

Who were Lois and Eunice in the Bible?

There is only one mention of Lois and Eunice in the Bible. They were the grandmother and the mother of Paul's young protégé Timothy. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he mentions the faithfulness of these women in raising Timothy with such a devout and fervent faith. He writes, "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also" (2 Timothy 1:5).

Eunice was a Jewish believer who had been married to a Greek man (Acts 16:1), which would explain the fact that, as an infant, Timothy was not circumcised as all Jewish boys were. It was the responsibility of Jewish fathers to oversee that rite, and, since Timothy's father was Greek, circumcision would not have been his custom. Paul had Timothy circumcised before they began their missionary journeys together in order not to offend their Jewish audiences (verse 3).

Lois was either Eunice's mother or her mother-in-law. The fact that she helped rear Timothy may indicate that Timothy's father had died or that the family all lived together, which was not uncommon in those days. It is possible that the father had died while Timothy was young, since Paul takes on a fatherly role with Timothy and often refers to him as "my true son in the faith" (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Timothy 1:2, 18).

Timothy's godly upbringing is referenced again in 2 Timothy 3:14-15: "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Paul's mention of those "from whom you have learned" probably refers to

Timothy's godly mother and grandmother, Eunice and Lois, who taught him the Jewish Scriptures from infancy. They, along with Timothy, received Paul's teaching about the Messiah and continued to train young Timothy in the things of Christ.

Lois and Eunice are examples of the powerful influence a mother or grandmother can have on a young man's life. Many personal testimonies include statements such as "My mom (or grandma) took me to church, taught me right, and prayed for me every day." Paul recognized the life-changing contributions of these two women in a day when women were rarely mentioned by name. He honored their impact in preparing his young protégé, who later joined Paul in his travels (Romans 16:21) and eventually became the pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). Lois and Eunice should encourage all Christian mothers and grandmothers, reminding them that their godly influence has an eternal impact on the lives and futures of their children and grandchildren.