

Mother's Day 2019

Today is Mother's Day.

After considering an endless list of reasons why we honor mothers Solomon gives this amazing conclusion:

“She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her saying: Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all. Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Giver her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.”
(Pr. 31:27-31).

So many of the reasons we honor mothers are obvious. One little scamp remembered how his mother prayed for him when he was three and wild – “Lord help you if you do that again.”

¹⁵And they were bringing their babies to Him so that He would touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking them.

¹⁶But Jesus called for them, saying,
“Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them,
for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

¹⁷Truly I say to you,
whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child
will not enter it at all.” (Luke 18:15-17)

There was a tradition with the Jews of an elder placing his hand on the head of a person to pronounce a blessing. Apparently there was a long line of people seeking this blessing from Jesus. The disciples intended to rescue the Lord from the monotonous task by rebuking the parents. Jesus in turn said, “Permit...don't prevent!”

Throughout ancient societies children were a bother, and represented helplessness, and to a certain degree, worthlessness – they were consumers and not contributors to the community because they couldn't work. Hebrew ethics took a longer view, of course, regarding children as a blessing from the Lord.

To Jesus children were ideal Kingdom citizens:
guileless, helpless, quick to believe, and not self-conscious.

Jesus never considered children a nuisance; He welcomed them with enthusiasm as examples – childlike faith opens the doors of heaven; their prayers delight the heart of God.

It is in fact the job of mothers to bring their children to Jesus as early and often as possible.

How important are mothers?

The next generation is totally dependent on mothers; on this earth there is no one of greater importance.

This is beautifully illustrated in the life of Timothy; a young man whom Paul the apostle called his true child in the faith.

Where did Timothy's faith come from?

Being a Christian isn't an inheritance from parents, but it is the result of sincere examples and consistent training from parents, especially the moms.

Paul wrote in his letter to young Timothy,

“For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and am sure that it is in you as well.” (2 Timothy 1:5)

“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. 2:14-15)

The faith of Timothy's mother and grandmother were bestowed on him through learning the Word of God. They took their job description seriously and trained Timothy in the Scriptures.

“O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.” (Deut. 6:3, 5-7).

The primary job of every mother is to bring her children to Jesus.

Those she birthed then need to experience the new birth, followed by discipleship - training in the Scriptures.

This world has never been easy for healthy Christian development.

It's called a rat race for that reason.

I never had a pet rat, but I remember the plastic ball a friend had for his rat, rolling all over the place. I see it as a perfect picture of humanity imprisoned in it's own technology and toys, going everywhere and making progress... but still imprisoned.

Vance Havner writes on modern humanity,

“We’ve ...painted ourselves into a corner, built our own jail, forged our own chains, and the more we try to throw them off the more tightly bound we become.”

It is Jesus who sets the captives free. The pattern is the same for children:

If we continue learning the Word of God, we become disciples
and we will know the truth and the truth will set us free. (John 8:31-32)

Why is training children in the Scriptures so important?

First it is the duty of parents as commanded by God.

Second, it is a prerequisite for future blessings from God.

Third, it is the primary way to raise up the next generation who will obey God as His covenant people. The real inheritance is spiritual; a godly heritage, a legacy.

Solomon wrote,

“Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Pr. 22:6)

The greatest significant influence on children are the moms.

Stunning verses are found in the book of Judges:

“The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the Lord which He had done for Israel...

All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, not yet the work which He had done for Israel.

Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals, and they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were around them and bowed themselves down to them; thus they provoked the Lord to anger. So they forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtaroth.

The anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. Wherever they went, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had spoken and as the Lord had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed.”

(Judges 2:7, 10-15)

At this time Israel began the Cycles of Destruction that repeated for generations.

Leaders died

People forgot

They forsook the Lord and sinned

God raised up their enemies

People cried out to God

God sent a judge to deliver them.

The last verse in the book of Judges reveals the outcome of forgetting God:

“In those days there was no king in Israel;

everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21:25).

God’s solution: Mothers

“Hear, my son, your father’s instruction

And do not forsake your mother’s teaching;

Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head
and ornaments about your neck.” (Pr. 1:8-9)

Our job as parents is to teach values. Their business is our business.

There should never be secrets between parents and children, just as there should be none between husbands and wives. We gave us privacy when we said, “I do.”

They never had it.

David wrote on key attitudes for a child of God facing a cruel world:

Initially this can be learned by songs or memory verses and then worked out in actual situations as children grow through the stages of life.

A key verse is from Paul’s 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 they you may live long on the earth.” (Eph. 6:1-3)

Courage:

“O love the Lord, all you His godly ones!

The Lord preserves the faithful

And fully recompenses the proud doer.
 Be strong and let your heart take courage,
 All you who hope in the Lord.” (Ps. 31:23-24).

Discipline:

“How **blessed** is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
 nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit I the seat of scoffers!
 But his **delight** is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he **meditates** day
 and night. He will be like a tree firmly panted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in
whatever he does he prospers.” (Ps. 1:1-3)

No one is as sensitive as a mother or grandmother, nor can be.

Poem: A Mother’s Day Poem

By Ruth Bell Graham

Listen, Lord,
 a mother’s praying
 low and quiet:
 listen, please.

Listen what her tears
 are saying,
 see her heart
 upon it’s knees;

lift the load
 from her bowed
 shoulders
 Till she sees
 and understands,
 You, Who hold
 the worlds together,
 hold her problems
 in Your hands.