

Anna Hayford, Strength Under Control

Reflections from her daughter, Rebecca Bauer

“Growing up in rural Nebraska, my mother used to joke that she was almost born in a manger, because the house she was born in had a dirt floor! In a poor, country family, there wasn’t much expected of my mother in terms of education,” recounts Rebecca Bauer. In fact, Anna Smith was never encouraged to finish high school, much less college. “If you don’t want to go to school, you can get a job,” her father said to her one day. There was always a need for more help around the family farm. “My grandfather grew crops that he would use to can vegetables, and that was the primary way he provided for the family of nine kids.”

Needless to say, times were tough and money was always in short supply with a family of that size. While my grandmother worked outside of the home, doing odd jobs, the family was still forced to be on welfare at times during Anna’s formative years. **However, what her upbringing lacked in finances, it more than made up for in an abundant commitment to serve the Lord over everything else.** From this simple beginning, an unshakeable foundation was built for a woman of incredible self-sufficiency, faith, and determination.

Anna drew upon this foundation as she defied the odds not only to become the first among the nine siblings to attend college, but graduated with honors. “My mother had an attention to detail, that combined with her common sense upbringing gave her an ability to teach, minister, and relate to anyone. She was such a stabilizing force for everyone in

our family, including my father.” said Rebecca. Anna’s presence on the front row at The Church on the Way or by Pastor Jack’s side during their ministry served as an anchor. “My mom always said, ‘The Lord told me that my ministry was Jack Hayford.’ Many people described my mother as ‘quiet,’ but I think that they underestimated her. **She lived as a godly, submitted woman, but she brought a strength to the table that few can match.** She is the best example of submission being ‘strength under control’ (the Greek definition) that I have ever seen.

“As I reflect on the Anna M. Hayford Scholarship, I think about how my mother’s story can embolden people to persevere toward completion of their degrees. Maybe some of them are like my mom and lack the financial opportunity or come from a family that hasn’t stressed the value of education. I hope the Anna M. Hayford Scholarship serves as a catalyst to help them receive the training they need while in pursuit of their calling. My mother was passionate about pursuing God, and she did that with all of her heart, soul and strength. In the home and outside of the home, everything she did was for the glory of Jesus Christ. That focus and passion has become a prime example for me: no matter how menial the task or how ‘exalted’ the ministry, *everything* is all about Jesus.”

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