

**The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Woman of Grace:  
Loves Her Children—  
Nurturing Love In a Loveless World  
Titus 2:4c**

We all owe our very life to our mom.

May each of you mothers know the joy of your children rising up and blessing you.

As we open to Titus 2:4 we are focusing on the second priority God desires in all younger women. God has called for all women of grace to be characterized by love. But never forget that we are looking back into a world where so few had ever known or felt real, Biblical love. The New Testament church was born into the culture of Rome.

The culture of Rome, and even to every person living where this letter to Titus arrived, on the island of Crete was a world framed by mighty armies, where daily life was lived around over-powering architecture, when most cities were fed by aqueducts with gravity-defying engineering, and with Emperors known for their absolute life and death power. So most people had grown up:

**Living in a  
World without Love**

For some today, you may have been raised in an environment of conflict, hatred, abuse, or danger. You understand what it means to have grown up in a world without love. Others have known and felt the warmth of a loving parent's embrace, the encouragement of their words of affirmation, and the depth of their loving investment.

So all of us either relate to the world of Rome without love, or to the love God calls us to shape our families through. But wherever you came from, this passage is a call to choose to have a lifestyle of Nurturing Love in the midst of a Loveless World. Please hear God's Word to us in Titus 2:4-5:

*that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.*

To those steeped in the Roman culture of Crete, anyone seen as loving, sensitive, and caring **were considered to be weak**. Only the tough could endure all the hardness of the day.

So to be told by God that He desired a lifestyle of tender, gentle, nurturing love; and that priority made up His top-two qualities all wives and mothers were to possess—must have been shocking to these early followers of Christ on the island of Crete. Lifestyle change, social non-conformity, and peer-offense were all the probable results of such a significant change of direction.

But for a moment, think back to what you know deeply about our God from His Word: God is love, the greatest of all Christian virtues is love, and love energized by God lasts forever. So what God desired in Crete He had always desired in the past, and still expects it today.

### **What Does God Say Can Last Forever**

And, what does God say will last forever from all the endless and mostly unseen hours of work that being a wife and mother entail? God has promised that ALL the deeds wives and moms have offered in obedience to Him as Lord, prompted by grace-energized-love, are ETERNAL, front-line ministry, that shall never go unrewarded.

So today we learn what can be the most powerful aspect of a wife and mother's life on earth as she obeys God's calling for her life: her grace-energized love.

Titus 2:4 contains the key, that produces eternal rewards from every day of a godly wife's marriage and a grace-energized godly mother's family. Paul explains that the key is love. The first calling of a wife and mother in God's Word is to do all she does, and say all she says prompted by God LOVE.

If you miss everything else today from this message, remember this. If you do all your duties as a wife and mother prompted by God's love, He will give you an unending reward. Everything you say as a wife and mother that is prompted by God's love will generate from Him an unending reward. That is the most liberating and motivating truth that any woman of grace could ever learn! Listen to this same idea once more:

*[Our] gifts, [and our] ministries, all one day will cease to exist because they will cease to have purpose or meaning. But our showing love [to our husbands and children], practicing [that] love, [and] living [that] love now—are of utmost importance, **more important than having any of the other virtues or gifts**, because love is the link God gives us with His eternal Self.<sup>1</sup>*

God is love (I John 4:8), and everyone who is born of God loves (I John 4:7)—so the greatest of all the virtues, the one that will last forever, is love (I Corinthians 13:13).

The key to lives, marriages, and families that will have eternal rewards and maximum earthly blessings is love.

Just as love that is prompted by the Spirit and energized by God's grace as Peter said, "**covers** a multitude of sins" (I Peter 4:8), so the absence of that love **causes** a multitude of sins. Love is eternal, love is supreme, and love is most like God for God is love!

Love was rarely seen in everyday life and culture in the Roman world. So this gentle, sensitive, grace-energized love was to become a powerful witness in the culture of century one.

Jesus had already told His disciples that "by this shall all know that you are My disciples, by your love" in John 13. So that is why Paul says to all women of grace: cultivate nurturing love even when surrounded by a love-less world.

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<sup>1</sup> MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: I Corinthians 13:13*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

For older women of grace, who seek Christ's reward and want to serve His church this quality is to be seen in their lives, and is to be taught by their words.

For younger women this is the second highest priority of their daily lives. That is what we find in the second phrase of Titus 2:4, which states:

### **To Love Their Children**

This characteristic is one word in the Greek text, ***philoteknos***; and it means to be a lover of children, so grace-energized mothers love their children. That is what God says through Paul. This love is described precisely by the Spirit of God in the word He chose. God says I want ***phileo*** love that can be felt. That is a grace-energized-mother's special ministry in Christ's church!

Just the fact that these words were inspired by God to come to His saints means that this was not common, this was not easy, and this was not normal. This type of love just doesn't "happen" because God wants it. It is a choice, it is a lesson to be learned, and it is a factor that determines a believer's eternal reward in Heaven.

From time to time it becomes so very hard to take care of children that a mom of any century in history no longer "feels" positive feelings towards her children. So how did God instruct Paul to prepare Christ's church for these great social challenges and family pressures? Again, Titus 2 has the solution. God says that the way that tired, burned out, and depressed mothers get relief is from the faithful army of Titus 2 grace-energized role models.

The Bible clearly explains and illustrates this love that was modeled by Christ. This special ***phileo*** love is demonstrated by Jesus Himself. This type of close, companionship and friendship, emotional love is how Christ's relationship is described with Lazarus (John 11:3) and with "the disciple He loved" named John (John 20:2). This is also the word used in Revelation 3:19 for Christ's love for true saints in His church.

Jesus demonstrated His love to Lazarus and all who saw that friendship knew how close they were. The same was seen in Christ's closeness to the Apostle John. That is how Jesus loves us, and wants us to know He loves us, feeling His closeness, and enjoying His friendship.

And that ***phileo*** love that is emotional, close, and visible: is what the Lord asks from grace-energized mothers towards their children. God desires mothers to show love that their children can feel. The acid test of this love is to ask yourself: "Do my children *feel* my love"?

Without attending the actual classes Paul helped Titus begin, where would we start for a way to understand, in a practical way, this love that was to be characteristic of those energized by God to live by His grace in the homes and marriages of Crete? I believe that—

### **Jesus Showed Us How to Love**

Christ's life reveals a perfect example of love<sup>2</sup>. That is why Peter, writing just after Paul wrote to Titus, tells us that Jesus Christ's life is an example and that we should follow 'in His steps' (I Peter 2:21). As

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<sup>2</sup> Jesus and phileo love are seen in the New Testament as: the love God has for Christ (John 5:20); the love Jesus had for Lazarus (John 11:3, 36); the love God has for us, and that we have for Jesus (John 16:27); the love Jesus had for John (John 20:2); and the love Jesus has for believers (Revelation 3:19).

we consider how grace-energized mothers love their children, we can learn so much from the ways that our Lord Jesus Christ loved those He came to serve during His earthly ministry.

Jesus communicated His love to the disciples and others in two very clear ways. He **told them** that He loved them. He **showed them** that He loved them (like serving them and touching them). Jesus is the perfect model of showing love that could be felt. One of the clearest ways Jesus showed His love was when He spoke and blessed His disciples.

What was the last memory all the disciples had of Jesus? As we turn to Luke 24 let's remember some details about when Jesus ascended into Heaven. What was He doing as He left? Have you ever noticed that little insight Luke gives us?

We already know from Acts 1:8-12 that Jesus took the disciples to the Mt. of Olives and then ascended up into the clouds and out of their sight. That is the picture of Christ's final moments with the disciples we remember most, but there is a second account that gives some precious details we have often missed. Turn back to Luke 24:50-53, and relive with me this precious event:

*Luke 24:50-53 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and **He lifted up His hands and blessed them.** 51 Now it came to pass, **while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.** 52 And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple praising and **blessing God.** Amen. (NKJV)*

Those men would never forget walking with Jesus for 3 1/2 year, they would never forget Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; but what would be riveted in their minds?

It would be that incredible moment of the last time they saw Him here on Earth.

Their friend, their Savior, their most precious Lord of all left them in a most touching way.

Jesus lifted up His hands and gave them the most unforgettable expression of His personal love as He touched each of them with His blessing!

Think about that. Jesus was very careful what He did as He left His disciples, and the picture they would have deeply etched in their minds is Christ's loving, prayerful blessing raining down upon them as He was lifted upward and out of sight.

### **Christ's Words Powerfully Expressed His Love**

Those words of blessing raining down upon them must have been remembered over and over in the days ahead.

Words have such power for good or evil. What kind of words do you "rain down" upon those you are speaking to in life? And what are those who listen to your words remembering? Are they "blessed" by what you said?

Turn back with me to what Peter told us in I Peter 3. After talking about the basic building blocks of society and the church (marriage and family), he concludes with an incredible postscript:

*1 Peter 3:8-9 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling (spoken curses), **but on the contrary blessing**, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.*

In the New Testament a “blessing” we offer to a loved one is basically a prayer of encouragement for them. So, women of grace are—1

### **Loving Mothers Who Bless Their Children**

Blessing is a verb<sup>3</sup> used 44 times in the New Testament that means: “to praise [your loved one], to celebrate [them] with praises [that] invoke [God’s] blessings and consecrate [your loved one] with solemn prayers [that] ask God’s blessing on [your loved one] to cause [them] to prosper, to make [them] happy, to bestow blessings [that they be] favored by God.”

That is why Peter says to the church so strongly, watch out for how you “rain down” your words upon others.

*1 Peter 3:9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, **but on the contrary blessing**, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.*

So Peter basically says those who love with Christ's power, “sow words of blessing and you will reap a harvest of blessing.” What a powerful motivation to primarily use our words, mouths, and voices to bless others in Christ's Name!

And that is what we get from nearly every one of the 44 times the word “bless” is used in the New Testament (14 x in Luke). Here are some of the key verses:

- *Mark 10:16 And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and **blessed them.** [blessing often involves touching]*
- *Luke 2:34 Then **Simeon blessed them**, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against [blessing often points to the future]*
- *Luke 6:28 “**bless those** who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. [blessing is usually hard but always very rewarding]*
- *Romans 12:14 **Bless** those who persecute you; **bless and do not curse.** [lest we miss it Paul repeats the habit of blessing as part of Christ's church’s mandate]*
- *1 Corinthians 14:16 Otherwise, **if you bless with the spirit**, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? [there was a Spirit-prompted work of blessing in the early church services]*

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<sup>3</sup> *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

- *Hebrews 11:20-21* **By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. [heroes of the faith made it their last act like Christ's to stretch out their hands and bless those they loved]**

Why should we learn to share a blessing with our families? Because a blessing shared and the whole expression of love that it gives helps those we love know in a visible way that we love them. Blessing those we love is a memorable way they can remember feeling and hearing our love.

### **Give the Priceless Gift of Love**

Do you ever remember your mother or father telling you out loud, in a clear and loving voice, that they loved you and admired some qualities they had seen in your life?

Those words just stay in our hearts for a lifetime. My own mom and dad often told me how much they saw the Lord's Hand in my life and what great things they believed God would do in my life—and my dad to his final day in ICU struggling to breathe, continued one last time saying to me what a blessing I had been to him. For all my conscious life for the last thirty years of my dad's life, I think he told me something like that saying that on a weekly basis!

This type of love expressed is actually a reflection of what God taught as one of the key instructions to the priests. In the Jewish community the priests were the public servants, they inspected for disease, they protected the food supply, housing, dealt with domestic issues, and of course represented the people to God. In the New Testament we are to all be priests, and, in a real sense, we are called like them to bless those around us.

*Numbers 6:23-27 (NKJV) "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." ' "So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."*

This idea of the blessing of the people was so woven into the fabric of the life of God's chosen people of promise, the Jews, that they began to make a specific verbal blessing time to be part of the private family Sabbath meal.

One of the most moving Shabbat (Jewish Sabbath) traditions is the blessing over the children given on Friday night. There are many variations on how the blessing is made. The most common custom is the father walks around the table, puts his hands on each family members' head, and blesses them. Parents, moms, dads, grandparents—if you are alive today it is not too late to start, or restart the habit of blessing those you love.

Start on the way out today, say something that will bless and encourage those around you. In the car, go out of your way to ask for a moment of silence and then say what a blessing your wife, or your children, or your husband, or your parents have been. In fact, what would be best is for everyone in that car to practice telling the others just one simple, small way they have touched your life that you are thankful for.

## **Shower those you Love With Words of Blessings**

Go back in your mind to where we started.

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Those men would never forget walking with Jesus for 3 plus years, they would never forget Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; but what would be riveted in their minds? It would be that incredible moment of the last time they saw Him here on earth.

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Think about that. Jesus was very careful what He did as He left His disciples, and the picture they would have deeply etched in their minds is Christ's loving, prayerful blessing raining down upon them as He was lifted upward and out of sight.

They felt His love. Those words of blessing raining down upon them must have been remembered over and over in the days ahead.

Words have such power for good or evil. What kind of words do you "rain down" upon those you are speaking to? And what are those who listen to your words remembering?

Do they feel your love?

Women of grace who are mothers, have as their second highest priority for life to cultivate a nurturing love that can be felt by their children in a love-less world. Start today and make this the very best Mother's Day of your life!

## APPENDIX:

### **God has a This Desire For Every Young Woman**

Titus 2 women train younger women in one of the hardest and yet most rewarding investments in life—***children who feel deeply loved by their mothers.***

- The Holy Spirit emphasizes very clearly that the key to raising children is LOVING them.
- Titus 2 women train, teach, model, and mentor moms into the deepening of love for their children that can be felt.

Mothers energized by grace are “lovers of children.”

This characteristic is also one word in the Greek text, *philoteknos* and it means to be a lover of children. As we see in 1 Timothy 2:15, this is a woman’s highest calling. “God doesn’t want all women to be mothers or they would be. Those women who have no children mean a great deal to God’s kingdom because He has given them freedom to serve in unique ways. God wants women who are mothers to love their children, which involves making personal sacrifices for the benefit of their children. Remember, loving your children is not merely expressing love your children can feel, it is also pouring yourself into your child’s life so that he or she grows up to love Christ.”

Almost all mothers in the world have the same maternal instinct of love, nurture and protection for their babies. It causes great and widespread public indignation when a mother is found abandoning, or even worse, harming her child. That is built into almost every mom. But there is also an equally widespread reality. From time to time it becomes so very hard to take care of children that a mom no longer “feels” positive feelings towards her children.

In the Roman world, those feelings arose from having to bear children as a “duty” for the husbands, or from having no life outside the home being acceptable so there was never a moment of rest from the constant demands and pressures of the children, or even more prevalent, the Roman world’s sweeping women’s liberation movement had infected many women with the sense that they should get out and make a place for themselves in a male-dominated world.

Things haven’t changed much in twenty-centuries, have they? Those same pressures that were brought into homes and marriages in Paul’s day, are still in various degrees with us now. And, the basic emotional make-up of people is pretty similar around the world, as well as throughout history. So how did God instruct Paul to prepare Christ’s church for these great social challenges and family pressures? Again, Titus 2 has the solution. God says that the way that tired, burned out, and depressed mothers get relief is from the faithful army of Titus 2 grace-energized role models.

In new marriages or when children first come to a home, busyness and activity reach a high pitch as the tasks of homemaking and child care increase. Is it possible that being loving can get crowded out? Don’t forget the love that motivated the marriage and the desire for children. Don’t let all the tasks (even though some are very irritating) ruin the love relationship.

Within the church today, older women rarely become active role models for the younger women. In fact, the honor due our elders in the church is often absent. Age groups are isolated from each other, causing people to feel that little can be learned from one another. It is unfortunate when patterns in society become patterns for the church. The church must encourage intergenerational caring and

sharing. There are times when the kitchen provides an eloquent pulpit for the application of biblical truth!

## **How to Teach Moms to Love**

What are some of the lessons these in-Spirit prompted in-home mentors would teach? Just a few might be:

1. Explain to them that negative feelings towards your own children in some circumstances are normal, even for a mature and godly woman.
2. Remind them that God planned for younger women in His church to need the mentoring of older women.
3. Show them how families are vulnerable to cultural trends that seep in slowly, and how these trends can devastate a Biblical family life.
4. Teach them the Biblical perspective of motherhood with children being gifts from the Lord and our highest duty, to raise for the God's glory.
5. Assure them that we do not have any unique challenges, just the same old struggles that God's Word has clearly said would need to be faced and dealt with God's way.

Why did Paul stress that young Christian women should love their husbands and families? While such teaching may appear too obvious for mention, there are forces at work in today's world that undermine even that very basic part of family life.

Women are being told that their interests or desires come first, that they must seek what makes them happy before they can be good wives and mothers. While women should be encouraged to use their gifts and abilities, each Christian woman must align her priorities with God's wisdom, not the world's values. She must love her husband and her children, accepting the sacrifices that love brings. God will honor those who value what He values.

Women who were new Christians were to learn how to have harmony in the home by watching older women who had been Christians for some time. We have the same need today. Younger wives and mothers should learn to live in a Christian manner—loving their husbands and caring for their children—by observing exemplary women of God. If you are of an age or position where people look up to you, make sure that your example motivates younger believers to live in a way that honors God.

The Bible clearly explains and illustrates this love that was modeled by Christ. This special "phileo" love is demonstrated by Jesus Himself. This type of close, companionship and friendship, emotional love is how Christ's relationship is described with Lazarus (John 11:3) and with "the disciple He loved" named John (John 20:2). This is also the word used in Revelation 3:19 for Christ's love for true saints in His church.

Jesus demonstrated His love to Lazarus and all who saw that friendship knew how close they were. The same was seen in Christ's closeness to the Apostle John. That is how Jesus loves us, and wants us to know He loves us, feeling His closeness, and enjoying His friendship.

And that "phileo" love that is emotional, close, and visible is what the Lord asks from grace-energized mothers towards their children.

## **Ten Practical**

## Love Gifts

Here are ten practical “love gifts” that mothers energized by grace can offer that can be felt; in other words practical ways a Titus 2 mentor encourages a younger mother in loving her children.

1. Give them a heart that prays.
2. Give them a heart that serves and meets their needs with love: a regular schedule of nutritious meals, clean clothes, clean bodies, adequate sleep and rest.
3. Give them a heart that rejoices and is filled with happiness. Psalm 113:9 describes a “joyful” mother.
4. Give them a heart that gives like Christ's (Mark 10:45): because love gives (John 3:16); because love is generous (II Cor. 9:6); because love expects nothing back (Luke 6:35).
5. Give them a heart that plays and is full of fun.
6. Give them a heart that celebrates all their special days (Matthew 5:41); and since we have to do all those things in the family, why not make them special!
7. Give them a heart that prefers your family first (Titus 2:4 says they are your first priority).
8. Give them a heart that is focused (Matthew 6:24).
9. Give them a heart that is present and attentive (Psalm 119:10 ‘my whole heart’).
10. Give them a heart that trusts in the Lord (Isaiah 26:3 ‘perfect peace...trusts’).

This absence of loving approval can lead to untold pain; whereas loved ones who feel approval and love face the daily challenges in their world with eagerness and confidence. Look with me for a moment at how Paul cultivated this type of love with a needy young man named Timothy. The mighty pastor of the church at Ephesus was also a young man with many physical and emotional needs. Paul disciplined Timothy with love that could be seen and felt.

### Paul Loved His “Son” Timothy

Paul loved his “son” in the faith. So as our example, how was his “love” for Timothy, his “son” in the faith expressed? One of the most beautiful testimonies to the power of encouragement (or affirmation) in the New Testament is in the life of the Apostle Paul. If you turn to I Timothy 1, listen as Paul explained to Timothy that he was:

- ‘a true son’ (I Timothy 1:2); “To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord” (NKJV);
- he told Timothy he was ‘an example to the flock’ (I Timothy 4:12) “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (NKJV);
- that he ‘had a gift’ (I Timothy 4:14) “Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership” NKJV and needed to ‘stir it up’ (II Timothy 1:6) “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands” (NKJV).
- and he reminded him of his incredible spiritual heritage ‘and that from a child’ (II Timothy 3:15) “and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (NKJV).
- Paul was careful to not ‘belittle Timothy for his weaknesses’ (1 Timothy 5:23) “No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities” (NKJV),

and 'his frequent tears' (2 Timothy 1:4) "greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy" (NKJV).

- Rather, he told Timothy he had a "treasure" entrusted him (1 Timothy 6:20) "O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—(NKJV), and that he should never stop no matter what lay ahead because he was 'gifted' and that God was 'going to use him and reward him' (2 Timothy 4:8) "Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing (NKJV).

So Paul loved Timothy with love he could feel. Paul "affirmed" Timothy, and used tender and encouraging words to help him as his son in the faith Timothy. These exhortations were tenderly given to a struggling man.

### **Practice Ways to Make your Love Felt**

Make sure your loved ones in your family feel your love. To help them receive and be touched by your love, we can try to use those several key ingredients that we see in Paul's ministry to Timothy. These small choices always help us to communicate affirmation and encouragement.

1. ***We love our children in a way that can be felt when we use meaningful touches with them.*** That is what Jesus did (Mark 10:16) when he blessed the children. He was always touching those He ministered to. He could have healed them with a word; eight times in Mark alone Jesus touched those He served. So should we! The act of touch is a key to communicating warmth and affirmation. It is even essential to physical health. Be generous with your hugs.
2. ***We love our children in a way that can be felt when we prepare special words for them.*** Remember how we saw that Paul used tender and encouraging words to help his son in the faith Timothy. He doesn't belittle him for his weaknesses and tears. We should always remember that hugs aren't enough. Tell your children how you feel about them! Those who are left to fill in the blanks often feel worthless and insecure. At best, only confusion can come from silence. Far too many of us are really not that encouraging. It's not that we have a critical spirit. Rather, we just say nothing. Our loved ones are not mind readers. We can do better than just expecting them to know we are in their corner, loving and admiring them silently. They need to hear it! Make an effort to catch them doing something good, right, thoughtful, considerate, well done, etc. and point it out. Highlight it! "Hey, you really handled that situation very well."
3. ***We love our children in a way that can be felt when we attach high value to them.*** Remember what we saw in Paul, how he told Timothy he had a "treasure" entrusted him; and that he was "gifted"; and that God was "going to use him." So should we also tell the ones we love about the qualities you admire in them. One of the best ways to do this with children is to liken them to a physical object (like calling your daughter a "pearl" or "precious jewel"). This is the same way that mothers teach their children the power of affirmation. Children grow in expressing their love when they hear their mother describe their father in terms like: saying your husband is such a "wonderful dad, husband, friend" or such a "faithful leader, provider, diligent, hard-working, thoughtful, etc.". And dads can strengthen this training of their children by talking about your wife in front of the children with words like: "you are so beautiful I think about you all day long; I can't wait to see you when I get home; I know how hard you work all day and can't wait to get home to help you;

there are so many things I want to talk over with you; I'd rather spend an evening walking and talking with you than anything else, even sports, friends, golf, etc." If children never see the joys of marriage why would they ever want to get married? If they never see obedience to God demonstrated by self-sacrificial love, why would they want to obey God themselves and wait to give themselves in marriage. Unloving husbands and wives are sinning just like unmarried couples are sinning.

4. ***Finally, we love our children in a way that can be felt when we picture a bright future for them.*** Paul told Timothy about a "crown" that was awaiting him as he ran the "race" set before him; and that the Lord was going to "reward" him. So we also should express what God can do with them as they follow Him in their life.