

Mother's Day 2016

“If the first 100 years of the church, there were only 25,000 believers. In the next 200 years, it went from 25,000 to 20 million believers. What happened? A man came onto the scene. He uttered three words to change it all. He said: believe [what you believe is important], behave [how you live is important] and belong [relationships are critical].”

Josh McDowell

Quoted from Grow Together Film

Three keys are mentioned by Josh: Believe, Behave, and Belong.

Today I want us to see that these are all fulfilled in a basic way by mothers. We will look, first of all at the **importance** of mothers; second, the **purpose** of mothers; and third, the **plan** of motherhood.

Vital Relationship is the bond that secures all things of faith and society together.

I. The importance of mothers.

After the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage of Egypt He gave them the Ten Commandments.

The fourth commandment given stated,

“Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.” (Ex. 20:12)

Having been in the wilderness only three months God was preparing them for successful living in the Promised Land.

Paul restated this law in his letter to the Ephesians,

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:1-4)

It is clear God not only wants our success in this life but has given us the necessary steps to receive His blessings. The primary step is for children to ***honor their father and mother***, and for parents to ***bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord***.

Paul reiterated this same thought in his letter to the Colossians, **“Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord”** (Col. 3:20).

We live in a generation in which the laws of God have been rejected and neglected. As a result, we are witnessing the collapse of our culture.

When something has been built wrong we go back to the instruction manual and put it back the way it was designed. God’s pattern is parents. Parents are so important that God included honoring and obeying them with a promise that they would enjoy a good life and a long life. Parents prepare their children for every other relationship in society and with God in His kingdom.

A relationship with a child and parents begins with the mother. Hers is a pre-birth relationship and as the young child is totally dependent for the first years. In the Jewish culture a son was considered his ‘mother’s son’ until the age of 12, at which time he became his ‘father’s son.’

1. A mother is important to God.
2. A mother is important to a young child.
3. A mother has an important purpose.

II. The Purpose of Mothers

The primary purpose of mothers is to have children and then have a key role in raising them (as Paul wrote) ***in the discipline and instruction of the Lord***.

The Message says,

“...Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.”

NLT says,

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.”

AMP,

“Fathers, do not irritate and provoke your children to anger [do not exasperate them to resentment], but rear them [tenderly] in the training and discipline and counsel and admonition of the Lord.”

Bring them up – ektrefo – “to nourish, promote health and strength, to bring up, to educate”

How do we nurture children?

Discipline – paideia – rearing a child through discipline [Heb. 12]

Admonition – noutheteo – admonish and warn.

- Serious consequences from God.

Children are nurtured with disciplining and warning.

Abigail Adams was the wife of John Adams, one of the Founding Fathers of our country. Her son, Johnny, was an active and adventurous young man. Abigail trained young Johnny from his childhood to recite the Lord’s Prayer and a patriotic poem each morning before rising from bed. When he was eight and the American Revolution was commencing, he performed musket drills with the Massachusetts Minutemen. When he was eleven, he went overseas with his father, John Adams, who had been sent by Congress as a diplomat to Paris, serving as his father’s secretary. After he arrived in France, Abigail was obviously deeply concerned about her young son’s vulnerability to the moral decadence of Paris and wrote him:

“Adhere to those religious sentiments and principles which were early instilled into your mind and remember that you are accountable to your Maker for all your words and actions...Dear as you are to me, I would much rather you should have found your grave in the ocean you have crossed, or that any untimely death crop you in your infant years, than see you an immoral, profligate or graceless child.”

1. Restrain

– key job of mothers.

Since every child is born a sinner, if a mother neglects to restrain them, they will live out the evil within them.

A mother of three unruly preschoolers was asked whether she would have children if she had to do it all over again,
 “Sure,” she responded, “just not the same three.”

The job of the mother is first of all to restrain a child from the evil within.

Restraint means that a child learns to think of others, not say mean things, learn to share and not take, not bite, scratch, or spit on others.

The concept is two-fold: restrain evil that the child would do, and then teach him to be kind, thoughtful and giving.

Obedience must come from the heart.

- Forcing. (only makes the child a hypocrite)

Nurturing has as its goal: obedience from the heart.

- Want to obey.
- Break their will without breaking their spirit.

When a young mother brought her newborn son to General Robert E. Lee for a blessing, he took the babe and cradled him for a minute and then looked at the mother and said, “**Ma’am, please teach him that he must deny himself.**”

Problem is that children have wicked hearts – *‘No one outgrows depravity’*.

The Minnesota crime commission reports,

“Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered. He wants what he wants when he wants it – his bottle, his mother’s attention, his playmate’s toy, his uncle’s watch. Deny him these wants, and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness, which would be murderous, were he not helpless. He is dirty. He has no morals, no knowledge, no skills. This means that all children, not just certain children, are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in the self-centered world of his infancy, given free reign to his impulsive

actions to satisfy his wants, every child would grow up a criminal, a thief, a killer, a rapist.”

How does a mother restrain evil in children?

Teach him about Salvation – only the new birth can conquer the sin nature.

➤ Teach a child that God is holy, that we are sinful and accountable.

- The Ten Commandments identify sin. Rom. 3:23
- Judgment day will come. Rev. 20:11-15
- Ultimate eternal punishment for all sinners. **Lake of fire...**

➤ Tell him that Christ died for his sins. 2 Cor. 5:21

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:9)

2. Train.

Believe, Behave, and Belong.

Enforce conformity of the heart and life to God and His truth.

Sanctification: training to live in such a way that we please God.

Discipleship - Punishment and rewards.

Ps. 32 “...I will counsel you with my eye upon you

... don't be like the donkey or horse, who need a bridle and bit.

Do what you have to do to restrain and train, don't neglect discipline.

III. The Plan of Motherhood

God had a specific plan in mind when He designed mothers as ...**Models of faith.**

Motto: Every mom a model.

**For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you,
 which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois
 and your mother Eunice,
 and I am sure that it is in you as well.**

(2 Tim. 1:5).

Faith is contagious if it is modeled.

Notice that Timothy was trained in the Scriptures:

“You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 3:14-15)

Timothy received His faith from his mother and grandmother.

Between the ages of 4 and 14, 70% of all Christians first believed.
 After that between 14 and 21 only 10% come to Christ.
 Then only 4% of adults come to Christ.

How important is motherhood? - Eternally priceless.

Abraham Lincoln said,

“No man is poor who has been raised by a godly mother.”
 “All I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother.”

How you did things in the past have consequences for the present and future.
 But the past can also be a rudder that guides you or an anchor that hinders you.
 Leave your past mistakes with God, and look to the future by faith.