



Ladies of Grace

Bible Studies for Women

The Ministry of Womanhood Series

Every woman has been born into the ministry of God. It is spelled out for her in Scripture, lived out before others in her home, church, and community, and recorded by God in the pages of eternity.

Mothering By Faith And Not By Fear

Today we are going to talk about something that is near and dear to the heart of every life giving mother ~ the tendency to mother by fear, rather than faith.

As a woman that has been a mother for over twenty-one years, I can assure you, that in the course of time that it took to raise my children to full maturity, there were plenty of things that *I thought* I had to worry about.

And my fears began during my first pregnancy, even before my daughter had even been born. I worried about things like, “Will my baby be normal, or will it be handicapped? What will the labor and delivery process be like? Will it hurt to give birth? Will I be injured in the process? How will I know when I am really in labor? And will we be able to make it to the hospital on time?”

It continued to escalate after I gave birth. “What if I am unable to hear her cry in the night? What if she stops breathing when I am not looking and dies? What if her dad forgets to put her in the car seat like he is supposed to when he takes her out? What if she gets sick and doesn’t immediately recover?”

As she and her sister grew older, it only got worse. “What if they get away from me at the mall and someone steals them? What if they don’t walk on time, talk on time, or potty train when they are supposed to? What if I don’t teach them well enough at home and they aren’t ready for school? What if the other kids don’t like them and they don’t have any friends? What if they get a teacher that is mean and doesn’t understand them? What if they make friends with the wrong crowd? What if they climb too high and fall? What if someone tempts them to smoke, drink alcohol, do drugs, or pierce their body parts? What if they get hooked up with the wrong boys? What if they rebel against us when we correct them? What if, what if, what if???”

As mothers, our days can easily be **consumed** with fear **IF** we spend our time worrying about all of the “what ifs” that could happen in our children’s lives. But you know what dear friend? The Word of God tells us that it doesn’t have to be this way. **We can have victory over a life of mothering by fear**, and it will come as we learn to live by faith by placing our total trust in the Lord.





The Ministry of Womanhood Series



Have you ever stopped to think much about this concept called faith? Do you know what it really is? Do you know how to get it? And if you have it, do you really know how to use it?

It is my desire to show you in this study what a genuine faith in God is all about, what it looks like in the lives of those who have it. and how you can get it and live by it if you need it.

Please turn with me to Hebrews chapter 11, and let's read together this whole chapter that has been nicknamed, "The Hall of Faith".

As this chapter begins, God gives us His definition of faith, "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" So, according to God, what is faith?

1. It is the substance of things hoped for.
2. It is the evidence of things not seen

What did it look like in the lives of those that God had listed in this chapter that lived by it? It looked like courage, didn't it?

What did "these elders" obtain from God by living their lives by faith? The Bible says that they gained a "good report". What do you think this means? It means that God was pleased with their lives. He liked the way that they responded with faith to the trials in their lives, rather than in fear. Why? Because by behaving in this way, they showed the world around them that they trusted in Him, rather than in themselves.

As Christian women, God wants us to mother by faith and not by fear, and He knows that this will only come as we learn to put our trust in Him, rather than in ourselves. How can we learn this? Well, the easiest way is to be inspired by the faith of others.

I want you to turn with me to Exodus, chapters 1 and 2 as I show you the amazing faith of a mother named Jochebed, who gave birth to a baby boy in a time where there was much for her to fear and worry about. I'm sure this story will encourage you, and after we talk about her incredible faith, I want to share with you how God blessed her willingness to mother by faith, and what you can do to strengthen your faith to be like hers too.

As this story unfolds, we find that Jochebed was mothering during a time of great national turmoil and fear. The King over the land of Egypt hated the fact that the Hebrew people were fruitful and multiplied, and he was willing to do whatever it took to afflict them and get rid of them. Two things in particular that he mandated was hard bondage for their labor, and the killing of their first born sons. What a terrible time this was for the Hebrew people! And what a fearful time it would have been for a woman to raise her children and be an expectant mother.

If you would have been a mother during this time, would you have been afraid? If you would have been pregnant during this time, would you have been nervous about the delivery of your baby? I would have! And I'm sure that Jochebed was afraid too. But the interesting thing to realize, as we read the account of her baby's birth, that even though she must have been afraid, she didn't allow her emotions to give birth to fear. Did you know that you can be afraid and not live in fear? You can, and it is done by doing *what God would have you to do*, not *what your emotions would lead you to do*.

How was Jochebed able to mother by faith during this time and not by fear?

1. She allowed the Word of God to dwell in her richly. The faith that she evidenced in the providence of God *clearly* demonstrates to us that she had a heart that knew God. Let's face it ladies, you can't believe in what you don't know. And you can't know something that you never come in contact with. In order for Jochebed to have had the kind of faith that believed that God would protect her and take care of her baby during this time, she had to have spent a lot of time before this going to church and memorizing the Word of God. Did you know that the same kind of things will strengthen your faith in God too? It's true. If you will give your heart over to the reading, meditation and memorization of your Bible, and to the genuine listening and applying what you learn from the preaching at church, you will find that your faith will grow strong and you will be

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8



The Ministry of Womanhood Series



able to overcome your mothering fears. *Romans 10:17* says, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”

2. She allowed the testimonies of other women around her to encourage her. Jochebed’s faith was encouraged by the two midwives in Exodus chapter one who “feared God and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them”. And she was also greatly encouraged when she saw the Lord deal well with them because of this by providing for them their own houses. As Christian women, there is nothing quite like seeing the hand of God work in the lives of other women to convince us that He is able to do something incredible in our lives as well. I want to encourage you to take the time to read the biographies of great Christian women that have lived before you, and to hang around victorious Christian women that dwell among you. I can assure you, that if you will do these things, your faith will grow and your willingness to trust in God during the hard times will be encouraged. *Malachi 3:16*, “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.”

3. She allowed her fears to be used as a springboard to drive her to the throne of God. Jochebed was a woman full of faith and action. But I can assure you, that sandwiched in between her faith and her actions was a time of great fear. And many of her fears were wrapped up like ours are in the form of “what ifs”. “What if the Egyptians storm into my house while I’m in labor? What if someone hears my baby cry while I am trying to hide him? What if the little ark that I have made for the baby to travel in tips over and he falls out? What if the King’s daughter rejects my baby when she sees him? What if my boy grows up in the King’s home and forgets about me and who he really is? What if they don’t take care of him the way I would?” Fear is a natural part of life, but, as we learn from the life of Jochebed, if we give things over to God, it doesn’t have to be a consuming part of our life. I would really encourage you as a mother to pray without ceasing and about everything. Believe it or not, God cares about everything and He has a plan for everything ~ but many times we don’t see this clearly because we aren’t willing to ask Him about anything (or if we do ask, it is after we have done what we wanted, and it is almost too late). *James 1:5-7*, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.”

4. She allowed herself to rest in the comfort and guidance of her husband. In Hebrews, chapter 11, the Bible tells us in verse 23, that it was **both of Moses’ parents** that hid him for three months after he was born because **they** both saw that he was a proper child, and **they** were not afraid of the king’s commandment. It wasn’t just his mother’s faith that gave her the strength that she needed to trust God during this very scary time, it was the faith of her husband as well. And I believe with all my heart that it was her husband that kept her eyes on God when he comforted her and guided her with words like, “It will be just fine Jochebed, you can have faith in God. He will take care of you. He will watch over the little one. He loves us, and He has a plan for us. And I know that His plan is for our good, and not our evil, to bring all of us to an expected end.” Oh dear mothers, if only we would turn to our God and our husbands, instead of ourselves and others, in the times when we are afraid, we would find the kind of comfort and guidance in our times of fear that Jochebed had when she faced hers, as they remind us. *I John 5:4*, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

How did God bless Jochebed for her willingness to mother by faith, and not by fear? He blessed her by allowing her to give birth to a goodly baby boy, by keeping him safely hid for the first three months of his life, by touching the heart of the King’s daughter to take him in, by turning his heart towards his own people when he was grown, by allowing them to pass down their incredible faith in God to him (even to the point that he would fear God more than he would fear the King of Egypt), and by choosing this son and his brother and sister to be the ones who would deliver His people out of the hand of bondage, and into His land of promise.

This is not the end of our study on mothering by faith, next week we will talk about Mothering by Faith and not by Feelings. But for now, I want to encourage you to draw near to God by meditating on his Word, applying His truths, turning everything over to Him in prayer and listening to the right people for encouragement.

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” *Psalms 40:8*

Mothering By Faith, When Your Heart Is Filled With Worry And Fear

I don't know about you, but there are few things that cause me to worry as a mother like the times when my children are sick and I am unable to do anything about it.

Such was the time, two years ago, when my oldest daughter got very sick while traveling out west with her tour group.

It had all started with an asthma attack. She had been out riding horses with the people from one of the churches, and her allergies acted up and she began to have trouble with her breathing.

On the day of her attack, she took her anti-histamine, she used her inhaler, but her body was still having trouble fighting off the infection that this attack had brought on. By the end of that week, she was running a fever, coughing constantly, and struggling for every breath. The only way she was going to get better was to get to a doctor and get a prescription for some antibiotics and steroids.

How did I know all this, even though I was many miles away? Because I am her mother, and I had been through this with her many times before.

I remember my conversations with her during this time as if they went on yesterday.

"How are you feeling Kina?"

"I'm Ok Mom."

"Is that the truth?"

"Well, not really."

"How are you really feeling?" I would then say.

"I'm feeling horrible," she would then reply.

"Why don't you ask the folks that you are with to take you to the doctor?"

"I have. And they said that they will as soon as we have time. Our schedule is very busy, and we just haven't had time."

And when I would hear that, I would be so angry and frustrated because of my fear of what might happen to her if she got any sicker, that I wanted to jump on a plane, fly to wherever she was, strangle the person who wouldn't get her to the doctor, and then take her to the doctor myself. But since I didn't have the money to get on a plane, I restrained myself and resorted to worrying about it to the point that I was starting to worry my daughter unnecessarily about it as well.

"Mom," she said to me during that time, "I'm sure



they will take me to the doctor when they can. I know I feel terrible, but we will just have to pray that God will help me to live through this. There is nothing else I can do."

But there was something else that I could do. I could call my own doctor and tell her about the problem and ask her to call in a prescription to wherever Kina was so she could pick it up and start taking it.

And you know what? I called my doctor and she called in a prescription, but the folks that Kina was with weren't able to take the time to pick it up.

Now I was really getting mad at the folks that Kina was with. Weren't they supposed to be responsible and take care of my daughter? Why weren't they doing their job? Didn't they know that she might die if she didn't get help?

Apparently not, and at this point, the only thing that was left for me to do was talk to my husband about it and pray. (Isn't it sad to think that I thought praying and talking to my husband about it was the last thing that I could do???)

Well, I did begin to talk to my husband about it and he assured me of God's concern for our daughter, and together, we began to pray. For the first time in my daughter's life, I genuinely began to hand over her health to the Lord. Yes, I was afraid, but since my hands were tied and I couldn't do anything about it, I worked hard at resting in whatever God's will was for her life at that time.

And you'll never believe what happened? My daughter lived. Oh, she was still pretty sick when she finally got home, but she did survive the remaining six weeks of tour and managed to be a blessing in some way everywhere she went. And when she got home, we took her to the doctor, got her the medicine that she needed, and when it was all over, we thanked God for allowing us to struggle through this trial.

Why? Because it increased our faith and showed us something very valuable from the Word of God, that we can cast our cares upon God, because He genuinely cares for us.