

HOORAY FOR MOTHERS! Titus 2:1-5

I suppose that other than our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, there have never been any persons in history that have had more written about them than mothers. Quotes and poems on mothers and motherhood are endless. Let me share just a few. The poet George Cooper penned these words:

Hundreds of dewdrops to greet the dawn,
Hundreds of bees in the purple clover,
Hundreds of butterflies on the lawn,
But only one Mother the whole world over.

And an unnamed poet wrote:

No painter's brush, nor poet's pen
With justice to her fame
Has ever reached half high enough
To write a Mother's name.

One tool of communication that writers have used for years has been the acrostic. And another unnamed writer came up with this acrostic for mothers:

M – multitasking expert. The basic job skill of a mother is to be able to wear more hats than a circus act.

O – officer-in-charge in the home. And the sooner the one who **thinks** he is the officer-in-charge learns this, the better off the whole family will be.

T – tangible love and forgiveness

H – healer of wounded knees and broken hearts. Daddys are great to play with, but in times of crisis give us the TLC of mother.

E – encourager of youthful dreams. Mother believes in you when nobody else will.

R – representative of Jesus. An old Spanish proverb says, “An ounce of Mother is worth a ton of priest”. And the fact is no one has the opportunity to point a child toward Jesus and foster their love for Jesus like mother.

Well, mothers and future mothers, today I want to speak especially to you. I want to encourage you in perhaps the most influential profession on the planet, that of motherhood. And I want each of you who are mothers to leave today more

encouraged about your calling and more challenged to fulfill your calling than ever before.

Please turn in your Bibles to Titus 2:1-5. In our text today we actually have a word for two different sets of mothers, older ones and younger ones. Now, we do not actually see the word “mother” in any of these verses, but it is obvious that these are the primary groups to which Paul is referring, and so I want to speak to each of these groups as well.

First of all, Paul talks about the responsibilities of older women. So just who fits into this category? Well, I think that I’ll play it safe and defer to the experts to answer that one. I read this week that the Romans considered anyone to be old that had hit the three score mark, which is 60 years of age. But that’s an ancient idea that we can easily brush off. Bible teacher John MacArthur says that older women would be about the age of 60 and up, basing this upon Paul’s instructions in 1 Tim. 5 about widows who are 60 years old or older, but that’s just MacArthur’s opinion. But someone told me something this week that has been gnawing away at me every since. They told me that the medical profession in America considers a gerontology patient to be anyone who is 60 or older. Now that was a pretty sobering stinger. But if any of you mothers have crossed the Rubicon into the world of old folks with me then verse 3 and the first part of verse 4 are for you.

The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; **4** That they may teach the young women to be sober... Titus 2:3-4a KJV

Older moms, God wants you to know that if you have life and breath He is not through with you yet. As the psalmist said, you can still bear fruit in old age, and you can be fresh and flourishing (Ps. 92:14). But the place you must start is that you must be reverent in behavior. The old KJV states it better when it says that the behavior of older women should be befitting of holiness. The Greek words mean that older women are to carry themselves in every area of life as though they were in the temple rendering service to God. And verse 3 goes on to give you two particulars. It means, ladies, that you will not be a slanderer. You will not instigate gossip nor will you spread gossip, whether it is true or untrue. Instead of talking about people to your friends, you will talk about them to God. You will pray for them.

And you’ll also not be a winebibber, either. And I will say to you what I said about pastors a few weeks ago. You won’t even be a wine sipper if it damages your Christian testimony. But the point is, ladies, God says that you are to offer yourself as a holy vessel unto the Lord, so that your godly demeanor will radiate Jesus day by day and be a godly influence to many.

But God would have you be a woman who influences by your walk, but also by your talk. Look again at the latter part of verse 3 (“teacher of good things, that they admonish the young women...”). Older moms, God wants you to know that you are a great storehouse of wisdom that can be a blessing to a generation of mothers who are walking behind you. And you need not think that you must have been a perfect mother for you to instruct those who are younger. We often learn from the mistakes of others just as surely as we learn from their successes. But never forget what Paul said about reverent behavior. While your past record need not be perfect, your present walk must be pure. And you can be sure that the younger women will see it, and you can be sure that when they do they will listen to what you have to say.

I was listening to Christian radio not too long ago and I came across a female speaker that I did not recognize. But what she was saying was biblical and so I continued to listen, and the more I listened the more I thought, “This woman is passionate about what she’s talking about”. And when the broadcast was over I discovered that the speaker was Kay Arthur, who is now 78 years old. She and her husband Jack are former missionaries to Mexico and co-founders of the Precept upon Precept Bible study ministry. When Kay was 73 she teamed up with two other women’s Bible teachers young enough to be her daughter and granddaughter and for two years taught the Bible to thousands of women all over the country. She continues to blossom in her old age as mighty instructor of younger women who are seeking to learn how to be godly wives and mothers. And older women, you may not have an influence as widespread as Kay Arthur, but you can still do a mighty work for God in the life of just one, or a few, or even more. And that work will live on for generations and generations to come.

So gerontic moms, the word of the Lord to you today is, **pursue a godly life, proclaim His ways to younger moms**, and let me add one more “p” to the list. **Pray Heaven down.** Your old age prayer ministry could be the most productive thing for the Kingdom of God that you ever do in your entire life. So pursue, proclaim, and pray. And a final word - don’t quit!

Well, let’s move on now and examine the things that you older moms are to teach to the younger ones. And young moms, whether they teach you or not, God’s Word says that your first focus of being a godly mom doesn’t come with your children, but with your husband. Look back at verse 4. You are to love your husband.

Now, there is a reason that God begins His admonitions to the younger mothers with loving their husbands. And that is, the best thing that a mother or a dad can do for their children is to love their spouse. And that is because the more love that flows between mom and dad the more stable the home and the more secure the children. Don't think for a minute that your marital fights don't have an effect upon your children. Don't think that for a minute that a divorce will not rock their world, and maybe shatter it. I'm not saying that kids from broken homes can't make it in this world, for by God's grace they can and many do. But I am saying that kids from broken homes are sitting behind the eight ball, and only by the grace of God will they come out unscathed.

So young wives, love your husbands! Love him even when you don't feel like it, and by the way, that will come pretty quick in your marriage. An article in Newsweek Magazine years ago reported that all the bells, rockets and whistles stop going off in a marriage in about two years. There is some sort of chemical change in your brain at that point that just shuts down the fireworks. So then what do you do? You reach up and grab hold of the grace of God and you begin to pour out that grace on that man of yours whether he deserves it or not, and much of the time he won't. But you love him and love him anyway, and finally you'll get to the point that you've invested so much into him you'll say, "Even though he is a jerk, I've got too much invested in him to turn back now". And that just could be the turning point in your relationship.

Many of you heard Ruth Owar speak in our church a few months ago. She is a committed Christian and a member of my sister's church in Montgomery. She is a Kenyan who has been in America for about 17 years, but she has not been here by choice. She left three young children in Kenya fleeing from an abusive husband. But for 17 years Ruth has continued to love her husband. She told me when she visited us that not once did she ever consider divorce, not once did she ever look at another man. Look back at verse 5. The godly mother is to be discreet and chaste, that is, self-controlled and pure. And that's the way Ruth has lived for 17 years. And while she has lived this way she has prayed and prayed for her husband, that God would change his heart and reunite their family. And if you heard her testimony, you know that while she was praying she founded an orphanage that now cares for almost 30 homeless children.

Well, beloved, within the next two weeks guess what is going to happen? Ruth Owar will be back home in Kenya, reunited with her husband and three children she missed seeing grow up. For God answered her prayers and miraculously transformed her husband into the most kind and gentle Christian you've ever seen. In fact, visitors from the states to the orphanage tell Ruth that if

they did not know her to be a truthful woman they would not believe that he could have ever been such a violent man. Talk about Romans 8:28 coming to pass! Talk about all things working together for good for those who love God. For now Ruth is going back to minister to 30 children who now are safe and secure, hearing about Jesus every day, and it never would have happened had Ruth not come to America, and had been faithful to keep loving her husband.

Oh, young women, love your man! God will honor your commitment to love him. There may be dark, difficult days, But He will bless your home, and you can be sure that your children will see your commitment and that one day they will follow in your footsteps.

But there is a second thing that God asks you young mothers to do. Look again at verse 4. Moms, you are to love your children. Now, I know that many of you might like to say to Paul, "Duh! Who do you think I am, Paul, not to love my children?" Well, moms, if you are loving your children today I praise God for you, but surely you know that many, many moms are not. I was listening to one of our Christian radio stations this week and the program host was interviewing a young mother who was talking about children either being a blessing or a burden. Well, young ladies, let me say that more and more in our culture we see that children are indeed a burden to their mothers. More and more in our culture it's the grandmother who is the really the mother, because the mother's priority is somewhere else. Young moms, listen to God's word to you this morning. **It's not about you!!** It's about your husband first, then it's about your children. Do you remember what we studied just a few weeks ago from 1 Tim. 2:15? Paul says that women will be saved through childbearing. Not spiritually saved, but saved from a life of frustration and defeat, as they make their priority the calling that God gave them as a mother.

So moms, I have two words to you about loving your children this morning. First of all, if you are to love them, **you must not neglect them.** You don't sit them down in front of a TV or a play station and leave them there all day. You rarely leave them at home at night while you are out at a movie with friends, and never if they're too young. You make time to support their school activities. You will make time to make memories, some of which you may forget but which they will never forget.

But that's just the physical area. Even more importantly, you don't neglect them spiritually. You don't see to it that they get to church; you bring them with

you to church. You take time for family devotions and you take time for spiritual conversations. You buy them spiritual gifts that will have a spiritual influence.

Here's the deal, parents. Other than your own relationship with Jesus, the spiritual welfare of your children is the greatest responsibility that you have on this earth. James Dobson said years ago that whatever he accomplished in this life – and he has accomplished a lot – that whatever he accomplished in this life was a big fat zero if he failed to pass the torch of faith down to his children. And you will not pass the torch of faith down to them if you neglect them.

But there is a second thing that you must not do if you are to love your children as God would have you to. You not only do not neglect them, but one the other end of that spectrum you do not worship them. You say, "Come on, Bro. Mike. I love my kids but I certainly do not worship them". Well, I hope that you don't, but I can tell you about one parent in the Bible who did. His name was Eli. He was a priest in the nation of Israel. And Eli worshipped his two boys, Hophni and Phinehas. In 1 Samuel 2 God sent an unnamed prophet to chastise Eli for his wayward ways, and he said to Eli in verse 29, "Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling place, and honor your sons more than Me...." That's worship, folks. Anything you honor more than God is your object of worship, and that was what Eli was doing with his sons. He let them act like gods, doing anything they pleased. They were priests just like their dad, but they were taking for themselves the sacrifices the people brought to the tabernacle for God, and they were even committing adultery with the women who were the servants of the tabernacle (1 Sam. 2:22; Ex. 38:8).

And you see the worship of children all the time today. You see mothers dragging their little girls who are less than a year old to beauty pageants, really believing that their little darling is the prettiest baby that God ever made. You see parents in principal's offices cursing the principle and defending their sons who tried to burn down the school.

Let me tell you what happens when you worship your children. They have a good possibility of turning out like Hophni and Phinehas. Selfish brats, thinking the world revolves around them. Have you ever seen Little House on the Prairie? Ever wonder why Nellie Olson acts the way she does? I walked through the house not long ago and Little House was on, and Janice told me that Nellie was the meanest kid she had ever known. And even though it was just a show, just make believe stuff, I saw the way Nellie was treating a playmate and it made me so mad that I wanted to reach in that TV screen and yank her out in my living room by her little blonde curls and wail the tar out of her. But why does Nellie act that way? Because Harriet has spoiled her rotten, and thinks her beautiful Nellie

is better than every other kid in town, especially Laura Engels. And back to real life, as far as Eli's sons are concerned, the Bible says that God killed them (1 Sam. 2:25).

Mothers, when you worship your kids you ruin them, but you also ruin yourself. Charles Spurgeon said, "If Christians desire to grow thorns to stuff their sleepless pillows, let them dote on their dear ones". And he goes on to say that when we do dote over our children, "We commit two evils. We forsake the living God and turn to idols".

Well, moms, if you would love your children you can't neglect them and you can't worship them. But God says that the way to love them is to cherish them. In 1 Thessalonians 2:7 Paul writes that he was gentle among the Thessalonians, as a nursing mother cherishes her children. And any nursing mother needs no explanation of what Paul means. But for us clueless men, the word "cherish" means to nourish, to foster, to warm. Moms, let me share with you two practical ways to cherish your children. **Encourage them**, but don't **excuse them**. Encourage them to do right, but call them to repentance when they do wrong, instead of playing it off as unimportant. And secondly, **support them**, but don't **sustain them**. Help them when they need it, but teach them to be responsible for themselves, for one day you will not be around for them to depend on.

Time is short, but please allow me just a few moments to put the bow on the wraps. Mothers, young and old, if there just had to be a one word summary for the calling that God has upon each of your lives this morning, there would probably be none better than one found in verse 5. Look at verse 5 again.

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Titus 2:5 (KJV)

What's your guess? Well, you get the prize if you said, "homemakers".

More and more our culture challenges young women to think that a career is a more desirable path to take than to be a full-time mom. A few weeks ago we heard one political campaign worker say that a stay-at-home mother hasn't worked a day in her life. Well, let me say that of all the characteristics of a godly mother that Paul lists he fails to mention "love your career".

Now, please hear me carefully. I am not advocating that every mother here go out and quit their job tomorrow. But as I've said before, moms, you must remember that your 8-5 job is not your day job. You didn't get a degree for your day job and you don't get paid for it. Your day job is to be a homemaker, and

whatever you do outside your home; it's your job inside the home where God measures your success.

Listen to what God says about the value of children: "Children are a heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb is a reward. The word "heritage" means "inheritance". Think about all God could have given you as an inheritance. Money, fame. Influence. And God certainly allows some people to have all of that. But what did He choose to give to all of you moms? God chose to give you an inheritance of children. He chose to reward you with children. It is a precious reward! Treasure it with all of your heart today.