

Mother Bennie Faye Brown *(A God-Given Mother)*

Mother Bennie Faye Brown, also known as “Mama,” “Mama Faye,” “Mom,” “Mommy,” “Mother,” “Granny,” “Mother Brown,” “Sister Brown,” “Missionary Brown,” “Cousin Faye,” and “Mrs. Brown.”

Bennie Faye Brown was born June 2, 1937, in the Social Point Community in Tenaha, Panola County, Texas. She, along with two brothers, was raised by her grandmother from a very young age after the passing of her mother. Bennie Faye attended Social Point Elementary School and Turner High School in Carthage, Texas. In 1954, after the death of her grandmother, she moved to Houston TX, where she lived for two years. She then moved to Blackjack Community, Troup TX, to live with her grandfather, until she met and married Daniel Brown. The couple established their home in Jacksonville, Texas. She worked with her husband at The Gay Laundry, and later at Nan Travis Memorial Hospital until she retired.

At an early age, Mother Brown confessed Christ and was a member of Social Point Baptist Church in Tenaha. In Jacksonville, she and her husband joined White’s Temple Church Of God In Christ, under the pastorage of the late Elder C. C. White. It was at White’s Temple that she was saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, and received the mantle of prayer. The couple hosted prayer meetings in their home. Many times the couple provided meals, lodging and fellowship to visiting clergy who conducted revivals at White’s Temple.

After her husband was called to the ministry, eventually becoming a pastor, and a superintendent, Mother Brown, continued developing her walk with the Lord, and accepted her call in ministry as an intercessor and encourager. Though Mother Brown was not a licensed missionary, she did the work of a Missionary. She mentored and inspired women in her family, her church and community to trust God. She often shared her testimony of how God blessed and provided for her despite losing her mother at a very young age. Before the death of her husband, God gave her a vision to start a citywide noonday prayer meeting at the church. The prayer hour convened each Tuesday and was open to the public, regardless of race or denomination. Mother Brown also served as President of the Pastor and Ministers Wives Circle, and as coordinator of local and district women’s work. Mother Brown was also a “dreamer,” and the Lord would reveal things to her through dreams (Joel 2:28). He could trust her to pray and intercede on behalf of the individuals in her dreams.

While prayer was one of Mother Brown’s gifts from God, so was a genuine love for His people and an attitude of service. This was evident in the community, but most importantly in her home amongst her husband, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Cooking and canning for her family was a passion of hers. Mother Brown spent countless hours in the kitchen preparing meals and preserving jams, jellies, and vegetables. If it could grow, she could can and/or preserve it. It was a running theme amongst the family and close friends that if you were sick, you needed to get some of Mother’s canned soup because it had healing from the Lord in it! Children and family members did not acquire a taste for store bought jams and jellies because they “didn’t taste like Mama’s.” Many others also enjoyed the fruit of her

hands, and put in their requests for special products, like chow-chow, pickled squash, mixed vegetables, soups, etc.

Mother Brown was a giver who believed God's word and practiced it daily. She understood that blessings were not only for the receiver, but they should be shared with others (Proverbs 22:9). This was instilled in her as a child. When there was not enough food for seconds, she would share her portion of meals especially with her blind brother who could not tell how little food there was. When no longer able to physically attend church, she continued to support the ministry. To those handling her finances, her question was frequently "Did you pay my tithes?", not "Did you pay the utility bills?" Her children knew that if there was a special program, they were expected to help Mama meet her goal. She kept a stash of secret blessings to bestow on anyone who needed it, and to those special ones that she just wanted to bless. Even after she was unable to work and personally purchase her gifts, she prepared her gift lists and ask her children to help her fulfill them, whether for birthdays, Christmas, special needs, or just because. While in the nursing center, she accumulated goodies that were given to her and set them aside for the great grands. Children and friends often marveled at how someone confined to a wheelchair, at home and eventually in the nursing home, could manage to accomplish so many things.

One of Mother Brown's greatest gifts was her family, which included eleven children, and she loved each of them dearly. She taught them to love the Lord and serve Him. Growing up, the Brown children were taught about the Lord by both parents and taught to pray together as a family. There was no going to bed without family prayer. Love for the Lord and service to His people was not just taught, it was modeled by their lives.

These teachings did not stop at her children but also extended to her grandchildren. Granny often talked to granddaughters about how to be good wives and mothers. Oftentimes, at family gatherings, or as they were doing her hair, talking to her on the phone, she would share stories of her past, offer words of encouragement, and bits of wisdom with them. When the great grands would get a bit rowdy during family visits, they would be sent to Granny's room and she would talk to them and tell them Bible stories.

Although Mother Brown did not complete her formal education, she prayed that she would be blessed to see all her children graduate. She testified many times that her prayers were answered, as she saw all her children graduate from high school, and most of them completed secondary education. God also extended this blessing to the next generation. She was blessed to see all her living grandchildren, and some great grandchildren, graduate high school. Many of them have also completed, and are continuing to pursue, secondary education. Mother Brown had many additional "adopted" children, some from churches her family attended and visited, some from the community, and those brought home by her children as they grew up and established lives away from home. Many times, the house was full of children's classmates, neighborhood friends, and extended family relatives.

Proverbs 31:28a says *Her children arise up, and call her blessed*. Mother Brown was truly blessed, and she was a blessing to others. She physically left us November 25, 2020, the night before Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving Day was a day for us to focus on, and give thanks for, the blessing that she had been to us. Now, it is up to us to *Continue the Legacy* that she left us.