

M.O.T.H.E.R

When I was asked to offer the sermon on Mother's Day, I had many visuals and memories flash through my brain. Of course my first thought was of my mother and then my grandmothers and then I expanded to aunts and all females in my family who have offered love, support, and compassion to me throughout my lifetime. But almost as cherished as those memories are the very vibrant memories of women mentors in my lifetime. Wow! That list goes on forever...many of my most precious mentors were women in this church; we can all name a few of those amazing persons!

I want to give you ALL a moment to think about the women in your lifetime who have impacted you... I'm sure we can all agree that they weren't all our mothers, but vital people who have made us who we are today.

The Bible shares with us many verses about Motherhood:

- Isaiah 49:15: speaks to the enduring love and care of mothers, highlighting their unwavering commitment; "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you!"
- Proverbs 31 provides a powerful depiction of a virtuous woman, highlighting her wisdom, strength, and dedication to her family
- Luke 1:39-45 depicts Mary and Elizabeth's meeting and their miraculous events surrounding their pregnancies, emphasizing the power of faith and divine intervention. Both women were challenged with unique Motherhood responsibilities which required unconditional love, support, and as mothers of Jesus and John the Baptist, were called upon to watch their sons lead and sacrifice for the good of others. These narratives illustrate the power of faith and resilience in Motherhood.

“Mothering” is not just a biological role but a spiritual one, encouraging women to instill values and to guide children toward a faith-filled life:

DIVINE MOTHERHOOD allows us to explore the concept of God as a loving and nurturing parent, drawing parallels between God’s care for humanity and the love and support mothers provide their children. When I read the word “Divine” I think of Divine Intervention and the times when I felt God’s Intervention were when my children were in life crises and I was praying for them; and during my prayers, I felt a presence that filled me with comfort, peace, and acceptance of the situation and the knowledge that God was with me and with my loved ones who were struggling with life’s challenges.

THE ENDURING IMPACT OF MOTHERS highlights the lasting influence mothers have on their children’s lives, emphasizing the importance of their guidance, values, and love. I was blessed with a stay-at-home mother who, although very active herself, was always there for me. I also had the valued love and care of grandmothers and aunts who were so important in my life. They were valuable to me in many ways but even more importantly, I watched WHO they were and what they DID for others. Their personal life journeys reflected lives that were formed through years of education, travel, community and church involvements, and their wide ranging impacts with other family members and friends. My grandmother was in Paris May 1927 when Lindbergh landed and had an audience with the Pope...gracious!! Her stories captivated me for years and demonstrated that women could do ANYTHING!!!

MOTHERS AS SPIRITUAL GUIDES presents the role of mothers in instilling faith and spiritual values in the children, encouraging them to be role models and mentors. I often brought my grandchildren along with me to “help” when I was volunteering within the community. I didn’t always know if they understood the value of these excursions until my granddaughter commented to me, after I congratulated her on

a resume she had written, saying, “Well Grandma, I learned it all from you!” She was sharing her “values” in her college admission application....we don’t always need to narrate what we do....we just need to show our children how to be active and care for others. That’s something we ALL do.....through our PERSONAL TESTIMONIES we share how love and support can shape lives.

CALL TO ACTION encourages mothers and all of us to continue to nurture our children’s faith, values, and spiritual growth, and encourage the community to support and appreciate mothers. I remember sharing a sermon with you last fall and talked about caring for the care-givers; how often we forget that we need to reach out in so many ways to offer support to mothers, and to daughters who are now caring for mothers; and to all others who are physically, emotionally and financially helping those in need.

Martin Baker shared an Acrostic utilizing M-O-T-H-E-R:

- “M” is for Multi-faceted. Think about how many things Mothers can do at one time...while fixing a meal they can manage a child’s homework lesson, text a message to the teacher, change a load of laundry, etc....all while doing one task....I’m sure we can all relate to that!! Think about what a mother really is: Teacher, Guide, Counselor, Prison Warden, Lover, Maid, Gardener, Chef, Friend, Therapist, Taxi Driver, Telephone Operator, Shopper, Doctor, Vet, Bounty Hunter, Cheerleader, Activist, Paramedic, Dishwasher, Waitress, Prayer Warrior, Entertainer....and the list continues on!! A Mother can wear all of these hats, and the most amazing thing is that she often wears many of them at one time. Thank God for creating someone as priceless as this and make it a point to thank her for her multi-faceted abilities.
- “O” is for On the Job. A Godly Mother is one who is always there for her family. She’s available 24/7/365...always tuned in to what’s happening around her and always ready to listen. A mother or mentor teaches one how to live, work, and walk in this world. The perks are often plentiful: smiles, funny stories, precious times spent with loved ones. A Godly Mother knows that her job is never over.

Think of the many ways mothers and mentors have been there for us....when we're hurt, when we need a cheerleader, when a friend said something that upset us, when we faced a friend's death, when we had questions about our life's goals and how to accomplish them; When I was.....she was there. (Fill this in yourselves) Through my mother's or mentor's continued presence, I always felt thankful, knowing that I was not alone.

- "T" is for Tender. Do you remember your mother's touch? A touch is often a reflection of one's heart. In a Godly Mother, it's a heart full of ingredients like love, compassion, forgiveness, and mercy. We are blessed if we had a mother who fulfilled the essence of Ephesians 4:32 which says: "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you." If a woman's tender heart is balanced with a forgiving heart, there's always plenty of room for Grace. We stand in awe of godly women who know and live out their calling.
- "H" is for Heroine. A hero is a person who is always there for you when others aren't. They believe in you and let you know it. The hero in your life will focus on your assets; I support you, I believe in you, You can do it, I have faith in you, Go for it....!!!! Napoleon Bonaparte echoed his mother one time saying: "The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother." We thank the Lord for women who drip with enthusiasm for us; who look at obstacles and call them opportunities, who don't see the glass as half empty but half full, who don't worry about what we can't do but are wildly enthusiastic about what we can do. May YOU change the landscape of your family, mothers and mentors, by choosing today to be a heroine in a person's life.
- "E" is for Educator. The course content of being a mother/mentor/educator is endless. Often after 18 years, or 28 years, or 78 years it sometimes takes that long for things to penetrate our skulls! While mother and mentors teach us a lot about life, the greatest gift is the importance of biblical love. Love is in short supply in our world...we appreciate the mothers who put godly, biblical, unconditional love on the front burner of every teaching

opportunity. (1John 3:18: "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.")

- "R" if for Reverential. A Reverential Woman/Mentor focuses on prayer, relationships, confession, worship, Bible Study, and thinking about the Lord; The Lord is her life and it is God who helps her set her priorities in her life and in those she impacts.

And so today we continue to honor our mothers and mentors who have impacted us in so many positive ways; who have given us the strength and courage to seek godly lives for ourselves and for those we are with daily. We continue to thank God for all the blessings that are bestowed upon us through who give us unconditional love. Thanks be to God. Amen