

## Honor Your Mother

**Ephesians 6:1 ESV** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. **2** “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), **3** “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”

- I. So today is Mother’s Day. It is a day that has been set aside to honor our moms. It is a day to say thank you, to express admiration and appreciation for all that you amazing ladies will do, are doing, and have done. Celebrating our moms is a good and even holy thing to do. It is something that the church should embrace. So let it be known that City View whole-heartedly affirms the treasure that is motherhood!
  - A. But to simply say “we appreciate you” seems far too small to me. That seems like a sentiment more suited for a hastily bought, drugstore greeting card than a true expression of how your children and husbands feel about you.
    1. The fact of the matter is that you amaze us. Your beauty, grace, patience, perseverance, and commitment astound us.
    2. Trust me when I say that none of us men have any delusions of grandeur concerning who you are and what you do. From your first pregnancy to the days of the empty nest, we stand in awe of how you do what we cannot do.
      - a) Comedian Jim Gaffigan has said, “All women are amazing...A woman can grow a baby **inside** their body. And then somehow a woman can deliver the baby **through** their body. And then by some miracle, a woman can feed a baby **with** their body. And when you think of the male contribution to life, it’s kind of embarrassing really. The guy’s always like, “Yeah, well I helped too...for like 5 seconds...doing the one thing I think about 24 hours a day...”
      - b) We must concede that you have a physical advantage when it comes to producing, delivering and nurturing new life! But the truth is that we’re awestruck by so much more than just your physical uniqueness!
  - B. For example, your tenderness. I’ve shared with many of you what I call the “America’s Funniest Home Videos Theory of Parenting”. Next time you watch the show (or any viral video involving injury to children for that matter) test my theory.
    1. If a mom is filming and the kid falls off the trampoline, gets whacked by the other kid on the swing, or falls into the lake, you ALWAYS hear a huge “Gasp!” followed by the camera dropping as mom runs to the rescue.
    2. If dad is holding the camera, the filming NEVER stops! No matter the nature or severity of the injury, you can count on us to film it to the bitter end, and the only sound you hear on the tape is raucous laughter!
  - C. Have you noticed that small children rarely scream for daddy when they scrape their knee or bonk their heads?
    1. There is a reason for this. Standard first aid procedure for a Dad doesn’t go much further than “walk it off” or “rub some dirt on it”.
    2. But not so with Mama! She’ll hold you, rock you and wipe away your tears! She’ll blow on your cuts and scrapes, and kiss your “owies” and “boo-boo’s”!
      - a) This primal need for the tenderness and nurturing that a mom provides is never diminished.

- b) It has been said that the most common word uttered by dying soldiers on the battlefield is some version of “mama”.
  - c) The toughest of men, in the harshest of situations, once mortally wounded, cry out, not for their wives or girlfriends, or often even for God, but for their mothers.
- II. I don't know if there is a tougher job on the face of the planet than that of a mom.
- A. We recently had Pastor Dave and Caty over for dinner and, Ellie their 6-year-old asked Curtis if he goes to work.
    - 1. When he said he did, Ellie responded, “My Daddy goes to work, but my mom doesn't.” Meaning she doesn't “clock in” somewhere.
    - 2. I quickly replied, “Believe me Ellie, your mom goes to work everyday! She even sleeps at work”.
    - 3. Then I quickly corrected myself realizing that Caty is raising a 6 year-old, a 3 year-old, and a 2 year-old. “Well, sometimes your Mom gets to sleep at work!”
  - B. Most of us are familiar with the concept of the Proverbs 31 woman. The last half of Proverbs chapter 31 describes the qualities of a Godly woman.
    - 1. It describes her lifelong sacrifice and service to her family.
      - a) **Proverbs 31:11 ESV** The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain.**12** She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.
      - b) **Proverbs 31:15 ESV** She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens.
      - c) **Proverbs 31:27 ESV** She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.
      - d) **Proverbs 31:23 ESV** Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land.
        - (1) Do you think this is because he's all that! No way! A man always appears to be a better man than he is when he has a great, godly wife!
        - (2) When people meet my wife for the first time, they think I must be filthy rich to have won a woman like that!
    - 2. It describes her industry and productivity.
      - a) **Proverbs 31:13 ESV** She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands.**14** She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar.
      - b) **Proverbs 31:16 ESV** She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.
      - c) **Proverbs 31:18 ESV** She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. **19** She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle.
      - d) **Proverbs 31:24 ESV** She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant.
    - 3. It describes how she cares for the appearance, protection and provision of not only herself, but her family as well.
      - a) **Proverbs 31:17 ESV** She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong.

- b) **Proverbs 31:21 ESV** She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. **22** She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.
    - 4. It speaks of her generosity and grace in the community.
      - a) **Proverbs 31:20 ESV** She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy.
      - b) **Proverbs 31:25 ESV** Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. **26** She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
  - C. What is the reward to her for all of this?
    - 1. **Proverbs 31:28 ESV** Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:
    - 2. And what do we say when we bless you? The next verse tells us...
      - a) **Proverbs 31:29 ESV** “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.”
      - b) This sentiment is not reserved for one single imaginary ideal of a woman described 3,000 years ago. It’s how we feel about you today!
        - (1) I know that sometimes a lot of guys have a hard time saying it eloquently or frequently (I know I do!), but most all of us are convinced we’ve got the best wife and are SO glad that you are the mother of our children!
        - (2) After I married Ginger, I actually used to feel pity for other men, because after she was off the market, I was convinced that they all had to settle for sub-standard women!
  - D. Now can I talk about an elephant in the room? I know that there are many of you ladies that, for one reason or another, are raising children all by yourself. You don’t have a husband either to help and support you, or to praise you for the awesome job you’re doing.
    - 1. May I take the liberty to stand in for the partner who is not there and say to you, “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.” You need to hear that. By raising your kids, you are doing kingdom work!
    - 2. I admire single moms so much for your faithfulness and diligence, often in the face of incredible obstacles. Though they may not recognize it, or be able to acknowledge it yet, you will be your kid’s hero. Truly, your children will rise up and call you blessed.
    - 3. If there is anything City View can ever do to help lighten your load, please let us know. The church doesn’t exist to preach at you; but to stand with you.
- III. Hopefully you have seen that mothering is one of the highest assignments that God gives to mankind. Because of this, we are commanded to honor our mothers.
  - A. Have you ever pondered how highly God prioritizes the value of parenting in the moral code called the 10 Commandments? The Commandments in order are...
    - 1. You shall have no other Gods before me.
    - 2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them.
    - 3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- B. But after four explicit commands regarding the holiness and worship of God, we read these words: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.”
1. This commandment precedes God’s commandments on what we consider the big sins: don’t murder, commit adultery, steal, lie or covet.
  2. I think this commandment is listed first for two reasons:
    - a) Because one way to honor our parents is to not get caught up in these other sins. God’s intent was that by submitting to the authority of our parents through honor and obedience, we avoid the trap of other sins.
    - b) Will will not get caught up in these other sins if we strive to honor our parents. No one honors their mother by becoming a murderer or adulterer!
  3. And, as Paul pointed out in the text we read at the beginning, this commandment carries with it the hope of a promise; and it is the only one of the 10 to do so! “...that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”
    - a) This doesn’t say that honoring our parents means that a person will never face death early in life (as though honor were some kind of magic charm), but that we will be kept from the ***certain peril*** that is guaranteed in the life of a fool.
    - b) **Proverbs 10:8 ESV** The wise of heart will receive commandments, but a babbling fool will come to ruin.
- C. But a greater question arises for us as we consider how God requires honor to be shown to our parents. And that is, “Why?”
- IV. God requires such honor to be bestowed on parents because ***he is one***. Seven times in scripture, the Apostle Paul refers to God as “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- A. But what a mighty thing has been accomplished by Jesus through his death, resurrection, and ascension to his eternal throne! As God is Father to Christ, because of what Christ has done, so he is to us!
1. **1 John 3:1 ESV** See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called ***children of God***; and so we are.
  2. In a truly revolutionary move, Jesus taught us to pray, not to a God, or a Creator or even a King, but he said **Matthew 6:9 ESV** Pray then like this: “Our ***Father*** in heaven, hallowed be your name.”
- B. Therefore parents must be given honor because they are the primary representatives of who God is. All parents (whether great or not-so-great) should be given honor because they stand in a role, granted and ordained by God, to represent him in the life of every child born to them.
1. Let’s talk about the second elephant in the room. I know many of you have parents that dropped the ball in a thousand different ways (I am one of those people). I know some of those ways may have traumatized you dramatically.
  2. This is real. As someone whose experience with my parents was oftentimes painful, I know the emotional struggle that rises within you when you try to contemplate honoring your parents.

- a) The key thing to remember is that honoring them does not mean ignoring their faults or granting them a pass for real, injurious mistakes they made.
  - b) It may mean that you ask God to help you understand why they were so flawed. Or learning to appreciate the things (however few) they got right. Most certainly it means that you can honor them by doing the hard work of forgiving them.
- 3. If you would ever like to talk more about this, I would love to talk to you.
- C. Most of us have been taught the concept of God as Father from early on. But ladies (and gentlemen), do you want to see something really cool in God's word?
  - 1. It is fundamental to orthodox Christian belief that God has revealed himself only as masculine in the scripture.
    - a) He is always "he" and "him", not "she" and "her"; "God", never "goddess."
    - b) This is true regardless of what you hear in the media or read in popular books.
  - 2. However, when He placed his image, mankind (his representation), on earth, that image wasn't complete in just the male of the human race.
    - a) **Genesis 1:27 ESV** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; **male and female** he created them.
    - b) The image of God is never complete without the female component.
- D. With that in mind, watch how God (The Father, the masculine one) often chooses to reveal himself in scripture...
  - 1. **Isaiah 66:13 ESV** As one whom **his mother** comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.
  - 2. **Isaiah 49:15 ESV** "**Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?** Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.**16** Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.
  - 3. **Luke 13:34 ESV** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together **as a hen** gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!
- E. Motherhood is so vital, because it is a important part of how we serve as God's image-bearers on the earth.
  - 1. This means that though you call on God as Father, you ladies don't have to surrender the image-bearing to the dads!
  - 2. As a follower of Christ, the way you mother your children will look like God, smell like God, and feel like God to your children, your husband and to the watching world.
  - 3. The impact on your kids will be dramatic! As they grow and mature, they will get hints of how **God** loves them by the way **you** love them, and will thereby be drawn deeper and deeper into his love eventually coming to know him as savior.
- V. And this is the most important facet of motherhood. Motherhood is first and foremost a gospel-promoting proposition.

- A. **2 Timothy 1:5 ESV** I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.
  - B. Paul records for all time that the primary gospel influence in his chief disciple's life was not himself, or Timothy's pastor or even his father. It was his grandmother and mother.
  - C. The point is this: Your unique representation of the image of God was never intended as an end, but rather a means to see that your son and daughter are introduced to the wonder and majesty of Jesus Christ in the gospel.
    - 1. Your primary purpose as a mom is not to see your kids get into Harvard. Your primary purpose as a mom is not to keep them out of the penitentiary.
    - 2. Your primary purpose is not to make sure your 5 year old gets every athletic opportunity so they won't blow their first big-league tryout. Your primary purpose is not to teach them to sit up straight, say "please" and "thank you", keep their room clean, and floss every day.
    - 3. Your primary purpose as a mom is to introduce your children to Jesus! If you do everything else that the culture, and the books, and the so-called experts tell you to do, yet you give no thought to the gospel implications of motherhood, you've missed the entire point.
- VI. I hope this morning that as we celebrate the wonder of who you are and the glory of what you do, that you will soberly reflect on this solemn responsibility.
- A. My intention is not that you would be condemned, but rather inspired, to see the awesome responsibility that you have in the eternal life of your children; that the gospel purpose of motherhood is not "a" task of your calling as a mom, it is "the" task.
    - 1. But I also know that the culture is brutal to moms! You are constantly bombarded with voices telling you that you should feed them better, clothe them better, educate them better, etc., etc., etc.!
    - 2. You don't need to come to church and have some preacher (who is not a mom by the way) say, "You're doing it wrong!" That is not my intent.
  - B. I truly believe that embracing the gospel role that goes along with the high estate of motherhood will bring more joy, and purpose, and satisfaction to your life as a mom than any other goal you might try to accomplish for your kid.
  - C. It's not accomplished by getting your kid to Sunday School to say a prayer, but by daily demonstrating a humble trust and confidence in God alone, and walking in grace, love and forgiveness, even in when you yourself feel far from perfect.
  - D. It's not an easy task, but it's worth it! It's noble and rewarding task!
- VII. This morning as a Mother's Day gift from the church, we'd like to give you the two things you need most to do what you're called to do. Affirmation and Prayer.
- A. Moms would you please stand...
  - B. First we want to tell you how awesome we think you are! We want to say thanks for all that you've done. We want to let you know how much you've impacted us; how our lives would never be the same without you. We are very grateful.
  - C. Second, we want to let you know that we know how hard your job is. We acknowledge that your are uniquely gifted to do it, but that it is still difficult.

1. Therefore I'd like to ask every mom (of every age) and pregnant woman to come forward so that we might pray for you.
  - a) If you are a guest, we promise not to do anything weird! We just want to ask God to supply you with his strength to do what you're called to do.
  - b) If your mom is here, why don't you come down with her.
2. I'd like to ask everyone else to come and find someone to pray for.