

Notes:

Sermon Text

Subject

Spiritual "To Do List"
(things God has shown me today)

Helena displayed other Christian virtues as well. She donated money to the poor, worked to liberate prisoners, and restored exiles. When she worshiped, she dressed plainly, mingling with humbler believers. She also donated money to churches throughout the empire, building or re-building facilities in places where Christianity had been a persecuted sect just a few years earlier.

Anthusa (c. 347-407) lived in Antioch, the hub of Paul's missionary journeys, and bore a son, John, just before her husband died. Though Antioch's population was roughly one-half Christian at this time, Anthusa feared society's corrupting influence on John, so she taught him what she knew of classics and Christian faith at home. After his character was formed, she sent him to be trained by an experienced orator, who honed John's innate gifts of communication. John became one of the early church's most renowned preachers. His contemporaries named him Chrysostom, or "golden-mouthed."

Katie Luther (1499-1552), wife of the Protestant Reformer Martin Luther, schooled a large and ever-changing group in her house. She bore six children, raised four orphans, and generally rode herd over the students Martin brought home from the university where he taught. Sometimes as many as 30 people crowded under her roof, seeking to learn all they could from both Martin and his formidable wife. Luther was only half-joking when he referred to her frequently as "my lord Katie."

Susanna Wesley (1669-1742), mother of John and Charles, is sometimes called the "Mother of Methodism" as well. She ran a tightly ordered household by necessity, for her husband subsisted on a minister's salary and she bore 17 children, 9 of whom died in infancy. ...She conducted day school for her youngsters, instructing them in godliness alongside academics. Each child had chores to perform, Scriptures to learn, and character issues to address. Each child also had a personal audience with mother every week, for one-on-one attention and encouragement.

It is not hard to see how the discipline integral to the Methodist system grew from John Wesley's childhood experiences. In contrast to the Church of England, a hierarchy in which religious duties generally fell to clerics and spiritual oversight was sometimes lax, Methodism emphasized small groups in which every member was accountable for Bible study, mutual correction and edification, and Christian service.

Though Susanna lived only long enough to see John's earliest revival meetings, she would have been proud of the religious movement he founded following many of her principles.

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