

[The Influence of Older Women](#) [1]

by: [Mary Ann Smucker](#) [2]

“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness...that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Tit 2:3-5).

It was at a weekend of meetings on the godly home when I saw her. She sat contentedly with her family at the end of the long row of chairs in front of me, where I sat holding one of our six-month-old twin babies, while my husband sat beside me holding the other one. Being a mother of five small children, there were times when the responsibility of raising a godly family loomed before me like an unattainable task. These precious souls the Lord had so graciously entrusted to us were a constant reminder for me to draw into a deeper, richer relationship with my Lord. However, I must admit there were days when the task seemed too big, too heavy, and rather overwhelming. I felt in need of some encouragement.

I glanced across the room again. There was something about this woman’s countenance that was attractive. She seemed to have a rare kind of beauty that appeared to be as one who was full of joy. Her face radiated with the love of Christ and permeated the very atmosphere around her. Her modest dress gave indication of a meek and quiet spirit. Her graying hair was tucked carefully under her head covering. Her very being seemed to be surrounded by a sense of tranquility, while the serene look on her face was one that revealed a life of trials, blessings, and victories; a life of toiling, while in His faithfulness, the Lord had taken her through them all. She was as one who was devoted to her God.

Later that day, during a women’s talk, I had the opportunity to listen to this godly woman sharing, encouraging all of us in our role of motherhood. I was thrilled. Not the kind of thrill that worldly pleasures bring; this was different. It was the thrill of having a deep longing of the heart fulfilled.

I was one of those young women eager to learn from the older, as taught in Titus 2. As I sat there with eagerness, I was certain God saw the desire in my heart and was bringing it to pass. Enthusiasm welled up within me, inspiring me to rise up to the challenges that motherhood would bring. It would be worth it all on that great day when I would stand before my Savior and present each of my children as a sacrifice to Him. Suddenly, I felt like a queen who had inherited a valuable kingdom. I certainly did not want to fail my Lord.

I never did get to personally know this woman, and likely she will never realize how she influenced my life that day. The impression she left on me was not just a normal, everyday experience but one of those long-lasting, never-to-be-forgotten ones that seems to leave its mark for a lifetime. It was one of my first experiences (but certainly not the last) in realizing the power of influence that older, godly women hold in our society, something that is not defined by positions of prominence but by their faithfulness and devotion to God and their family.

Going home that day, I felt so inspired. I knew without a shadow of doubt that I wanted to be a

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godly mother, leaving a goodly heritage for my children. Then the Lord began to work in my heart, as realization dawned on me of the power of influence that I held in my hand. Were there not little eyes watching me day in and day out? Was I not influencing these young ones that graced my life? Surely I was also an older woman teaching my young daughters who wanted to grow up to be “just like Mama.” I began to realize how much my children were learning from me and that I had a wonderful opportunity in life to show the love of Christ by joyfully serving in our home.

Sometimes we tend to feel overwhelmed by the ordinary tasks that seemingly consume our time—our very lives, if you will. It is what we make out of these mundane responsibilities that help build our character. Our attitudes toward these things express clear messages to our children. They will either see chores as being a drudgery, something that just needs to be done every day, or they will see it as an opportunity to serve in the home.

Special occasions, projects, and events can all be fun times, but what really counts is when we can take those ordinary tasks that repeat themselves day after day and do them with a pleasant attitude—with joy and enthusiasm.

Learn to find ways to make these tasks enjoyable, not only for yourself, but also for your children. Teach them the blessing of work. For example, you can teach them that if we did not have extra clothes to wear, there would not be as much laundry to do. And if it were not for having plenty of food to eat, we would not need so many dishes. Therefore, we can be grateful that we have sufficient food and clothes, while doing the extra work with thanksgiving in our hearts.

And then there is that quiet time spent with the Lord, which can make such a difference in our day, in our responses, and in our character. It isn't always easy for moms with many children to find this quiet time. One thing I tried to make good use of was the time I sat down to nurse my babies. This can be a wonderful time to pray. Or you can have your children join you in prayer or Bible reading. Nowadays, we also have the privilege of listening to audio recordings of the Bible or other godly books, which is something our children have greatly enjoyed.

Having a period of quiet time after lunch greatly enhances our vitality, as well. This is a time when Mom can take a nap along with the younger children, while older ones take the opportunity to read books or work on some type of project that is quiet and will not disturb those who are resting. We have found this to be a real blessing. On our daily work chart, as we home school, we have our three R's in the morning of “reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic.” In the afternoon we have an hour of a different kind of three R's which we call “rest, relaxation, and refreshment.” Getting a proper amount of rest and nutrition, along with spiritual nourishment, will all affect how we respond to situations in life. It is in how we respond to these things that build our character and make us women of virtue and strength.

For us to experience the life that is filled with His presence and with His Spirit, we need to continually yield ourselves to the lordship of Christ. We need to practice what Romans 8:12-14 says; “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

Finally, as we practice this in our daily lives, we will be able to minister to others in many ways, even without words, just like that sister ministered to me, never realizing the impact she

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left by the way she allowed herself to be used of the Lord. Therefore, never underestimate the power of influence that your life can hold. Whether you are married or single, you never know who is looking up to you as an example for their own lives.

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