Grand Mother's Ghost!

2 Timothy 1:5, “The unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother, Lois."

Do you believe in ghost? I do not believe in cloud bedimmed ethereal forms that flit about a darkened room by virtue of hidden wires in the hands of some medium. Nor do I believe in the return of some tight-fisted uncle to advise me to sell certain stocks or bond. I do not believe in ghost like that. But I do believe that my ancestors live on in me. They are breath of my breath. My father's personality does not die with him. It is an integral part of me.

My mother's faith did not end at the grave. It is my faith too. I am what I am largely because my father and mother was what they were. Their “spirits” crowd every corner of my soul.

There are “haunted houses” too. Our homes still contain the angel presence of those who have gone on to their higher homes. And, I believe in churches that are filled with the Spirit of God. The moment you step into certain sanctuaries, you can sense the Divine Presence of God. For the record, I must say, that I have been in some churches were you sensed something entirely different.

Our very lives are meant to be “haunted.” Jesus said, “If I go away, I will send the Spirit!” It is God's Holy Spirit Who lights the fires of our soul and Who kindles the heavenly flame. To the rationalist, I cannot explain it. It is not possible to define this Spirit presence any more than I can explain the presence of light in the dull, colored electric wires that lead into this building. We simply turn on the switch and the room is aflame with light. Likewise, touch God and your life is all aglow and filled with glory! If our eyes are open, we can see the light. If our hearts are open, we can feel the Spirit's presence. The proof is in the experience! It is very real to me.

I cannot prove to you that the sun is shining if you refuse to open your eyes. And I cannot prove to you the brooding, haunting presence of the Holy Spirit if you refuse to open your soul.

Oh, yes! I believe in ghosts! I want to speak about three things:

1. HEREDITY IS A POTENT FACTOR IN EVERY LIFE

Every parent and every grandparent is either making it easier or harder for their children or grandchildren. Never forget this, the influence went from Lois – to Eunice – to Timothy! It may sounds like a double-play in baseball game, but that's the way it goes – from grandparents - to parents - to children.

There is something in the cells that are past on to you that determines the color of your hair and eyes. Something precedent in grand parents and parents that determines the twist of you mouth, the shrug of your shoulders, the way you walk and the size of your shoes or hat. You are a composite of your ancestors. (Maybe that explains your funny looks and manners!)

No one can ignore this law of heredity. From Lois to Eunice to Timothy! It works also in the areas of intellect. We inherit many of our mental characteristics. Our ideas are not all our own. A lot of our beliefs are the results of certain convictions of others who have splashed over onto us!
People don't know exactly why they are of a certain political party except that the parents instilled in them certain ethics which they believe a certain party holds.

Psychologists, like William E. Hocking, insist that the subconscious is nothing more than a memory deposit. Others, like Jang, say that it is the “remnant of ancient humanity,” that is, the thought life of those who have gone before.

Have you ever suddenly felt that in the midst of some present experience that the same thing had happened to you once before - but when or how - you have no idea?

The past has more to do with us than we suspect. And there are spiritual tendencies that come down to us. Mother's spirit of faith has reached out toward many a son who has been tempted to be wayward.

Many a moment has come when a boy suddenly says, “No, I can't do it. Something inside of me won't let me do it.” That's a wonderful moment. It's the result of somebody's faith. That's why faith is so important. It is not for YOU only! Unborn generations will believe, or disbelieve, in God because of your faith, or lack of it.

Lois and Eunice have a tremendous responsibility toward Timothy. What if Eunice had lost the faith of Lois? Would there have been a Timothy? - I wonder!

But heredity is not everything. There are other ghosts with which to deal. One of the most potent is:

2. THE GHOST OF ENVIRONMENT

Just as heredity is either for, or against, a child, so is environment. A godly Eunice will provide a right kind of a home for little Timothy. And what kind of home will help mold him into honest manhood? If Lois and Eunice had lived a worldly lifestyle, with no realization of the need for Christian training in the home, Timothy’s chances for becoming a man of faith would have been considerably narrowed.

Every man does not have the same chance as others. When God made man, He breathed into him the spirit of life and man became a living soul, and with that breath came spiritual independence. No one has to be good and no one has to be bad! We are creatures of individual choice. No power can chain us, without the consent of our will. Each of us has a spirit of our own. We are free moral agents. Never forget the words of my text: “the spirit that is...in thee also.”

You can renounce the faith of your mothers and become an atheist. You can resist your mother's experience with God and become a disbeliever. A man can become what he wants to be. A president may be born in a cabin. A saint can come from a house of sin. We cannot entirely escape the powers of heredity and environment, but we dare not blame our failures upon them. We can rise above them! Which leads me to share with you that we need another “Unseen Power” because the spirit of man, unaided, can never find the whole answer. We need: THE HOLY GHOST OF GOD to help us. I believe in Him. I have seen Him work. I see in Scripture where Him transformed Peter, the wishy-washy, sandman, into s solid Rock. I see the glory of the Holy Spirit in the face of a dying Stephen. I have seen Him at the deathbed of saints. I've seen His finger touch the parched lips of the dying into a smile of victory.
Let me tell you, I believe in the Holy Ghost with all my heart. Without His Presence, environment and heredity could prove too strong for me. He can put to naught the evil influences of the most devilish environment and change the hereditary strains of a thousand generations. He can also consecrate the faith of a Lois so that it becomes a living fire in the breast of a young Timothy. His power is unlimited. I praise God for the Holy Ghost!

Why do we not use this power? Why does it seem that so many Christians are so impotent in the face of worldly immorality? There is only one answer. It is because so many born-again Christians are not living in the power of the Holy Ghost. We must meet the requirements for releasing His power. God will manifest Himself today as He did in the Book of Acts, if we would meet the conditions.

Are we willing to pay the price? You may have to settle differences and old quarrels. God help us, if we block the pathway for the unbelievers to get converted. Some hang onto their grievances, while a generation is going to the devil. Some will give an account to God in eternity for souls of lost men.

God's power is available today!

For countless centuries primitive man lived on the spot where Boulder Dam now stand, not realizing the power there was at his command. It remained that way for generations for man to appropriate this power to light cities, run factories, and cultivate the land.

Just so, the same power, which we read about in the Book of Acts, is available today. It is that power that you and I need in our lives - and in our church! Even though our faith may have come down to us as a goodly heritage - from Lois to Eunice to Timothy - even though we have been reared in Christian homes and have had every advantage of heredity and environment, we need a Spirit greater than these. Without the Spirit of God, we lack the power to proceed. Without God's help, we stand there knowing full well what we ought to do, often times, longing to do it, but unable to do what we know we ought to do.

Reach out now!

God has sent His Spirit into this world to be your Comforter! He has freely provided a Helper! Let me ask, “Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? Have you?” I ask you to open your heart toward God now, believe that His power, like a rushing, mighty wind, like a divine hurricane, will sweep into your life and lift you up to the Presence of God. Believe Me, you and I are “haunted” by the presence of the Holy Ghost. We cannot deny His Presence in this world of ours. Yield to Him now!