

Examples of Godly Women (Slide 1)

Reading: Ephesians 6: 1-4
Psalms 127:3-5

This past week I attended the funeral for Doris Bartanen.
(Slide 2)

Most of us here knew Doris and if you didn't know her, I am sure you know someone like her in the Lord's church. She was a very sweet and honorable soul.

I went to support Ron and to celebrate her life. As I looked at the display of pictures and the still photos that were displayed on the Video just to the right of her casket, I realized what a wonderfully simple life this Godly woman lived. (Slide 3)

(Slide 4)

She was born during the depression years and learned from an early age to accept hard work. Her father was killed by a drunk driver when she was very young and as a woman of simplicity does, she shared in supporting her family. (Slide 5) She picked cotton in Tennessee. She was raised in what Tennesseans call the "Hollers."

She was advised by someone to marry a "Preacher" who will take you out of these "Ole Hollers." (Slide 6) And that's exactly what she did. She met Ron at

(Slide 7) Freed-Hardeman University while he was studying to become a minister. It was in a teen bible class, in which he was the instructor, that their eyes met and it was love at first sight. After a courtship and 68 years of marriage, Ron laid to rest his beloved wife this past Wednesday.

(Slide 8)

There were pictures of many family gatherings that the couple shared together. They are portraits of two people who became one and that have

shared the awesome responsibility of raising their children in the Lord. And after meeting their children, I am sure the formative years were met with a nurturing discipline that has created a lasting, Godly relationship.

The speaker, Brother Wayne Miller, mentioned that although Doris missed the hills and hollers of Tennessee, she was committed to being by her husband's side while he brought the "Word of God" throughout the country. The pictures displayed bare that out as well. Her contentment with doing her part as a minister's wife can also be seen in her smile.

Many secular progressives today are struggling to define what a woman is when they need only to look at the life of Doris Bartanen and a multitude of women like her, for their example. And if people can't define the incredible Love a man can have for his wife, I offer up what I have observed.

Ron, though not needing to be there, moved in with Doris at the nursing home so that he could be by her side to help care for and encourage her. One picture on display shows Ron placing a tender kiss on Doris' forehead and it's clear to see her declining health and the blank stare in that picture. That devotion on display is greater than a thousand words spoken and it visually describes what God intended the union for a man and woman to be like. God has not changed and that has not changed.

Ron and Doris are the products of God fearing Parents who built a Godly relationship with them and instilled a high level of spiritual responsibility into their heart.

I think we see that relationship magnified in the relationship between Hannah and her son, Samuel.

(Slide 9)

Last week we looked at Hannah in 1st Samuel Chapter 1. We looked at her plight in which she was childless. Despite her condition, we recognize her faith in God, the power of prayer and the example of what the condition of one's heart should be when we pray.

The end of 1st Samuel we see the time of the yearly trip to worship and to sacrifice in Shiloh has once again come. As they are to depart Hannah tells her husband Elkannah that she won't be going until the child is weaned.

(Slide 10)

1 Samuel 1:22

22 But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "*I will not go* until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, so that he may appear before the Lord and stay there for life." I find this to be astonishing!

(Slide 11)

Three things to discuss here, Hannah would honor her pledge to dedicate her son to the Lord, what is meant by weaning and the fact Samuel would stay in the place of worship, forever!

Let's look at weaning first.

Weaning a child in the Old Testament was an important event. In Genesis 21 Abraham threw a great feast after Isaac was weaned.

Genesis 21:8 (Slide 12)

8 And the child grew and was weaned, and Abraham held a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

Weaning meant that a child had survived the early years of his life (many did not) and was on his way to adulthood.

(Slide 13)

It is thought that this weaning was between the ages of 2 and 4. Samuel's age was not recorded here in 1st Samuel but we know he was young.

1 Samuel 1:24 (Slide 14)

24 Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with a three-year-old bull, one ephah of flour, and a jug of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh, although the child was young.

Verse 22 records that he would stay in the place of worship forever!

How many parents would leave their child, especially a child she prayed so earnestly to have, and only see them once a year. As the child grew I believe year after year his mother would come to worship and encourage her son in the Lord!

1 Samuel 2:18-19 (Slide 15)

18 Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing a linen ephod. **19** And his mother would make for him a little robe and bring it up to him from year to year when she would come up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

The Bible calls him a boy. What age comes to mind here in these verses? (Slide 16)

Weaned: 2 to 4. Boyhood: age 8 to 10.

Not only did she live up to her commitment to the Lord but somehow she convinced the young child, Samuel, to stay and serve the Lord. How did she do that?

Some would say that he was so young when she left him that he wouldn't know the difference. Those of you who have had children, do you think they would have realized their mother left them with someone else?

(Slide 17)

Silas, my grandson, at age 8, doesn't want you to leave him alone for even a minute. If you step out of the room for a mili-second, he's calling out for you. No way you could convince him to stay somewhere for even a week

with strangers. As a toddler he had extreme separation anxiety and he still has it.

I believe Hannah had a great deal to do with this but I also believe that God had a hand in this transition for Samuel. Samuel was consecrated to the Lord by his mother and God accepted him for service.

Samuel accepted his responsibility of service with faith. Perhaps faith at the beginning in his mother's judgment, but very shortly, faith in God. Samuel would be given a very difficult first task and we'll discuss that next week Lord willing.

In the meantime, what can we take away from this lesson?

1. We have examples of Godly parents all around us today who know how to build spiritual relationships with their children.
2. We need to open our hearts and minds to these examples so that those relationships will be perpetuated.
3. Serving God takes personal sacrifice. Hannah made a great sacrifice by dedicating her son to the Lord. A child she pleaded with God to have.

We haven't mentioned this, but hopefully we see the parallel from Hannah's story and the sacrifice God has made through his only begotten Son!

Invitation