



Lesson 13

What Does a Grandmother Do?

by Gail Yost

But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to those who keep His covenant and remember His precepts to do them.

Psalm 103:17-18

A grandmother remembers and reminds.

The importance of reciting the Lord's mighty acts to subsequent generations is heavily underscored by the three-fold injunction in Joel 1:2-3—

²*Has anything like this [the extended drought and massive invasion of locusts that stripped the land of every green thing, brought severe economic devastation, and left the southern kingdom weak] happened in your days or in your fathers' days?*

³**Tell your sons** about it, and **let your sons tell their sons, and their sons the next generation.**

In Exodus 10:1-2 the LORD said to Moses,

¹*“Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them,*
²*And that you may **tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson,** how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, that you may know that I am the LORD.”*

In Deuteronomy 4:9-10 Moses spoke to the people of Israel,

⁹*“Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but **make them known to your sons and your grandsons.***

¹⁰*Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and **that they may teach their children.**”*

Then, in Deuteronomy 6:5-7, Moses commanded Israel,

⁵*“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

⁶*These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.*

⁷***You shall teach them diligently to your sons** and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”*

David writes in Psalm 78:5-7,

⁵*For [God] established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that **they should teach them to their children,***

⁶***That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may arise and tell them to their children,***

⁷*That they should put their confidence in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.*

A grandmother loves.

The Hebrew verb for the action of “showing parental love” is *racham*, usually translated in the KJV as either *have mercy* or *have compassion*. In Isaiah 49:13, the prophet commands all nature,

Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy [racham] upon his afflicted.

Psalm 103:13 assures us that *like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him*. *Racham* appears in this verse twice as the verb *pitieth*.

In addition to comparing God’s love to a father’s, the Bible likens divine parental love to the affection a mother shows to her children. No wonder Isaiah asked in Isaiah 49:15, *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea they may forget, yet will I not forget thee*. The phrase *that she should not have compassion* is the translation of *racham*.

Grandmothers pattern their expressions of love on God’s love *for them*. They also base their ministry with their families on their love *for God*.

“Love for God is the only reliable foundation for a ministry of truth speaking. Any other motivation distorts the process. We cannot come in anger, frustration, or a spirit of vengeance. We come because we love God and speak on his behalf to someone who may be wandering away. Confrontation has little to do with us. It is all about the Lord, motivated by a desire to draw people back into close, obedient, and loving communion with him.”

Paul David Tripp

A grandmother gives.

John 3:16 points to giving as a result of loving:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Our loving gifts can never be compared to God's "unspeakable gift" of his Son, but genuine love always acts on the behalf of a person greatly loved.

Matthew 7:7-11 shows God as a Father who desires to give good gifts to his children,

⁷"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

⁸For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

⁹Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone?

¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he?

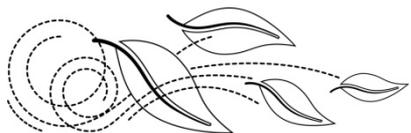
¹¹If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"

We delight in giving gifts to our grandchildren, but do we also desire to give them the good gifts of wisdom, understanding, and maturity? That kind of giving requires sacrifice of our time, energy, attention, and patience!

A grandmother teaches.

If grandchildren live with us or spend blocks of time in our homes, we have many good chances to “teach” them. But most of our teaching will likely be caught, not taught.

- Teach and model a growing relationship with God. God designed both our grandchildren and us to grow into a greater understanding of who He is.
- Teach and model contentment. Let your family hear and see that, for you, God is “more than enough.” Tell what God used to teach you to say with Paul, “*I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.*” Philippians 4:11
- Focus on biblical principles. While reading Bible stories to young ones, discuss principles along with events. While praying with a teen, look for ways to teach principles connected with the requests and with God’s hearing and answering prayer.



- Let outward behavior/appearance lead into talking about heart attitudes.
In Matthew 5, notice two repeating phrases: “*You have heard*” and “*But I tell you.*”

¹⁷“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. . . .

²¹“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’

²²“But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

²³“Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

²⁴leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. . . .

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’;

²⁸But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

The Law has to do with outward behavior, but God operates at a deeper heart level, where only He can impute perfect righteousness to those who believe.

“May God help us not to forsake our pursuit of purity, but to remember that purity is first and foremost an inward virtue. Virtue that is only external becomes the vice of Pharisaism.”

Layton Talbert

A grandmother prays.

Wherever our grandchildren live, whenever we see them, however we stay in contact, whatever their spiritual condition—our prayers for them are received by our loving, hearing, and answering God. Of all that we do for our grandchildren, it is prayer that can “*accomplish much.*” James 5:16

When a young child has memorized Proverbs 1:10, *My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent*, pray with him, “Lord, when evil people try to get Connor to sin, give him the courage to say, ‘No!’”

Scripture helps us to pray according to God’s will for our family. We can pray that

- our grandchildren will have a growing desire to understand and do God’s will.
And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2
- our grandchildren will acknowledge God in all their decisions and choices and allow Him to direct their paths.
⁵*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5, 6*
- our grandchildren will understand that God has a good and perfect plan for them that they can trust without reservation.
“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11
- our grandchildren will reject the temptation to do God’s will in order to appear righteous, but will, rather, obey God because of fully devoted hearts.
¹⁶*For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Psalm 51:16-17*

May we assure each grandchild that

⁹“we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the LORD, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.” Colossians 1:9-10

Resources

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Tripp, Paul David. *Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands*.