

LOVE YOUR MOTHER

This is a Mothers' Day sermon without apology and with appreciation for motherhood. Without mothers none of us would be here. Yet, as a pastor, it's good not to get too sentimental about motherhood because:

- (a.) for some, motherhood is an accident, and not always a welcome one;
- (b.) for some, biological motherhood isn't possible;
- (c.) for some, their mothers weren't all that nice;
- (d.) for some, motherhood under the very best of circumstances is not all they thought it would be.

So, why bother with Mothers' Day at all? Because for all its stumbling blocks, pitfalls and broken dreams, for all the soiled diapers, soiled wallpaper and spoiled plans, we're talking about a beautiful ideal, a natural part of God's creative plan to bring love and caring to the world.

Because mothers are the greatest examples of godly love in the world save the love of God for His creation. Birth mothers endure the pain of labor. Mothers generally are the ones who clean, bathes, and feed the baby.

In most instances she is the one who listens for the baby's cry and comforts him, caresses him, and sits besides his bed when he is sick or fretful.

Many times as the years pass it is still the mother who does the lion's share of raising the children, nurturing and encouraging them. She worries about them and surrounds them with her love and prayers as they struggle with temptations and testing that comes into their lives.

When all is said and done, the greatest example of love, real godly kind of love, is a mother's love.

Husbands love their wives and wives love their husbands. Friends love friends and family loves family. But this is all reciprocal love.

A mother's love is not reciprocal. It gives and gives and gives and expects nothing in return and receives nothing in return for a long, long time. The best known biblical mother is Mary.

Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus—to raise him, nurture him and prepare him for his

ministry—but most of all, to love him. She must have been very special. The angel told her, “Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus” (Lk. 1:30-31).

Nine months later she wrapped Jesus, her newborn son, in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn (Lk. 2:7). She wondered and worried about the future for her son.

And 33 years later, we are not surprised to find Mary at Calvary watching as history’s greatest tragedy was inflicted on her Son.

John 19:26 - 27 26When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son,” 27and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Of all the amazing events that transpired at the cross, this is one of the most amazing. He provided for her care in his absence. In all his pain and suffering, Jesus still was able to express his love for his mother.

Women two thousand years ago did not have many options. There was no social security or welfare. What better way to thank her for being his mother, and to honor her and to show his love than to make sure she was provided for.

Though he couldn’t take her in his arms, Jesus clearly let her know that he loved her and was thankful for her impact on his life.

By entrusting His mother to John, his beloved disciple and friend, Mary’s future was taken care of. John lived to be an old man—long enough to take good care of Mary all the days of her life.

How can you show love to your mother?

1. Love her verbally.

In indescribable pain, Jesus still spoke to his mother. She knew he loved her. A woman likes to be told that she is loved. A mother likes to hear her children tell her they love her.

Verbally let your mother know you love her. Thank her for the meals she prepared, or her dependability, or her fairness in discipline.

When you think about all the things your mother does or did to serve her family, you will discover plenty of things to thank her for.

2. Love her physically.

In the 13th century, German King Frederick II conducted an experiment with 50 infants. He wanted to see what language they would speak if they never had the opportunity to hear the spoken word.

He assigned foster mothers to bath and nurse the children, but forbade them to fondle, pet or talk to their babies. The experiment failed dramatically because all 50 infants died.

Hundreds of more recent studies indicate that the mother-child relationship during the first year of life is apparently vital to the infant's well-being. An unloved child is truly the saddest phenomenon in all of nature.

Your mother was the first person to touch you. Before you were born you were wrapped warm and snug in her womb. After you entered her world she kissed your cheeks in the middle of the night. She tickled your feet and made you laugh. She held your soft and warm little hands in her hands and played patty-cake.

She changed your diapers, tied your shoelaces, combed your hair, and buttoned your shirts or blouses. She touched you constantly during all those years when you needed the security of her touch.

I believe Jesus wrapped his arms around Mary whenever he was near home. If your mother is still alive, don't lose the opportunity to hug her and tell her you love her. She needs to know that she is still needed. She needs your touch.

3. Love her patiently.

There is no more difficult and consuming job in the world than that of being a mother. Nothing else comes close to the physical, emotional, and spiritual commitment. But they can't always do it the way we think they should.

Sometimes it is easy to become impatient with mom. Sometimes she is late to an appointment, or she doesn't fix a meal that you really like. Or she might not follow through the way we expect her to, or she talks during your TV show.

She may be slowing down as she gets older, and we're not used to that. Remember, our mothers are not bottomless wells from which we draw each time we have a need or think we do.

Be patient—it is unfair to expect our mothers to always change their lives to accommodate ours.

4. Love her attentively.

Do you remember a time or times when your mother stopped what she was doing to listen to you pour out your troubles? Maybe a date stood you up; you were not invited to a friend's party; or

you didn't make the basketball team.

What did mom do? She listened. Most likely she hugged and encouraged you. Did you know that sometimes she longs for someone to talk to? One of the sweetest ways you can express love toward you mother is to listen to her.

A lot of mothers hold in their fears, anxieties, and frustrations because they don't want to worry their children. Whether the children are young or grown, every parent has fears, heartaches, and burdens.

I try to visit my mother in Colorado every other month or so. I go to fix things in her house and yard. Us guys like fixing things. But more and more she just wants to talk. Since dad's death mom needs assurance the decisions she is making are okay and right.

In her later years your mother may face troubles more intense than anything she helped you ever overcome. Keep the door of communication open so she can talk about her fears when necessary.

5. Love her gratefully.

Now is the time to think about all the things your mother has done for you. She may already be in her heavenly home, but you can still be thankful for her.

How many meals did she prepare for you while you were at home? How many boxes of cereal did she buy? She tried to give you what you wanted, yet also give you nutritious meals. How many loads of your dirty clothes did she wash?

Mothers never bring these things to our attention. They just make their trips to the grocery store and stand in line with full carts because they love us.

When you count up all the little things your mother did throughout the years, you will quickly realize that you owe her an enormous debt of gratitude.

6. Love her generously.

Is anything too good for your mother? Can you ever do enough to repay her? Most likely your mother sacrificed so that you could enjoy decent meals and nice clothes.

She made sure you had the best she could afford before buying her own clothes. It's not just with clothes. Mothers do this every day with their time and energy.

Mothers will give up their own time and forfeit opportunities in order to go to their child's ball game or take them to a friend's house. How can we be stingy with our mothers when they have been so unselfish, loving, and generous to us?

7. Love her forgivingly.

You may be one who does not have a harmonious relationship with your mother. You may be resentful and bitter toward her for whatever. But whatever happened between you and her, you have a responsibility before God to forgive her.

Even if there is no excuse for whatever caused the problem, you still must forgive. When we do not forgive we cannot love. When we do not forgive we are not being godly. God tells us to forgive. If God can forgive us despite our failures, surely we can do the same for our mothers.

8. Love her honorably.

The Fifth Commandment is Exodus 20:12. 12“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”

For Mother’s Day, let’s call this, Honor your mother. This is the only one of the Ten Commandments with a built-in promise for blessing.

It doesn’t matter what your vocation is, how many people you know, or how much money you make—to love honorably is to live the kind of life that honors your mother.

This commandment is not arbitrary. And the real purpose of the Fifth Commandment is not to safeguard the honor of our father and mother; it is, rather, for the sake of children. Children are happier and safer if they obey and honor their parents.

As already said, the love and influence of the mother is the central and supreme influence of the home. Someone said “When you tell the story of any great man (or woman), you must begin with the mother.”

In Christianity there is no substitute for the home. Neither the government, nor society can take its place. Parental authority, parental honor, and parental love must be guarded at all cost.

The great tragedy of our day is that the sanctity, authority, and love of the home have been violated in so many areas. Too often the home is no longer central in the lives and training of our children. Let’s not let our homes become like that!

Application:

How do you love your mother? You love her with all your heart. You show your love to her in a way that makes her grateful for every moment of time she invested in you, every penny she sacrificed for you and for every experience she provided that helped you become the person you are. Whoever you are, you owe a great deal to your mother.

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