

All In
Julie Long

My grandmother had two favorite pastimes: shopping and church. After a particularly exhilarating shopping trip or a powerful worship service, she would announce, "I'm all in!" I have enjoyed her legacy, including the thrill of a bargain, but a far greater inheritance was her passionate worship. Either way, she was all in.

I was eleven years old when the hope of eternity became personal to me. At the request of my great-grandfather, I read aloud to him from Revelation 21–22 the night before he crossed over to Heaven's indescribable beauty. He was all in.

The irresistible combination of delicious food, family fun, and heaping helpings of faith made visiting my grandparents a highlight of my childhood. My grandfather would often start a spirited conversation about his favorite subject, Apostolic doctrine. In that atmosphere I was infused with a love for truth. We never left their home without a prayer of blessing that usually ended with Nana speaking wonderful words of praise and prophecy in a heavenly language. In those moments the power of prayer was transmitted to me. They were all in.

Two years ago I witnessed the most breathtaking example of absolute trust in God. My sweet mother stared down cancer with faith that never wavered. I was inspired to imitate her tenacious faith. She was all in.

Each generation before me lived their faith with the all-in mindset. I didn't think there was any other way to live. I still don't. Today, I joyfully accept the responsibility of passing on the godly heritage entrusted to me. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III John 1:4). I'm all in.

Three Keys to Transfer Faith:

1. **Live Convincingly - *Because our faith matters.*** (See Ephesians 4:5-6; Deuteronomy 6:4-7.) Eliminate hypocrisy. Children will examine our faith and will either be convinced or skeptical. Our life should advertise that God's Word impacts our relationships, our words, our actions, our attitudes, our love, our job, our finances, our choices, our entertainment, and everything else. When faith saturates daily life, our children will absorb it and replicate it.
Engage in church. Don't just attend church, engage in it as a family. Get involved in the ministries of the local church. Serve your community. Take a missions trip. Give sacrificially. Children will be passionate about what we are passionate about. Emphasize grace. Show children how to give and receive forgiveness. Make home a place of restoration, not perfection.
2. **Teach Constantly - *Because our faith is about relationship.*** (See Mark 12:30.) Studies confirm that children who have a close relationship with their parents are more likely to take ownership of the faith, so it is a good idea to plan weekly family time and extended vacations. Our primary role as parents is to create a thirst for the kingdom of God and

help our children find their purpose in it. Schedule opportunities for prayer and discussion of core beliefs. Use every day issues as teaching points to build godly character. Make the condition of the heart a priority. These things will help close the gap between knowing and doing what is right.

3. **Pray Fervently - *Because our faith must continue.*** (See James 5:16; Psalm 78:4.) There was no more beautiful, reassuring sound in my childhood than the voice of my father praying fervently every morning in our home. There is no substitute for prayer if we want to impart a legacy of faith. I have confidence that God will be pleased if I live my faith convincingly and teach His Word constantly. Ultimately, a successful transfer of faith hinges on God's grace and my child's response. I pray because I trust in the character of God who loves my children more than I do. I pray because a generational blessing is transferred through a covering of prayer. (See Genesis 28:1-4.) I pray because "prayer turns ordinary parents into prophets who shape the destinies of their children, grandchildren, and every generation that follows" (Mark Batterson, *Praying Circles Around Your Children*).

Bio

Blessed with four generations of Hanscom's and three generations of Tracy's embracing Oneness Pentecostalism in her family tree, Julie Long is living a life of incredible spiritual inheritance. Together with her husband, Peter (a fourth-generation Apostolic), they are transferring the faith to their children- Tyler (15) and Madison (10). The Long's pastor in Miramichi, New Brunswick.