same, it was Paul who brought them to see that the One who died upon the cross to save sinners was the long-promised Messiah. That the Apostle led Timothy to Christ is proven by the way Paul speaks of him as his "beloved son" and his "son in the faith." How grateful to God Eunice must have been when Paul chose her much-loved son to be his companion in his evangelistic work!

How she would appreciate the word of Solomon, "She that bare thee shall rejoice" Proverbs 23:25). Hereditary piety and personal faith are implied in Paul's reference to the unfeigned faith which first dwelt in Timothy's grandmother, Lois, then in his mother, Eunice, and then in himself also. While one parent's faith can sanctify a child 1 Corinthians 7:14), it is a personal faith in Christ that saves the soul. Notice is taken of the faith of Timothy's mother, but not of his father. After Paul's reference to Lois and Eunice in his second epistle to Timothy, they are not mentioned again. There may be a veiled reference to them, however, in what Paul had to say about widows and the children of widows 1 Timothy 5:4-5). The important feature we glean from the record of Timothy is that of the value of a positive Christian training in the home. Paul seems to be saying to Timothy in effect, "That you have always been schooled in the Scriptures represents an inestimable grace, for which you ought always to thank your God." We can be sure that Timothy constantly praised God for a home wherein His honor dwelt. Augustine always confessed the debt he owed to his saintly mother, Monica. Not all children have godly parents and the safeguard of a Christian home, but those born into a home where Christ is its Head are privileged and grow up to bless God for their spiritual heritage. Alas, the heartache of godly parents is to have a child or children who, as they come to the age of accountability, spurn the Christian influences of the home created for them!